Religion in China Today

Policy and Practice

Donald E. MacInnis

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Foreword

One of the great surprises of China after Mao has been the efflorescence of religious belief and practice. It is a surprise not only for many Chinese Communists, whose scientific materialist ideology teaches them that religion is destined to wither away with the advance of history, but also for many Western observers of China. Heirs to the same rationalist, Enlightenment tradition that Karl Marx drew upon, Western social scientists have tended to underestimate the role of religion in the modern world. Modernity dissolves religion, they have been wont to say. In the modern world *homo religiosus* yields to *homo economicus* and *homo politicus*. According to this way of thinking, the Chinese people would have been too busy dealing with their many political and economic problems over the past decades to worry much about religion. They would not have found it worth their while to hold on to religion in the face of vigorous government efforts to discourage and to suppress it. Even if a pre-revolutionary generation of religious practitioners secretly held on to their customs, a new generation grown up in a thoroughly secular society would have no interest in religion.

But the recent history of China has confounded such expectations. Ever since the establishment of the People's Republic, religion in all its forms has been systematically discouraged, and during the Cultural Revolution it was intensely persecuted. Yet with the death of Mao and the end of the Cultural Revolution era, all kinds of religious practices are springing back to life. Throughout the countryside, peasants are reviving the old marriage and funeral rituals, celebrating traditional festivals, sometimes calling on the services of sorcerers and shamans, and even in some places rebuilding local shrines and temples. On a more formally organized level, Buddhist temples and Islamic mosques are being refurbished and a surprising number of young people are entering training to become monks, nuns and imams. Despite enormous obstacles, the Catholic and Protestant churches have survived and are growing. Enough Communist Party and Youth League members are forsaking atheism for religious belief that the Party has had to issue anxious directives about how to stem this tide.

Even as it perhaps gives inspiration to people of faith around the world, the revival of religion in China thus challenges well-established social theories. This informative new book by Donald MacInnis will give scholars much food for thought. Dr. MacInnis has been studying about China for more than four decades. Nearly two decades ago, when the study of religion was only peripheral to the interests of Western scholars of contemporary China, he compiled and published an important set of primary source documents on religious policy and practice from the early years of the Com-

munist era through the Cultural Revolution. In this new book, he draws on all his accumulated knowledge and experience to document the multifarious forms of religious life emerging in the contemporary PRC.

His earlier book described religion on the defensive, beleaguered by a powerful government determined to systematically control it and, sometimes, fanatically to eradicate it. In an ironic reversal, this new book describes a government on the defensive, puzzled by the blossoming of so many new flowers of religious thought, worried about the consequences of this flowering for its political control, at a loss to explain or reliably to constrain such an outgrowth of popular religious vitality. On the other hand, most of the religious people whom Dr. MacInnis has interviewed for this book seem cautiously hopeful about the future of their practices.

This book allows us no easy explanations for the survival and revival of religion in China. As Donald MacInnis surveys the wide range of religious practice and belief in the People's Republic, it becomes clear that the meanings and motivations associated with rural folk religion are far different from, say, those associated with urban Protestantism. Each religious tradition has to be understood in its own terms, as a particular response to the general failure of the bureaucratic party-state to provide any satisfying experience of moral community or any plausible sense of transcendent meaning.

Allowing no easy explanations, this fascinating collection of data pushes us toward hard, but potentially very fruitful intellectual work. In recent years, there has developed in the West a widespread "post-modernist" dissatisfaction with positivistic social theories that assume an unbridgeable gap between religious belief and scientific reason and between religious practice and the instrumental behavior that supposedly forms the foundation of the modern world. Sharing this dissatisfaction, many historians, anthropologists, and other scholarly specialists on China have begun to take greater interest in the religious dimensions of pre-modern and early modern China. Out of this new research are coming a host of new insights into the complexities of Chinese cultural traditions and social organization throughout history—and a host of stimulating scholarly controversies as well. It portends an intellectual revolution of sorts in Sinology, with all the confusion and uncertainties, as well as the opportunities for progress that revolutions promise. Due to lack of information, scholars have not generally extended such revolutionary intellectual developments to analysis of the religious dimensions of contemporary China. Donald MacInnis's book will do much to remedy the lack of information. China studies—and the academic study of religion in general—will become more exciting because of it.

RICHARD MADSEN
University of California, San Diego

Preface

While this book follows an earlier work on the same subject written in 1970-71 *(Religious Policy and Practice in Communist China*; New York: Macmillan, 1972), because of the great changes that have taken place in both religious policy and practice in China since 1979 and the access to information now available, it is much more than an update of that book. Whereas in 1971 the turmoil of the "cultural revolution" had not yet abated, and its leaders, bent on eliminating religion once and for all, had totally suppressed all public religious activities and banned all published writing about religion, in recent years, under the restored policy of freedom of religious belief, revival is evident among all five officially recognized religions, as well as among folk religions and superstitions, and a flood of articles and books on religion has appeared in the Chinese press. Moreover, the country has opened its doors to visitors, including social-science researchers, so that one can now travel freely throughout China visiting temples, monasteries, churches, and mosques, and interview religious persons without hindrance.

Because information on current religious practice was not available in 1970-71, my earlier book was a documentary history, a selection of source materials available in print, most of them translated from the Chinese press, which documented religious policy and practice from the earliest Communist experience in the 1920s through the 1950s and early 1960s. The purpose of the present work, in contrast, is to provide, in Part I, key documents, articles, and press reports describing the present official policy on religion, and, in Part II, to describe the actual religious situation in China since 1979 using firsthand interviews, scholarly studies, speeches and reports by religious leaders, and translations of Chinese press reports and journal articles.

In conducting research for this book I interviewed persons in ten provinces and two autonomous municipalities (Beijing and Shanghai). Religious adherents, both clergy and laypersons, were quite willing to talk, as were scholars engaged in research on religion. Only once was I turned down for an interview, and that was with an official of a provincial Religious Affairs Bureau.

Even so, it was difficult, as is explained in the introduction to Part II, to obtain reliable religious statistics, because, in most cases, not even local clergy know them, and published figures can vary widely, as can be seen in the section on Tibet. Statistics on religion will be available, I was told, when a nationwide survey, part of a priority emphasis on research on religion called for in the current Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development, is completed in three to five years.

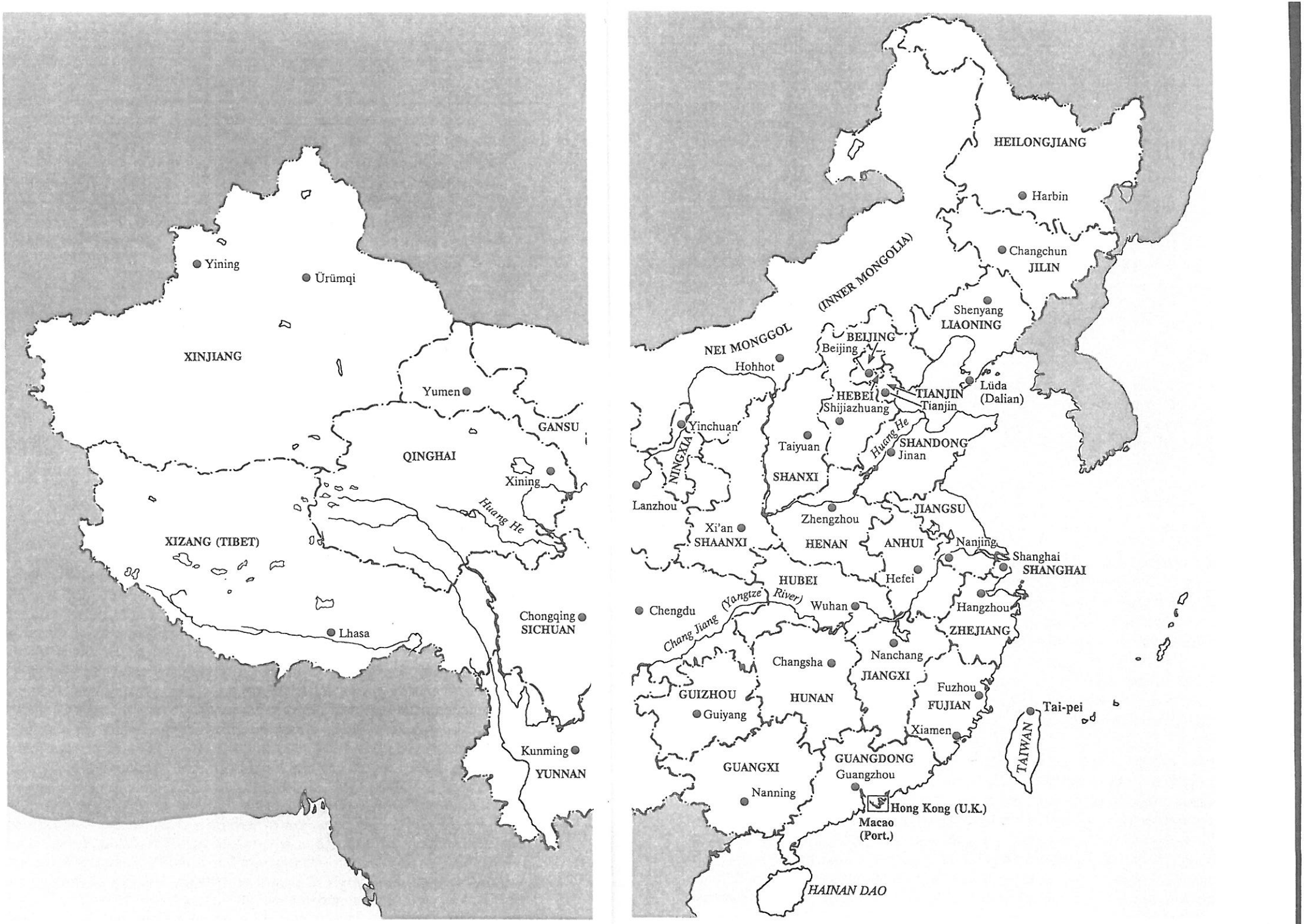
An outside researcher can learn a great deal from interviews, particularly from friends and others who trust him, but there are limitations as well. First, government officials, if they consent to an interview, tend to talk in generalities. Even religious adherents, clergy and laity, know little more than what is happening in their own immediate religious community. The larger picture, including such phenomena as the so-called Catholic underground church, the widespread Protestant house meetings, sectarian tendencies in any of the religions, and isolated examples of illegal or high-handed treatment of believers by local officials would be known, if at all, by hearsay only. For some of them, lingering fears from suffering and repression endured during the "cultural revolution" are inhibiting, I was told; they can't be sure it won't happen again.

As for the written word, the magnitude of published materials on religion since 1979 is seen in a bibliography of 374 articles on religion from Chinese journals and newspapers since 1952, published in *Zongjiaoxue Yanjiu* (Studies & Research on Religion), volume 2, 1986, by the Center for Research on Religion at the University of Sichuan. Dramatically reflecting the changing political climate of those years, 35 of these articles were published in the fourteen-year period, 1952-1966, not one was published between 1966 and 1977, and the remaining 339 appeared between 1978 and 1984.

In addition to the national journals of each religion—*Fa Yin* (Buddhist), *Zhongguo Yisilanjiao* (Islamic), *Tian Feng* (Protestant Christian), and *Zhongguo Tianzhujiao* (Catholic)—the Catholics and Protestants publish research journals, *Tianzhujiao yanjiu ziliao huibian* (Collected Catholic Research Materials) and *Jinling shenxuezhi* (Nanjing Theological Review).

Ten centers or institutes for research on religion which publish books and periodicals have been set up, each with a special focus: Urumchi, Islam; Shenyang, Russian Orthodox Church; Xi'an, Daoism; Kunming, minorities' religions; Shanghai, Christianity; Nanjing, Christianity; Chengdu, Daoism; Lhasa, Tibetan Buddhism; and Beijing, world religions.

Thanks are due to my employers, the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers, for granting a one-year working sabbatical based in Hongkong to complete the necessary research, including forays into China, for writing this book. I'm grateful to numerous friends in China, old and new, who helped arrange interviews and locate published materials; to the staffs of the Universities Service Centre and the Holy Spirit Study Centre in Hongkong; to the Chinese friends who worked with me on translations, Tam Waiyi, Zheng Xi'an, and Yu Linkai; to John Tong and my Maryknoll colleagues in China research in Hongkong, Elmer Wurth, Peter Barry, and John Cioppa; to Janice Wickeri, who provided a translation of "Document 19," and to Melvyn Goldstein, Cynthia Beall, Helen F. Siu, and Stevan Harrell, who shared their recent field research with me; to my colleagues at Maryknoll, New York, Jean-Paul Wiest, Cathy McDonald, and Susan Perry; and to Richard Madsen who read the completed manuscript, offered incisive suggestions, and wrote the foreword. Finally, my thanks to Helen MacInnis for entering bibliographical information on 784 documents into this project's dBase III+ database, an invaluable aid in the final task of organizing and writing.


Yining
Ürümqi
XINJIANG
Yumen
GANSU
QINGHAI
Xining
Huang He
XIZANG (TIBET)
Lhasa
Chongqing
SICHUAN
Kunming
YUNNAN
HEILONGJIANG
Harbin
Changchun
JILIN
(INNER MONGOLIA)
Shenyang
LIAONING
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PART I

Religious Policy since the Cultural Revolution

Introduction

Unlike countries that have neither a state religion nor a bureaucracy for government supervision of religion, China does have a religious policy and a hierarchy of State and Party organs for implementing that policy. The purpose of the Religious Affairs Bureau, set up in 1954 under the State Council with branches at provincial and local levels, is to serve as the government's agent in dealing with religious groups to carry out religious policy. The RAB, through its Party committee, including the director, is also accountable to the Party's United Front Work Department. In a Socialist state like China, the RAB is an essential intermediary between the religious groups and various government agencies, providing assistance in such tasks as evicting illegal occupants of churches, mosques and temples. It is said that the RAB also interferes in the internal affairs, even the finances, of local religious groups, although this may be slackening as the religious bodies strengthen their own administrative systems. Some RAB cadres are said to have an anti-religion bias, viewing all religious believers with suspicion and obstructing, rather than implementing, the policy of freedom of religious belief. Judging by numerous articles in the press since 1979, some of them included in this volume, government and Party officials are trying to educate these recalcitrant cadres.

While the religious rights of every citizen have been written into every PRC constitution since 1954, both the wording and implementation of those rights have varied through the years. From the early 1950s religious bodies and believers suffered increasing restrictions on their freedom to carry on religious activities, until all religions were summarily closed down at the onset of the "cultural revolution" in 1966. Many clergy and lay members were harassed, imprisoned or sent to labor camps, and public religious services were not resumed until 1979, following the Third Plenum of the

Eleventh Party Congress. The new constitution, adopted in 1982, included Article 36 on religious freedom, and "Document 19" [Document 1 in this volume] was circulated by the Party center that same year, inaugurating a new period of religious tolerance that continues to the present. Documents included in Part I indicate that Party and government policymakers recognize the self-defeating nature of attempts to suppress religion.

Part I of this book contains the basic policy documents, statements by State and Party policymakers and religious leaders, excerpts from a textbook designed to explain the official view of religion to young people, and definitions of religion published recently in Chinese encyclopedias, dictionaries, and books on religion. From these we get a clear picture of the official view of religion and religious policy, which is grounded in classical Marxist language and exegesis.

Ideally, a study of religion and religious policy since the "cultural revolution" should be organized under the journalist's "five W's": Who makes and implements policy? Where and when is it made, revised, or rewritten? What, exactly, is it, and how is it actually carried out? Why is it felt necessary to have such a policy, with its concomitant bureaucracy and restrictions on the full freedom to practice and propagate one's own religion in any way one pleases? Regrettably, while information available now provides partial answers to these questions, we can't know the whole story, and must content ourselves with the ample, if incomplete, fund of information in State documents and other Chinese publications, augmented by firsthand observation and interviews.

"Document 19," the most definitive statement on religion and religious policy ever issued by the Chinese Communist Party or government, was circulated internally through Party channels throughout China in 1982 by the Central Committee of the CCP. The entire text, translated from *Selected Documents of the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee of the CCP*, is reprinted here as Document 1. The theoretical framework of the many speeches and essays on religious policy published in the Chinese press since 1982 is based primarily on its positions.

"Document 19" is directed to Party and State cadres at every level to stimulate reflection on past experience, good and bad, and to provide policy guidelines for study so cadres will adopt "correct and effective methods" for carrying out the policy on religion.

Section 1 is a summary of the standard Marxist analysis of the reasons for the emergence, growth, and demise of religion.

The second section describes the five religions of China, noting ways in which the "five characteristics" of religion apply to each of them. Religion is (1) complex, (2) mass-based, (3) long-lasting, and has implications for relations with both (4) ethnic nationalities and (5) the nations of the world. The "five characteristics," which were first suggested in the 1950s by the late premier Zhou Enlai and a well-known religious theoretician,

Li Weihan, appear over and over in theoretical essays on religion and religious policy.

The third section sums up the successes and failures of the Party's work with regard to religious questions. It particularly condemns "leftist errors" (beginning in 1957), especially during the "cultural revolution," when the leftists "totally repudiated the Party's correct religious policy." The basic task now is to properly carry out the religious policy and to bring all religious believers together for the "common goal of building a modernized, powerful Socialist state."

Section 4 sets forth the Party's understanding of what the policy of freedom of religious belief does and does not mean.

The next section presents the problem of "winning over, uniting, and educating [politically] the religious professionals" and of redressing injustices perpetrated against them.

The sixth section calls on Party cadres and others to help all religions recover their places of worship and restore them to normal use, while setting the limitations for religious activities and differentiating between the "administrative control" of the Religious Affairs Bureau and the strictly religious functions of each religious organization.

Section 7 explains the organization, role, and purpose of the patriotic religious organizations, such as the Chinese Buddhist Association.

In the eighth section, the Party and State promise to help in setting up seminaries for the training of young clergy "who fervently love their homeland, support the Party's leadership and the Socialist system, and possess sufficient religious knowledge."

The following section spells out why Party members cannot be religious believers, with special attention to the problems of cadres working among ethnic nationalities belonging to one religion or another.

Section 10 explains the importance of the three world religions, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity, represented in the country, for China's international relations, with a warning to watch out for "hostile religious forces" from abroad infiltrating into China. "The present task is that of developing friendly relationships with foreign religious groups while maintaining our policy of independence."

Finally, "Document 19" closes with a political homily, warning its readers that the "successful handling of the religious question" depends on strengthening the Party's leadership, the work of government organs responsible for religious affairs, and the use of the Marxist viewpoint to carry out scientific research on religious questions.

We have, then, some answers to the "five W's". Who determines religious policy? At the top, the Central Committee of the Party. Who implements the policy? Party and State cadres at various levels, and the Religious Affairs Bureau, with national, provincial, and local offices. Who actually does the theoretical analysis and writes the policy? Theoreticians who "carry out scientific research on religious questions." According to some

sources, the most important of these is the Institute for Study of World Religions in the National Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing.

What is the policy? "Document 19" spells that out in detail. Why is it necessary to clarify and correctly implement this policy? Because the support of all religious citizens is important for the building of a united, strong, and modernized Socialist nation; the "five characteristics" of religion, moreover, demonstrate that the religious question cannot be lightly brushed aside or forcefully suppressed. How will the policy be successfully carried out? Only with the full and informed support of Party and State cadres at every level.

Implementing the Policy on Religion

We are quite clear on what the correct, official policy on religion is. We also know that it is the expressed intention of State and Party authorities to carry out that policy. Overall, great progress has been made in recovering, repairing, and reopening churches, temples, mosques, and monasteries; in restoring normal religious activities; in opening seminaries and training schools for new clergy; in publishing religious scriptures and periodicals; and in other related activities. However, many vandalized religious buildings have not been restored, and squatters still occupy others; religious activities are confined to houses of worship; limits are placed on the number of novice monks and clergy; and religious publications are few when compared to earlier times.

The government has provided large sums of money for the repair of houses of worship and other religious buildings, the replacement of cemeteries destroyed in the 1950s, the repayment of back salaries to wronged clergy, and other assistance in restoring the normal functions of religion, although, as noted above, the implementing of these policies is uneven, depending on local officials.

However, only five religions are singled out for protection under the constitutional guarantee of freedom of religious belief: Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, and Protestant and Catholic Christianity. Other religious sects, including at least two brought into China by outsiders in recent years, have been suppressed and their outside sponsors expelled. Religious sects have been at the center of political uprisings in the past, and this government wants religious activities confined to places of worship, with no direct ties to foreign religious agencies. Moreover, traditional popular religious cults, at one time pervasive throughout the countryside, are not included among the protected religions; but, as is pointed out in Part II, they are once again flourishing in the towns and villages, ignored by local officials.

As has been the case since the early 1950s, there are no foreign missionaries, and no schools, hospitals, or other institutions under religious management, nor are there organizations or activities (such as sabbath schools and youth groups) for young people under eighteen. Religious activities are restricted to the formal places of worship, and radio broadcasting and other forms of public evangelism are forbidden. While meetings of small groups for religious worship in homes are usually permitted, and, particularly in the case of Protestant churches, volunteer lay leaders provide important assistance for the clergy, there have been situations in which house meetings or similar activities have been forcefully stopped by local officials.

"Call for a New Look at an Outdated Religious Policy" [Document 16], a speech by Zhao Puchu, President of the Chinese Buddhist Association, to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in March 1988 speaks directly to such problems. Describing the government's system of management and administration of religious work as "old and outdated" and the laws governing religion as incomplete, he calls for the drafting of a new law on religion. As of this date, that legislation has not been written, although, according to Mr. Zhao, several religious leaders are preparing a draft proposal to present to the lawmakers. "We must . . . turn all religious bodies into true people's organizations," he said, "which are under the leadership of the Party and government, but can independently carry out their work according to their own characteristics . . . . The key point is to protect the proper rights of religious believers and religious bodies, and their temples and churches."

Section I

Official Party and State Documents

Introduction

After thirteen years of total suppression, the policy of freedom of religious belief was restored by action of the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Party Congress in December 1978. Churches, mosques and temples began to reopen the next fall, a trend that gained momentum in 1980 and subsequent years. In 1982 a Party directive on religious policy known as "Document 19" was circulated widely through Party channels. While the actual document never appeared in a public journal, an edited version was published in the official Party journal, *Red Flag*, on 16 June 1982.

In that same year a revision of the national constitution, which included an article defining the policy on religion, was adopted [Document 4]. The publication of the statement by Peng Zhen, vice-chairman of the National Constitution Revision Committee (at the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on April 22, 1982, commenting on Article 36), underscores the importance placed on publicizing its contents at that time:

> Citizens enjoy freedom of religious belief. The revised draft restores the relevant stipulations set out in the 1954 constitution, but more clearly and concretely. In our country, citizens may believe in religion or disbelieve, but politically they have one thing in common, that is, they are all patriotic and support Socialism. . . . The State protects legitimate religious activities, but no one may use religion to carry out counterrevolutionary activities or activities that disrupt public order, harm the health of citizens, or obstruct the educational system of the State . . . [and] no religious affairs may be controlled by any foreign power [NCNA in English, April 18, 1982].

The main difference between the article on religion in the current constitution and the 1979 version is the elimination of the phrase "freedom not to believe in religion and to propagate atheism," a significant liberalization that was brought about by pressure from a group of national religious leaders.

Another action, which for the first time put teeth into the guarantee of freedom of religious belief, was the inclusion of Section 147 in the new

Penal Code, which stipulates a sentence of up to two years in prison for State officials who are convicted of illegally depriving citizens of their right to freedom of religious belief [Document 5]. Article 165 of the same Penal Code provides that persons who "use superstition to spread false rumors and swindle people" must be strictly dealt with and punished as the law provides.

Numerous articles on religion and religious policy appeared in the Chinese press in the early 1980s, stressing both the rights and limitations on freedom of religious practice. One distinction, difficult to clarify, was the difference between religious and superstitious activities: one is protected and the other is not [Document 3]. That problem still perplexes Party and State cadres at local levels, as will be seen in the section on Superstition and Religion: Theoretical Analysis in Part II.

One indication of the importance placed on the new religious policy has been the appearance of hundreds of articles on the topic in the Chinese press after a hiatus of many years. Another has been the assistance given by the government in the recovery, repair, and restoration of churches, mosques, temples, monasteries, and clergy training schools, also widely reported in the press. The celebration of such religious festivals as Christmas, Corban, and the birthday of Buddha or Guanyin are regularly noted in the official press. "Document 19" and two other lengthy articles on religion were included in *Selected Documents of the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee*, published in 1979 [Documents 1, 2, and 3]. Finally, we learn from the introductory chapter of a 1987 book reporting the results of numerous field studies on the religious situation in various localities in China that research on religion has been given top priority in the Sixth Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development: " 'That research on large theoretical and practical questions regarding the establishment of Socialist modernization in China should be particularly strengthened,' and research on religion was placed first in a list of twelve key topics" [Document 23].

Document 1

"Document 19" was first published in Selected Documents of the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Party Congress, 1982.
Translated by Janice Wickeri.

To: all provincial and municipal Party committees; all Party committees of autonomous regions, greater military regions, provincial military regions, field armies, ministries, and commissions within State organs and the general headquarters of the Military Commission of the Central Committee;

all Party committees within the armed forces and within all people's organizations:

The Secretariat of the Central Committee has recently studied the religious question and has drawn up a document entitled The Basic Viewpoint and Policy on the Religious Question during Our Country's Socialist Period. This document sums up in a more systematic way the historical experience of our Party, positive and negative, with regard to the religious question since the founding of the People's Republic, and clarifies the basic viewpoint and policy the Party has taken. Upon receipt of this document, Party committees of all provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions, as well as those of the ministries and commissions of the Central Committee and State organs concerned, should undertake conscientious investigation and discussion of the religious question, and should increase supervision and prompt inspection of the implementation of each item related to this policy.

It is the belief of the Central Committee that following from this summation of the religious question, our Party needs to make further progress in summarizing its experience in all other aspects of its work, as well as of its work in each region and department. It should be affirmed that since the smashing of the "gang of four," and especially since the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee, our Party has achieved significant results from the summing up of its own historical experience. The "Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party Since the Founding of the People's Republic" passed by the Sixth Session of the Eleventh Central Committee is a distillation of this kind of result, marking the completion, in terms of ideological leadership, of the Party's task of restoring order. Viewed from another aspect, however, that is, taking our Party's work on all fronts, all regions and departments, the work of summing up our historical experiences is quite insufficient.

It is the hope of the Central Committee, therefore, that Party committees at all levels, most importantly at the provincial, municipal, and autonomous region levels, will, together with the first-level Party committees and organizations of the Central Committee and ministries and commissions of State organs, concentrate their main efforts within the coming two to three years on doing well the task at hand. They should undertake conscientious investigation of the work in those regions and departments for which they are responsible, systematically summing up their historical experience, positive and negative, shaping this into a set of viewpoints and methods in which theory and practice are intimately combined and which are suitable to conditions in their regions and departments.

It is the belief of the Central Committee that we need only earnestly grasp this key link and expand painstaking efforts in order to achieve new results and effectively raise the ideological and theoretical level of all Party members, who will then adopt correct and effective methods of work and open up a brand-new era as our country goes about the great task of

building Socialism in the remaining twenty years of this century.

Central Committee of the Communist Party of China
31 March, 1982

Document 19: The Basic Viewpoint and Policy on the Religious Question during Our Country's Socialist Period

March 1982

I. Religion as a Historical Phenomenon

Religion is a historical phenomenon pertaining to a definite period in the development of human society. It has its own cycle of emergence, development, and demise. Religious faith and religious sentiment, along with religious ceremonies and organizations consonant with this faith and sentiment, are all products of the history of society. The earliest emergence of the religious mentality reflected the low level of production and the sense of awe toward natural phenomena of primitive peoples. With the evolution of class society, the most profound social roots of the existence and development of religion lay in the following factors: the helplessness of the people in the face of the blind forces alienating and controlling them in this kind of society; the fear and despair of the workers in the face of the enormous misery generated by the oppressive social system; and in the need of the oppressor classes to use religion as an opiate and as an important and vital means in its control of the masses. In Socialist society, the class root of the existence of religion was virtually lost following the elimination of the oppressive system and its oppressor class. However, because the people's consciousness lags behind social realities, old thinking and habits cannot be thoroughly wiped out in a short period. A long process of struggle is required to achieve great increases in production strength, great abundance in material wealth, and a high level of Socialist democracy, along with high levels of development in education, culture, science, and technology. Since we cannot free ourselves from various hardships brought on by serious natural and man-made disasters within a short period of time; since class struggle continues to exist within certain limits; and given the complex international environment, the long-term influence of religion among a part of the people in a Socialist society cannot be avoided. Religion will eventually disappear from human history. But it will disappear naturally only through the long-term development of Socialism and Communism, when all objective requirements are met. All Party members must have a sober-minded recognition of the protracted nature of the religious question under Socialist conditions. Those who think that with the establishment of the Socialist system and with a certain degree of economic and cultural

progress, religion will die out within a short period, are not being realistic. Those who expect to rely on administrative decrees or other coercive measures to wipe out religious thinking and practices with one blow are even further from the basic viewpoint Marxism takes toward the religious question. They are entirely wrong and will do no small harm.

II. The Religions of China

There are many religions in China. Buddhism has a history of nearly 2,000 years in China, Daoism one of over 1,700 years, and Islam over 1,300 years, while Roman Catholicism and Protestantism achieved most of their development following the Opium Wars. As for the numbers of religious adherents, at Liberation there were about 8,000,000 Muslims, while today there are about 10,000,000 (the chief reason for this is growth in population among the ten Islamic minorities). At Liberation there were 2,700,000 Catholics; today there are over 3,000,000. Protestants numbered 700,000 in 1949 and are now at 3,000,000. Buddhism (including Lamaism) numbers almost the entire populations of the ethnic minorities of Tibet, Mongolia, and Liao Ning among its adherents. Among the Han race, Buddhism and Daoism still exercise considerable influence at present. Naturally, out of the total population of our country, and especially among the Han race, which accounts for the largest number of people, there are a considerable number who believe in spirits, but the number of those who actually adhere to a religion is not great. If we compare the number of religious believers at the time of Liberation with the present number overall, we will see that overall there has been somewhat of an increase in absolute numbers, but when compared with the growth of the population there has been a decline.

But in our appraisal of the religious question, we must reckon fully with its definite complex nature. To sum up, we may say that in old China, during the long feudal period and the more than one hundred years of semicolonial, semifeudal society, all religions were manipulated and controlled by the ruling classes, with extremely negative results. Within China, the Buddhist, Daoist, and Islamic leaderships were mainly controlled by the feudal landowners, feudal lords, and reactionary warlords, as well as the bureaucratic capitalistic class. The later foreign colonialist and imperialist forces mainly controlled the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches.

After Liberation there was a thorough transformation of the socioeconomic system and a major reform of the religious system, and so the status of religion in China has already undergone a fundamental change. The contradictions of the religious question now belong primarily to the category of contradictions among the people. The religious question, however, will continue to exist over a long period within certain limits, will continue to have a definite mass nature, to be entangled in many areas with the ethnic question, and to be affected by some class-struggle and complex international factors. This question, therefore, continues to be one of great

significance which we cannot ignore. The question is this: can we handle this religious question properly as we work toward national stability and ethnic unity, as we develop our international relations while resisting the infiltration of hostile forces from abroad, and as we go on constructing a Socialist civilization with both material and spiritual values? This, then, demands that the Party committees on each level must adopt toward the religious question an attitude in accord with what Lenin said, "Be especially alert," "Be very strict," "Think things through thoroughly." To overestimate the seriousness or complexity of the question and so panic, or to ignore the existence and complexity of the actual question and so let matters drift, would be equally wrong.

III. The Party's Handling of the Religious Question since Liberation

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, there have been many twists and turns in the Party's work with regard to the religious question. In general, although there were some major errors, after the founding of New China, and for the seventeen years up to the "cultural revolution," the Party's religious work achieved great results under the direction of the correct guiding principles and policies of the Party Central Committee. We did away with imperialist forces within the churches and promoted the correct policy of independent, self-governed, and autonomous churches, as well as the "Three-Self Movement" (self-propagation, self-administration, and self-support). The Catholic and Protestant churches ceased to be tools of the imperialist aggressors and became independent and autonomous religious enterprises of Chinese believers. We abolished the special privileges and oppressive exploitative system of feudal religion, attacked and exposed those reactionaries and bad elements who hid behind the cloak of religion, and made Buddhists, Daoists, and Muslims break away from the control and manipulation of the reactionary classes. We proclaimed and carried out a policy of freedom of religious belief, enabling the broad masses of religious believers not only to achieve a complete political and economic emancipation alongside each ethnic minority but also enabling them to begin to enjoy the right of freedom of religious belief. We carried out a policy of winning over, uniting with, and educating religious personages, and thus united the broad masses of the patriotic religious personages. We also assisted and supported religious people to seek international friendship and this has had good, positive effects.

Since 1957, however, leftist errors gradually grew up in our religious work and progressed even further in the mid-sixties. During the "cultural revolution" especially, the antirevolutionary Lin Biao-Jiang Qing clique had ulterior motives in making use of these leftist errors, and wantonly trampled upon the scientific theory of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought concerning the religious question. They totally repudiated the Party's correct policy toward religion, in effect since the founding of the People's

Republic. They basically did away with the work the Party had done on the religious question. They forcibly forbade normal religious activities by the mass of religious believers. They treated patriotic religious personages, as well as the mass of ordinary religious believers, as "targets for dictatorship," and fabricated a host of wrongs and injustices which they pinned upon these religious personages. They even misinterpreted some customs and practices of the ethnic minorities as religious superstition, which they then forcibly prohibited. In some places, they even repressed the mass of religious believers, and destroyed ethnic unity. They used violent measures against religion which forced religious movements underground, with the result that they made some headway because of the disorganized state of affairs. A minority of antirevolutionaries and bad elements made use of this situation and, under cover of religious activities, boldly carried out illegal criminal activities, as well as destructive antirevolutionary movements.

After the smashing of Jiang Qing's antirevolutionary clique, and especially since the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Party Central Committee, the correct guiding principle and policy toward the religious question of our Party was restored step by step. In implementing and carrying out our religious policy, we have opened both Buddhist and Daoist temples, as well as churches and religious sites. We have restored the activities of the patriotic religious associations. We have won over, unified, and educated religious personages. We have strengthened the unity between believers and nonbelievers in each ethnic group. We have righted wrongs and have launched a movement for friendly relations internationally among religious believers as well as resisting infiltration and like doings from hostile religious forces from abroad. In all this, we have undertaken a large number of tasks and have obtained remarkable results.

In this new historical period, the Party's and government's basic task in its religious work will be to firmly implement and carry out its policy of freedom of religious belief; to consolidate and expand the patriotic political alliance in each ethnic religious group; to strengthen education in patriotism and Socialism among them, and to bring into play positive elements among them in order to build a modern and powerful Socialist state and complete the great task of unifying the country; and to oppose the hegemonism and strive together to protect and preserve world peace.

In order to implement and carry out the Party's religious policy correctly and comprehensively, the main task now at hand is to oppose "leftist" erroneous tendencies. At the same time, we must be on our guard to forestall and overcome the erroneous tendency to just let things slide along. All Party members, Party committees on all levels, especially those responsible for religious work, must conscientiously sum up and assimilate the historical experience, positive and negative, of the Party in religious work since the founding of the People's Republic. They must make further progress in their understanding and mastery of the objective law governing the

emergence, development, and demise of religion. They should overcome every obstacle and difficulty and resolutely keep the religious policy of the Party on the scientific course laid out for it by Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought.

IV. The Party's Present Policy toward Religion

The basic policy the Party has adopted toward the religious question is that of respect for and protection of the freedom of religious belief. This is a long-term policy, one which must be continually carried out until that future time when religion will itself disappear. What do we mean by freedom of religious belief? We mean that every citizen has the freedom to believe in religion and also the freedom not to believe in religion. S/he has also the freedom to believe in this religion or that religion. Within a particular religion, s/he has the freedom to believe in this sect or that sect. A person who was previously a nonbeliever has the freedom to become a religious believer, and one who has been a religious believer has the freedom to become a nonbeliever. We Communists are atheists and must unremittingly propagate atheism. Yet at the same time we must understand that it will be fruitless and extremely harmful to use simple coercion in dealing with the people's ideological and spiritual questions—and this includes religious questions. We must further understand that at the present historical stage the difference that exists between the mass of believers and nonbelievers in matters of ideology and belief is relatively secondary. If we then one-sidedly emphasize this difference, even to the point of giving it primary importance—for example, by discriminating against and attacking the mass of religious believers, while neglecting and denying that the basic political and economic welfare of the mass of both religious believers and nonbelievers is the same—then we forget that the Party's basic task is to unite all the people (and this includes the broad mass of believers and nonbelievers alike) in order that all may strive to construct a modern, powerful Socialist state. To behave otherwise would only exacerbate the estrangement between the mass of believers and nonbelievers as well as incite and aggravate religious fanaticism, resulting in serious consequences for our Socialist enterprise. Our Party, therefore, bases its policy of freedom of religious belief on the theory formulated by Marxism-Leninism, and it is the only correct policy genuinely consonant with the people's welfare.

Naturally, in the process of implementing and carrying out this policy which emphasizes and guarantees the people's freedom to believe in religion, we must, at the same time, emphasize and guarantee the people's freedom not to believe in religion. These are two indispensable aspects of the same question. Any action which forces a nonbeliever to believe in religion is an infringement of freedom of religious belief, just as is any action which forces a believer not to believe. Both are grave errors and not to be tolerated. The guarantee of freedom of religious belief, far from being

a hindrance, is a means of strengthening the Party's efforts to disseminate scientific education as well as to strengthen its propaganda against superstition. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that the crux of the policy of freedom of religious belief is to make the question of religious belief a private matter, one of individual free choice for citizens.

The political power in a Socialist state can in no way be used to promote any one religion, nor can it be used to forbid any one religion, as long as it is only a question of normal religious beliefs and practices. At the same time, religion will not be permitted to meddle in the administrative or juridical affairs of state, nor to intervene in the schools or public education. It will be absolutely forbidden to force anyone, particularly people under eighteen years of age, to become a member of a church, to become a Buddhist monk or nun, or to go to temples or monasteries to study Buddhist scripture. Religion will not be permitted to recover in any way those special feudal privileges which have been abolished or to return to an exploitative and oppressive religious system. Nor will religion be permitted to make use in any way of religious pretexts to oppose the Party's leadership or the Socialist system, or to destroy national or ethnic unity.

To sum up, the basic starting point and firm foundation for our handling of the religious question and for the implementation of our policy and freedom of religious belief lies in our desire to unite the mass of believers and nonbelievers and enable them to center all their will and strength on the common goal of building a modernized, powerful Socialist state. Any action or speech that deviates in the least from this basic line is completely erroneous, and must be firmly resisted and opposed by both Party and people.

V. The Party's Work with Religious Professionals

To win over, unite and educate persons in religious circles is primarily the task of religious professionals. It is also the essence of the Party's religious work and most important condition and prerequisite for the implementation of the Party's religious policy. Throughout the country at present, there are about 59,000 professional religious, with affiliation as follows:

Buddhist monks and nuns, including lamas about 27,000
Daoist priests and nuns over 2,600
Muslims about 20,000
Catholics about 3,400
Protestants about 5,900

Due to many years of natural attrition, the present number of professional religious has greatly decreased when compared to the number at Liberation. Their class origin, experience, beliefs, and political ideology are quite diverse, but, in brief, we can say that by far the great majority of them are patriotic, law-abiding, and support the Socialist system. Only a very

small minority oppose the constitution and Socialism to the extent of colluding with foreign antirevolutionaries and other bad elements. Many of these professional religious not only maintain intimate spiritual ties with the mass of religious believers, but have an important influence over the spiritual life of the masses which should not be ignored. Moreover, as they carry out their more formal religious duties, they also perform work which serves the people in many ways and which benefits society. For example, they safeguard Buddhist and Daoist temples and churches and protect historical religious relics, engage in agriculture and afforestation, and carry on the academic study of religion, and so on. Therefore, we must definitely give sufficient attention to all persons in religious circles, but primarily professional religious, uniting them, caring for them, and helping them to make progress. We must unrelentingly yet patiently forward their education in patriotism, upholding the law, supporting Socialism, and upholding national and ethnic unity. In the case of Catholics and Protestants, we must strengthen their education in independence and self-government of their churches.

We must make appropriate arrangements for the livelihood of these professional religious and conscientiously carry out the pertinent policies. This is especially true regarding the well-known public figures and intellectuals among them, for whom we should speedily implement our policy to supply them with appropriate remuneration. We must pay very close attention to and reexamine those injustices perpetrated against persons in religious circles and among the mass of religious believers which have not yet been redressed. These must be redressed in accordance with the facts, especially those more serious ones which may have grave consequences. These must be firmly grasped and speedily resolved.

We must foster a large number of fervent patriots in every religion who accept the leadership of the Party and government, firmly support the Socialist path, and safeguard national and ethnic unity. They should be learned in religious matters and capable of keeping close links with the representatives of the religious masses. Furthermore, we must organize religious persons according to their differing situations and capabilities, respectively, to take part in productive labor, serving society, and in the scholarly study of religion. They should also take part in patriotic political movements and friendly international exchanges. All this is done in order to mobilize the positive elements among religious circles to serve the Socialist modernization enterprise.

With regard to those older religious professionals whose term of imprisonment has been completed or whose term at labor reform has ended, as well as those who have not yet been approved to engage in professional religious activities by the religious organizations, each case must be dealt with on its own merits, according to the principle of differentiation. Those who prove to be politically reliable, patriotic, and law-abiding, and who are well-versed in religious matters, can, upon examination and approval by

the patriotic religious organizations, be allowed to perform religious duties. As for the rest, they should be provided with alternative means to earn a living.

Marxism is incompatible with any theistic worldview. But in terms of political action, Marxists and patriotic believers can, indeed must, form a united front in the common effort for Socialist modernization. This united front should become an important constitutive element of the broad patriotic front led by the Party during the Socialist period.

VI. Restoration and Administration of Churches, Temples and Other Religious Buildings

To make equitable arrangements for places of worship is a means of implementing the Party's religious policy, and is also an important material condition for the normalization of religious activity. At the time of Liberation, there were about 100,000 places of worship, while at the present time there are about 30,000. This figure includes Buddhist and Daoist temples, churches, and meeting places of simple construction as well as places of worship built by religious believers themselves. The present problem is that we must adopt effective measures, based on each situation, to make equitable arrangements for places of worship. We must systematically and methodically restore a number of temples and churches in large and midsize cities, at famous historical sites, and in areas in which there is a concentration of religious believers, especially ethnic minority areas. Famous temples and churches of cultural and historical value which enjoy national and international prestige must be progressively restored as far as is possible, according to conditions in each place. But in those places where believers are few and have little influence or where churches and temples have already been demolished, we must work out measures which suit the conditions and do things simply and thriftily according to the principle of what will benefit production and the people's livelihood. After consultation with the mass of religious believers and important persons in religious circles, and with the voluntary support of the believers, we should set aside rather simply constructed places of worship. In the process of restoring places of worship, we must not use the financial resources of either country or collective, outside of government appropriations. And we must particularly guard against the indiscriminate building and repairing of temples in rural villages.

We should also direct the voluntary contributions of the mass of religious believers for construction work, so as to build as little as possible. Much less should we go in for large-scale construction lest we consume large sums of money, materials, and manpower and thus obstruct the building up of material and spiritual Socialist civilization. Of course we should not demolish existing structures, but fully consult with believers and important

persons in religious circles concerning them in order to reach a satisfactory solution based on the actual situation.

All normal religious activities held in places so designated, as well as those which, according to religious custom, take place in believers' homes—Buddha worship, scripture chanting, incense burning, prayer, Bible study, preaching, Mass, baptism, initiation as a monk or nun, fasting, celebration of religious festivals, extreme unction, funerals, etc.—are all to be conducted by religious organizations and religious believers themselves, under protection of law and without interference from any quarter. With approval of the responsible government department, temples and churches can sell a limited quantity of religious reading matter, religious articles, and works of religious art. As for Protestants gathering in homes for worship services, in principle this should not be allowed, yet this prohibition should not be too rigidly enforced. Rather, persons in the patriotic religious organizations should make special efforts to persuade the mass of religious believers to make more appropriate arrangements.

All places of worship are under the administrative control of the Bureau of Religious Affairs, but the religious organizations and professional religious themselves are responsible for their management. Religious organizations should arrange the scope, frequency, and time of religious services, avoiding interference with the social order and the times set aside for production and labor. No one should go to places of worship to carry on atheist propaganda, nor to incite arguments among the believing masses over the existence of God. In like manner, no religious organization or believer should propagate or preach religion outside places designated for religious services, nor propagate theism, nor hand out religious tracts or other religious reading matter which has not been approved for publication by the responsible government department. In order to ensure further normalization of religious activities, the government should hereafter, in accordance with due process of law, consult fully with representatives from religious circles in order to draw up feasible religious legislation that can be carried out in practice.

Major temples and churches famous for their scenic beauty are not only places of worship, but are also cultural facilities of important historical value. Responsible religious organizations and professional religious should be charged with making painstaking efforts to safeguard them by seeing that these monuments receive good care, that the buildings are kept in good repair, and the environment fully protected so that the surroundings are clean, peaceful, and quiet, suitable for tourism. Under the direction of the responsible government department and religious organizations, the income derived from alms and donations received by these temples and churches can be used mainly for maintenance. A part of this income can even be used as an incentive and reward for professional religious in charge of such places who have been outstanding in this regard.

VII. The Patriotic Religious Organizations

To give full play to the function of the patriotic religious organizations is to implement the Party's religious policy and is an important organizational guarantee for the normalization of religious activities. There are a total of eight national patriotic religious organizations, namely: the Chinese Buddhist Association, the Chinese Daoist Association, the Chinese Islamic Association, the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, the Chinese Catholic Religious Affairs Committee, the Chinese Catholic Bishops' Conference, the Chinese Protestant "Three-Self" Patriotic Movement, and the China Christian Council. Besides these, there are a number of social groups and local organizations having a religious character. The basic task of these patriotic religious organizations is to assist the Party and the government to implement the policy of freedom of religious belief, to help the broad mass of religious believers and persons in religious circles to continually raise their patriotic and socialist consciousness, to represent the lawful rights and interests of religious circles, to organize normal religious activities, and to manage religious affairs well. All patriotic religious organizations should follow the Party's and government's leadership. Party and government cadres in turn should become adept in supporting and helping religious organizations to solve their own problems. They should not monopolize or do things these organizations should do themselves. Only in this way can we fully develop the positive characteristics of these organizations and allow them to play their proper role and enable them, within constitutional and lawful limits, to voluntarily perform useful work. Thus they can truly become religious groups with a positive influence, and can act as bridges for the Party's and government's work of winning over, uniting with, and educating persons in religious circles.

Furthermore, in order to enable each religion to meet expenses under a program of self-support and self-management, we must conscientiously carry out the policy stipulations governing income from house and property rentals. As for the contributions and donations made by believers, there will be no need to interfere as long as they are freely offered and small in quantity. But professional religious should be convinced that private possession of religious income from temples and churches is not allowed and that any action that forces contributions to be made is forbidden.

VIII. Educating a New Generation of Clergy

The training and education of the younger generation of patriotic religious personnel in a planned way will have decisive significance for the future image of our country's religious organizations. We should not only continue to win over, unite with, and educate the present generation of persons in religious circles, but we should also help each religious organi-

zation set up seminaries to train well new religious personnel. The task of these seminaries is to create a contingent of young religious personnel who, in terms of politics, fervently love their homeland and support the Party's leadership and the Socialist system and who possess sufficient religious knowledge. These seminaries should hold entrance examinations and admit upright, patriotic young people who wish to devote themselves seriously to this religious profession and who have reached a certain level of cultural development. They should not forcibly enroll persons unwilling to undertake this profession or lacking in the necessary cultural educational foundation. Those young professional religious personnel who prove unfitted for this profession should be transferred elsewhere.

All these young professional religious should continually heighten their patriotic and Socialist consciousness and make efforts to improve their cultural level and their religious knowledge. They should loyally implement the Party's religious policy. They should show respect to all those upright, patriotic professional religious of the older generation, and conscientiously study and imitate their good qualities. These older and upright patriotic religious professionals should, in turn, cherish these younger patriotic professional religious. In this way the younger ones will become integrated into the patriotic progressive elements of the religious world, and, under the leadership of the Party, will become the mainstay ensuring that religious organizations follow the correct direction in their activities.

IX. Communist Party Members and Religion; Relations with Religious Ethnic Minorities

The fact that our Party proclaims and implements a policy of freedom of religious belief does not, of course, mean that Communist Party members can freely believe in religion. The policy of freedom of religious belief is directed toward the citizens of our country; it is not applicable to Party members. Unlike the average citizen, the Party member belongs to a Marxist political party, and there can be no doubt at all that s/he must be an atheist and not a theist. Our Party has clearly stated on many previous occasions: A Communist Party member cannot be a religious believer; s/he cannot take part in religious activities. Any member who persists in going against this proscription should be told to leave the Party. This proscription is altogether correct, and, as far as the Party as a whole is concerned, its implementation should be insisted on in the future. The present question concerns the implementation of this proscription among those ethnic minorities whose people are basically all religious believers. Here, implementation must follow the actual circumstances, and so make use of proper measures, not oversimplifying matters.

We must realize that although a considerable number of Communist Party members among these ethnic minorities loyally implement the Party line, do positive work for the Party, and obey its discipline, they cannot

completely shake off all religious influence. Party organizations should in no way simply cast these Party members aside, but should patiently and meticulously carry out ideological work while taking measures to develop more fully their positive political activism, helping them gradually to acquire a dialectical and historical materialist worldview and to gradually shake off the fetters of a religious ideology. Obviously, as we go about expanding our membership, we must take great care not to be rushed into recruiting devout religious believers or those with strong religious sentiments. As for that very small number of Party members who have shown extreme perversity by not only believing in religion but also joining with those who fan religious fanaticism, even to the point of using this fanaticism to oppose the four basic principles, attack the Party line and its aim and policy, and destroy national integrity and ethnic unity, persons such as these have already completely departed from the standpoint fundamental to Party members. If, after having undergone education and criticism, they continue to persist in their erroneous position or feign compliance, then we must resolutely remove them from the Party. If they have committed any criminal acts, then these must be investigated to fix responsibility before the law.

Even though those Party members who live at the grass-roots level among those ethnic minorities where the majority believe in religion have already freed themselves from religious belief, yet if they were to refuse to take part in any of those traditional marriage or funeral ceremonies or mass festivals which have some religious significance, then they would find themselves cut off and isolated from the masses. Therefore, in applying those precepts which forbid Party members who live among these ethnic minorities from joining in religious activities, we must act according to concrete circumstances, according to the principle of differentiation in order to allow Party members to continue to maintain close links with the masses. Although many of the traditional marriage and funeral ceremonies and mass festivals among these ethnic minorities have a religious tradition and significance, they have already essentially become merely a part of ethnic custom and tradition. So long as our comrades, especially those living at the grass-roots level, mark clearly the line between ideology and religious belief, then they can show appropriate respect to and compliance with these ethnic customs and traditions in their daily lives. Of course, this does not mean that those customs and traditions which prove harmful to production or to the physical and mental health of the masses should not be appropriately reformed in accordance with the desire of the majority of the people. But to lump these ethnic customs and traditions together with religious activities is not right and will be harmful to ethnic unity and to the correct handling of the religious question.

All Party members must come to the profound realization that our country is a Socialist state made up of many ethnic minorities. Each minority and each religion is differently situated with regard to this question of the relationship between religion and the ethnic minorities. There are some

ethnic minorities in which nearly all the people believe in one particular religion, Islam or Lamaism, for example. Among these peoples, the question of religion and ethnicity is frequently intertwined. But within the Han race, there is basically no relationship between ethnic background and Buddhism, Daoism, Catholicism, or Protestantism. Therefore, we must become adept in distinguishing very concretely the particular situation of each ethnic group and of each religion, and in sizing up the differences and relationships between ethnicity and religion, that we may proceed correctly in our handling of them. We must certainly be vigilant and oppose any use of religious fanaticism to divide our people and any words or actions which damage the unity among our ethnic groups. If our Party cannot with clear mind and firm step master this particular question in the present great struggle as we strive to lead such a great nation of so many ethnic groups as ours forward to become a modern Socialist state, then we shall not be able with any success to unite our peoples to advance together toward this goal.

X. *Criminal and Counter-Revolutionary Activities under the Cover of Religion*

The resolute protection of all normal religious activities suggests, at the same time, a determined crackdown on all criminal and antirevolutionary activities which hide behind the facade of religion, which includes all superstitious practices which fall outside the scope of religion and are injurious to the national welfare as well as to the life and property of the people. All antirevolutionary or other criminal elements who hide behind the facade of religion will be severely punished according to the law. Former professional religious, released upon completion of their term of imprisonment, who return to criminal activities will be punished again in accordance with the law. All banned reactionary secret societies, sorcerers, and witches, without exception, are forbidden to resume their activities. All those who spread fallacies to deceive and who cheat people of their money will, without exception, be severely punished according to the law. Party cadres who profit by these illegal activities will be dealt with all the more severely. Finally, all who make their living by phrenology, fortune telling, and geomancy should be educated, admonished, and helped to earn their living through their own labor and not to engage again in these superstitious practices which only deceive people. Should they not obey, then they should be dealt with according to the law.

In dealing according to the law with all antirevolutionary and other criminal elements who lurk within religious ranks, Party committees on each level and pertinent government departments must pay very close attention to cultivating public opinion. They should make use of irrefutable facts to fully expose the way in which these bad elements use religion to further their destructive activities. Furthermore, they should take care to clearly

delineate the line dividing normal religious activities from criminal ones, pointing out that cracking down on criminal activities is in no way to attack, but is rather to protect, normal religious activities. Only then can we successfully win over, unite with, and educate the broad mass of religious believers and bring about the normalization of religious activities.

XI. *The International Relations of China's Religions*

Buddhism, Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism, which occupy a very important place among our national religions, are at the same time ranked among the major world religions, and all exercise extensive influence in their societies. Catholicism and Protestantism are widespread in Europe, North America, and Latin America, and other places. Buddhism is strong in Japan and Southeast Asia, while Islam holds sway in several dozen countries in Asia and Africa. Some of these religions are esteemed as state religions in a number of countries. At the present time, contacts with international religious groups are increasing, along with the expansion of our country's other international contacts, a situation which has important significance for extending our country's political influence. But at the same time there are reactionary religious groups abroad, especially the imperialistic ones such as the Vatican and Protestant foreign-mission societies, who strive to use all possible occasions to carry on their efforts at infiltration "to return to the China mainland." Our policy is to actively develop friendly international religious contacts, but also to firmly resist infiltration by hostile foreign religious forces.

According to this policy of the Party, religious persons within our country can, and even should, engage in mutual visits and friendly contacts with religious persons abroad as well as develop academic and cultural exchanges in the religious field. But in all these various contacts, they must firmly adhere to the principle of an independent, self-governing church, and resolutely resist the designs of all reactionary religious forces from abroad who desire to once again gain control over religion in our country. They must determinedly refuse any meddling or interfering in Chinese religious affairs by foreign churches or religious personages, nor must they permit any foreign religious organization (and this includes all groups and their attendant organizations) to use any means to enter our country for missionary work or to secretly introduce and distribute religious literature on a large scale.

All religious organizations and individuals must be educated not to make use of any means whatsoever to solicit funds from foreign church organizations, and religious persons and groups in our country as well as other groups and individuals must refuse any subsidy or funds offered by foreign church organizations for religious purposes. As for donations or offerings given in accordance with religious custom by foreign believers, overseas Chinese, or compatriots from Hongkong and Macao to temples and

churches within our territory, these may be accepted. But if it is a question of large contributions or offerings, permission must be sought from the provincial, urban, or autonomous-area governments or from the central government department responsible for these matters before any religious body can accept them on its own, even though it can be established that the donor acts purely out of religious fervor with no strings attached.

We must be vigilant and pay close attention to hostile religious forces from abroad who set up underground churches and other illegal organizations. We must act resolutely to attack those organizations that carry out destructive espionage under the guise of religion. Of course, in doing so, we must not act rashly, but rather investigate thoroughly, have irrefutable evidence at hand, choose the right moment, and execute the case in accordance with lawful procedures.

The new task we now face is that of developing friendly relationships with foreign religious groups while maintaining our policy of independence. The correct guiding principles and policies of the central government and the Party provide the essential basis for doing this type of work well. We should handle the domestic religious question realistically and effectively, strengthen our study of the history of world religion and its present situation, and make efforts to train talented people able to engage in international religious activities. Facts have proven over and over again that if we handle the domestic situation well, then all hostile religious forces from abroad will have little or no opportunity to exploit the situation to their own advantage. Then the international contacts undertaken by religious groups will make smoother and sounder progress and the positive function they should have will be given full play.

XII. The Role of the Party and State Organs in Handling the Religious Question

The basic guarantee for the successful handling of the religious question is the strengthening of the Party's leadership. The Party's religious work is an important constituent of the Party's united front and of its work among the masses since it touches upon various aspects of social life. This demands that Party committees on each level must vigorously direct and organize all relevant departments, which include the United Front Department, the Bureau of Religious Affairs, the Bureau of National Minorities, the Department for Politics and Law, the Departments of Propaganda, Culture, Education, Science and Technology, and Health, as well as the Labor Unions, the Youth League, the Women's Federation, and all other mass organizations, in order to unify ideology, knowledge, and policy. The Departments must each take responsibility for their own work, but act in close coordination and take a realistic grasp of this important task in order to conscientiously and unremittingly carry it through to a successful conclusion.

We must strengthen the government organs responsible for religious affairs, to enable all cadres who give themselves to this particular work to study the Marxist theory of religion in a systematic way, to thoroughly understand the Party's fundamental viewpoint and policy on the religious question, to maintain close relationships with the mass of religious believers, and to consult on equal terms with persons in religious circles in order to cooperate and work together.

An important constituent of the Party's theoretical work on religion is the use of the Marxist viewpoint and method to carry out scientific research on the religious question. An important task for the Party on the propaganda front is the use of Marxist philosophy to criticize idealism (which includes theism), and to educate the masses, especially the broad mass of young people, in a dialectical and historical materialist and scientific worldview. To do this, we must strengthen our propaganda in scientific and cultural knowledge as these relate to an understanding of natural phenomena, the evolution of society, and of human life, with its old age, sickness, death, and ill and good fortune. An indispensable aspect of the Party's theoretical foundation is the establishment of theoretical research teams armed with Marxist ideology for the study of religious theory which would strive to set up organizations for religious research and make use of related university disciplines. Of course, when we publish articles in newspapers and magazines on the religious question, we should adopt a prudent attitude so as not to violate the present policy nor to offend the religious sensibilities of the mass of believers. Those in academic circles should respect the religious mentality of those in religious circles, whereas those in religious circles should also respect the research and propaganda activities carried on by academia in its Marxist interpretation of religion.

The central authorities of Party and State emphasize once again that all Party members must clearly understand that the Party's religious policy is not just a temporary expedient, but a decisive strategy based on the scientific theoretical foundation of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, which takes as its goal the national unification of the people for the common task of building a powerful, modernized Socialist state. Under Socialism, the only correct fundamental way to solve the religious question lies precisely in safeguarding the freedom of religious belief. Only after the gradual development of the Socialist, economic, cultural, scientific, and technological enterprise and of a Socialist civilization with its own material and spiritual values, will the type of society and level of awareness that gave rise to the existence of religion gradually disappear. Such a great enterprise naturally cannot be accomplished within a short period of time, nor even within one, two, or three generations. Only after a long period of history, after many generations have passed, and after the combined struggle of the broad masses of both believers and nonbelievers will this come about. At that time, the Chinese people, on Chinese soil, will have thoroughly rid themselves of all impoverishment, ignorance, and spiritual emp-

tiness, and will have become a highly developed civilization of material and spiritual values, able to takes its place in the front ranks of mankind in the glorious world. At that time, the vast majority of our citizens will be able to deal with the world and our fellowmen from a conscious scientific viewpoint, and no longer have any need for recourse to an illusory world of gods to seek spiritual solace. This is precisely what Marx and Engels have predicted—that there will be an age when people will have freed themselves from all alienating forces controlling the world and will have come to the stage when they will consciously plan and control the whole of social life. This is also what Comrade Mao Zedong meant when he said that the people, relying on themselves alone, will create a new age both for themselves and for the world. Only when we enter this new age will all that shows a religious face in the present world finally disappear. Therefore, each of us Party members, from generation to generation, must put forth all our best efforts in the struggle to bring about this brilliant future.

Document 2

Fully Implement the Policy of Religious Freedom

From Selected Documents of the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Party Congress, 1979. *First published in* Renmin Ribao (*People's Daily*), *17 October 1979. Translated by Zheng Xi'an and Donald MacInnis.*

The policy of religious freedom is the basic and long-standing policy of our nation and Party for dealing with religious questions. The constitutions adopted by each of the National People's Congresses since the founding of the People's Republic of China have stipulated that citizens should enjoy freedom of religious belief. That provision legally guarantees freedom of religious belief for each citizen, and at the same time sets forth the law by which we deal with religious questions. In the days when Lin Biao and the "Gang of Four" ran rampant, this policy of the Party was seriously violated and the rights of citizens regarding freedom of religious belief were rudely trampled. Today, a situation of stability and unity has emerged all over China. People of all [ethnic] nationalities are engaged in the new Long March toward the four modernizations, and to correctly understand and carry out our Party's policy for religious freedom in an all-around way is of vital importance for the task of uniting the broad masses of believers and patriots in religious circles, and for mobilizing the masses to make full contribution to the four modernizations.

I

The main religions of the world, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, have long histories in China. A considerable number of people are religious believers, particularly among the peoples of the minority nationalities. Religion still exercises a rather strong influence upon these people, and the influence of religion is quite widespread in the world as well.

Our Party has always paid great attention to the issue of religion. In the period of new democratic revolution Comrade Mao Zedong time and again expounded on Marxist-Leninist religious theories, and our Party set up a correct line and a series of concrete policies to handle religious questions.

After the Liberation of our entire country, the Party's policy on freedom of religious belief was written into the program of the CPPCC and the constitution of the People's Republic of China, and religious belief has been respected by the state and protected by law. The people's governments at every level have done a great deal of work, earnestly carrying out the policy of freedom of religious belief. The broad masses of religious believers, together with all the people of China, have made contributions on various fronts to the Socialist cause, securing political liberation for themselves and becoming their own masters in economic affairs. Chairman Mao, Premier Zhou Enlai, Committee Chairman Zhu and other State leaders have granted many interviews to people from religious circles, giving them important instructions, encouraging them to oppose imperialism and love their country, and to make their contributions to the Socialist motherland. According to the wishes of the broad masses of religious believers, each of the [major] religions in our country, with the help of the government, has established its own religious or patriotic organizations, has launched powerful patriotic anti-imperialism movements, has changed the situation of Chinese churches formerly under the control of exploiting classes at home and abroad, has abolished the system of feudal privileges and exploitation in religious circles, and has achieved independent and democratic management of their religious affairs.

Religious leaders have not only done a great deal of work in helping the government implement the policy of freedom of religious belief, but have also made great progress in their own political thinking. Finally, the revolutionary line of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party has played a dominant role in the achievements accomplished in religious work.

Nevertheless, Lin Biao and the "gang of four" have, in recent years, seriously violated the policy of freedom of religious belief. They recklessly trampled on the religious theories of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, have violated the religious policy, stopped religious activities, and even claimed that "religion no longer exists," and that "religion has disappeared into the museum of history." They rudely interfered with people's

religious beliefs, closed and tore down churches and temples, forcefully prohibited the normal activities of religious believers, and tried to wipe out religion by administrative decree. They took enemies for friends and friends for enemies; they confused the two contradictions [antagonistic and nonantagonistic] which are, in fact, of different natures; they called patriots among the religious leaders and believers "monsters and demons" and "objects of dictatorship" and denounced them with cruel accusations. Categorizing them as counterrevolutionaries, they dealt them merciless blows, setting up a great many unjust, fake, and erroneous cases based on fabricated charges.

They broke up the unity of the minority nationalities by forcefully prohibiting the practice of some of their customs, calling them superstitions. They committed outrages of many kinds against religions, violating the Socialist legal system, wrecking the Party's reputation for being practical and realistic, damaging relations between the Party and the broad masses, breaking up the [professional] religious workers, creating disorder among class groupings, dampening the Socialist enthusiasm of numerous religious believers, and seriously affecting production.

Meanwhile, one group of people, taking advantage of the chaos wrought by Lin Biao and the "gang of four," made money for themselves by exploiting the people through illegal superstitious activities playing on the religious sentiments and inflicting personal losses on the masses. These are the people who provided the social foundation for the activities of Lin Biao and the "gang of four," and some of them also were part of the "fight, smash, and rob" gangs.

Since the smashing of the "gang of four," the policy of freedom of religious belief has been restored. This is welcomed by the broad masses of the people. However, up to this very day, the extreme Leftist line of Lin Biao and the "gang of four" still has strong influence over some government cadres in some places. It will be a longtime task to wipe out these widespread pernicious effects.

II

Lin Biao and the "gang of four" violated the religious policy, putting forth the extreme leftist slogan "Wipe out religion," which had disastrous political effects and is anti-Marxist in theory.

Marxists do not believe in religion. They hold that religion is idealism, diametrically opposed to materialism and science. But, on the other hand, Marxism has always held that religion is the product of history, with its own objective laws of birth, growth, and disappearance. Only when the cognitive and social sources which bring about the birth and growth of religion diminish will religion finally wither away. Meanwhile, it should be understood that religious belief is an ideological matter, and that the great majority of religious believers are laboring people. Their different beliefs do not interfere with their economic contributions or hinder their political unity.

As Lenin pointed out in *Socialism and Religion*, "Unity in this revolutionary struggle of the oppressed class for the creation of a paradise on earth is more important to us than united views among the proletariat about paradise in heaven." The basic way to solve the problem of religion can only be to unite with the broad masses of the people, including the religious believers, to completely wipe out exploitation, to develop a high level of science and technology, to significantly raise the level of the people's material and cultural life and ideological consciousness, and thus to gradually eliminate the sources by which religion comes into being and grows. Historical experience has proved that this is the only correct way to deal with the religious question and to unite with the broad masses of people so that they may take part in Socialist revolution and social construction.

With regard to Article 36 of the national constitution, some people speak only about the freedom not to believe in religion but do not speak about, or dare to speak about, the freedom of religious belief. They obviously hold a partial view. Some comrades are afraid of being labeled "Right deviationists" or "capitulationists" if they advocate freedom of religious belief. This shows that the widespread pernicious influence of Lin Biao and the "gang of four" has not been completely wiped out. The correct explanation of Article 36 of the constitution should be: To believe or not believe in religion is a personal affair of each individual; each citizen has freedom to believe in religion as well as freedom not to believe in religion; religious believers will not be discriminated against. All religions are politically equal; there is no dominant religion, and none is allowed.

Other people think that freedom of religious belief means freedom to believe in the mind and heart, but that there is neither need nor permission for outward expression of that belief. This is also wrong. Since religious belief is legally permitted, then certain religious activities (such as reading of scriptures, public worship, observing religious festivals, etc.) and religious organizations and systems should be allowed. As long as these activities do not interfere with production and social order they should be permitted. They should also be allowed, in accordance with practical situations, to have places in which to carry on their religious activities, for that is their legal right.

Article 36 of our constitution also stipulates the "freedom to propagate atheism." This does not mean that the propagation of theism is prohibited. Comrade Mao Zedong said, "We allow various opinions among the people; that is, there is freedom to criticize, to express different views, and to advocate theism or atheism (i.e., materialism)." Therefore, religious professionals should be permitted to preach religious doctrines in places for religious activities such as churches and temples. Atheistic propaganda should not be carried on in churches, temples, and places for religious services; it is even more improper to force others to accept atheism by harsh and

simplistic methods. In this way we can avoid the useless disputes between believers and nonbelievers which affect unity.

While citizens enjoy religious freedom, they must, at the same time, conscientiously support the united leadership of the people's government, the independence and unity of their motherland, and the policies that reflect the will of the people which safeguard the normal order in their work, production, and life. Any act that uses religious superstitition to upset stability, unity, and the four modernizations is wrong and cannot be permitted. Article 147 in our newly published criminal law stipulates that "state functionaries who illegally deprive citizens of their religious freedom and drastically encroach on the customs of the minority nationalities will be sentenced to imprisonment or held in custody for up to two years." Article 165 stipulates that "Sorcerers, witches, and those who spread rumors or swindle people of their money or property are to be imprisoned, held in custody, or kept under surveillance for up to two years; for serious cases, the sentence will be imprisonment for two to seven years."

This makes it clear that we must correctly and comprehensively understand and exercise the democratic rights of freedom of religious belief, and must educate those who distort the religious policy, using superstitious practices in violation of the law, jeopardizing social order or production. We must check their activities and, for serious cases, punish them in accordance with the law.

III

To carry out the Party's policy of freedom of religious belief and to properly deal with this question, we should, at the present time, understand the following points:

1. We must be fully aware of the characteristics of religion, that is: its long-standing nature, its mass nature, its nationalities [ethnic] nature, and its international and complex natures (for short, its five characteristics). The religious question can never be solved by means of a few political movements or administrative decrees. We can rely only on persuasion and education to deal with ideological issues, not mandatory decrees, only the democratic method, not force or dictatorship. To do otherwise will not only fail to solve such questions, but can be very harmful.

2. We must strictly distinguish between the two kinds of contradictions [antagonistic and nonantagonistic]. Generally speaking, the religious question is a problem among the people, an ideological problem. There are few counterrevolutionaries now using the guise of religion. We must draw a clear line of distinction between political problems and those of religious belief, as well as the line between general political problems and problems between the enemy and ourselves. We must not politically discriminate against religious believers. Nonbelievers and believers are politically equal. Lenin pointed out long ago that "there should be no differentiation of rights among the citizens, and any reference to a citizen's religious belief should be completely expunged from formal [state] documents."

To use religion to carry out sabotage is not a question of religion, but a question of violating the law. We must keep sober-minded on this question. The few evildoers and counter-revolutionaries who use religion always fear the unity of the masses of the people and the implementation of religious policy. In their anti-Socialist aims, they provoke religious hostility. We must not relax our vigilance. As long as we implement the policy of freedom of religious belief, respect the proper religious activities of the believers, and strengthen the administration of religious activities, we can make it very difficult for counterrevolutionaries and evildoers to hide themselves among the masses of people, creating disturbances and sabotage. We can unite with the people to strike blows at the enemy and consolidate the proletarian dictatorship in our country.

3. Religions in our country, particularly Islam and Lamaism, have considerable influence among the minority nationalities. Nationality and religion are of two different categories, but they overlap. We must pay sufficient attention to these two points. It is absolutely forbidden to uphold feudal privileges in order to solve nationalities problems; nor should we regard nationalities problems as religious problems and handle them in the same way.

4. Patriots among religious circles are a component of the united revolutionary front of our country. It was totally correct for our Party to adopt the policy of unity, education, and reform toward religious persons, for it has been a success. Along with the progress of the Socialist revolution and social construction in our country, most patriotic religious persons, educated through revolutionary practice and political studies, have made great progress in supporting the leadership of the Party and taking the Socialist road. Since the smashing of the "gang of four" they have endorsed the Central Committee of the Party, they support the general tasks of the new period, adhere to an anti-imperialist and patriotic stand, love their motherland, abide by the law, and enthusiastically support the goal of modernization for our country. Therefore we must pay close attention to carrying out the religious policy for these people, taking further steps to unite with them in the march toward the goal of four modernizations, fully mobilizing their enthusiasm and creating the proper conditions for them to contribute their efforts. Of course, in the new Long March, religious personages have to continue to study and remold their thinking in order to continue making progress.

5. We must continue to strengthen the ideological and political work among the broad masses of believers and patriots in religious circles. We must give them Socialist education, teach them to love their motherland and abide by law, promote science and culture among them, teach them to love the Party and to love Socialism, and to take active roles in the cause of Socialist revolution and Socialist construction. At the same time we must

raise their ideological consciousness through participation in practical struggles. However, while carrying out this propaganda and education, we must resolutely avoid hurting the religious feelings of the believers, and, even more, avoid forcing people to give up their religious belief.

The question of how to deal with the masses of religious believers is not one of finding a method of work or thinking, but a question of mass viewpoint. All of us should give our attention to this work. We must earnestly carry out the Party's policy [among religious believers], help them to solve practical difficulties, and guide them to participate in Socialist construction.

The fate of our country and our people will be decided by whether or not we can accomplish the four modernizations in this century. People all over China are, at present, making great efforts. We believe that as long as we can strengthen the Party's leadership and do our work well, the broad masses of believers and patriots in religious circles will surely keep to the Socialist road, support the Party's leadership and the dictatorship of the proletariat, conscientiously abide by the laws and regulations of the government, support the present situation of stability and unity, and, led by the Central Committee of the Party, contribute to the realization of the four modernizations.

Document 3

Religion and Feudal Superstition

From Selected Documents of the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Party Congress, 1979. *First published in* Renmin Ribao *(People's Daily), 15 March 1979. Translated by Zheng Xi'an and Donald MacInnis.*

Recently our newspaper office has received some letters from readers asking, "What is religion and what is superstition?" "What is 'freedom of religious belief' as pledged to citizens by the Constitution, and what is this 'feudal superstition' that we should oppose, or even prohibit?" After visiting comrades in charge of leading offices in religious affairs and religious research, we have prepared this response for our readers, based on their opinions.

The Editors, *Renmin Ribao*

All worship directed to mysterious supernatural powers may be called superstition. Religion is superstition, but not all superstitions are religion. For instance, various feudal superstitions are not religion.

All religions are illusory, erroneous reflections created by humans who

experience fear and helplessness when faced by the forces of nature and society. The negative functions of religion become all the more salient as human beings enter a class society, with its exploiting classes and religious professionals. It makes the broad masses of laboring people resign themselves to mistreatment and oppression, submitting to the will of Heaven in the class struggle and their struggle with nature. Therefore Marxism holds that religion is the opium that drugs the people's spirit, which is used as a tool by the exploiting classes in their domination of the people. Marxists have consistently opposed religion in any form.

But, for the broad masses of people, religion is a matter of world outlook closely connected with idealism. The solution of this problem is linked to a long-term process which includes the withering away of social classes and the dissemination and progress of science and culture. Before religious believers completely change their idealistic beliefs, we must acknowledge, allow, and respect their beliefs in order to help lead them, through Party and government propaganda, education, and social practice [actual experience] of belief vs. nonbelief, superstition vs. science, idealism vs. materialism, to draw correct conclusions and rid themselves of these spiritual shackles. The actual practice of the past twenty-nine years since Liberation has fully proved the correctness and effectiveness of the Party's policy. This is also the starting point of Article 36 in the new Constitution which says, "Citizens enjoy the freedom to believe in religion, and also the freedom not to believe and to propagate atheism." Hereafter we should firmly carry out this policy.

In doing that, we must distinguish religion from feudal superstition. By religion, we chiefly mean worldwide religions, such as Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and the like. They have scriptures, creeds, religious ceremonies, organizations, and so on. These religions have histories of thousands of years. They have extensive influence among the masses of the people, particularly among people of minority nationalities. Religious freedom, first of all, refers to these religions.

Our nation's religious policy guarantees freedom to take part in normal religious activities for all religious professionals and believers, but they have to abide by government policy and laws. They are not allowed to interfere with the freedom of other people (including the freedom not to believe in religion), to interfere in politics and public education, or to bring back the system of feudal exploitation and oppression which has been abolished since Liberation. Even more, we must not permit class enemies to use religion to carry out counterrevolutionary activities and other unlawful practices. Therefore the government must strengthen supervision over religious organizations.

By superstition we generally mean activities conducted by shamans, and sorcerers, such as magic medicine, magic water, divination, fortune telling, avoiding disasters, praying for rain, praying for pregnancy, exorcising demons, telling fortunes by physiognomy, locating house or tomb sites by

geomancy, and so forth. These are all absurd and ridiculous. Anyone possessing rudimentary knowledge will not believe in them. Since Liberation, these activities have been losing ground among the people, but some years ago, due to the interference of Lin Biao and the "gang of four," these things have been increasing again in villages where the "disaster" ["cultural revolution"] was serious. In one or two places the daily life and economic output of the people have been affected and their mental and physical health have suffered. We must not neglect these activities. They must be suppressed. We must criticize and educate the shamans and sorcerers, dealing sternly and striking resolutely in such cases. They are absolutely forbidden to carry out superstitious activities on the pretext of religious freedom. Education is the main way to help working people who are cheated by these superstitious activities.

It is true, real life is much more complex than simple concepts and definitions. There still are, among the people, certain long-standing activities such as ancestor worship and belief in ghosts and deities. Although they are a kind of superstition, we generally do not prohibit them by administrative decree as long as they do not affect collective political and economic activities; rather, we solve the problems by patient persuasion and lasting education in science, culture, and atheism.

In dealing with the problem of religion and feudal superstition, we must make a strict distinction between contradictions among the people [nonantagonistic] and those between the enemy and ourselves [antagonistic].

At the same time, by carrying out the policy of freedom of religious belief, we must unite with the masses of believers in a better way in the common struggle toward the goal of the four modernizations.

Document 4

Article 36, Religious Policy

From Draft of Revised Constitution of the People's Republic of China. *NCNA in Chinese, 27 April 1982. In FE 7014, 29 April 1982, and reprinted in China Study Project* Documentation, *No. 8, May 1982, p. 3.*

The draft of the revised Constitution of the PRC was announced by NCNA on 27 April. Article 36, on religious belief, runs as follows:

Article 36: Citizens of the PRC enjoy freedom of religious belief.

No organ of state, mass organization, or person is allowed to force any citizen to believe or not to believe in religion. It is impermissible to discriminate against any citizen who believes or does not believe in religion.

The state protects legitimate religious activities. No person is permitted to use religion to conduct counterrevolutionary activities or activities which disrupt social order, harm people's health, or obstruct the educational system of the country.

Religion is not subject to the control of foreign countries.

Document 5

Penal Code, Section 147: On the Crime of Illegally Depriving People of the Freedom of Religious Belief

Reprinted from the Supreme People's Procuratorate, Department No. 2, Guangming Ribao Publishing House, Beijing, 1986, pp. 339-42, in Zhongguo Tianzhujiao *(The Catholic Church in China), December 1987. Translated in China Study Project* Journal, *Vol. 3:1, April 1988, pp. 49-51.*

China is a united country consisting of many nationalities, and each nationality has its own customs and practices. It is a country of many people covering a wide area, with many religious sects and differences of religious belief. For this reason, guaranteeing a citizen's freedom of religious belief and having respect for the customs and practices of minority peoples is a major question which has relevance to the implementation of equality between nationalities and to the bringing together of all nationalities and religious sects in the struggle to achieve the four modernizations. China's constitution clearly states that citizens of the Chinese People's Republic have the freedom of religious belief, and that no government organization or social body, or any individual, may force a citizen to believe in religion or not to believe in religion, nor may they discriminate between citizens who are religious believers and citizens who are not (Chinese Constitution, Article 36, Paragraphs 1 and 2). The constitution also states that each nationality has the freedom to retain or to change its own customs and habits (Constitution, Article 4, Paragraph 4). In order to ensure that citizens will enjoy the above-mentioned rights, China's penal code specially provides that State officials who deprive people of their religious freedom or interfere with the customs and practices of minority nationalities in serious circumstances will be punished.

The crime of illegally depriving people of the freedom of religious belief means serious acts undertaken by State officials to deprive other people of their freedom of religious belief illegally.

The crime of interfering with the customs and practices of minority nationalities means serious acts undertaken by State officials to destroy the

customs and habits of minority nationalities by forceful means. . . .

2. Correctly recognizing and dealing with the customs and practices of minority nationalities.

Section 147 of the penal code states that State officials who illegally deprive people of the freedom of religious belief or who encroach upon the customs and practices of minority nationalities shall, if the offenses are of a serious nature, be liable to imprisonment or labor reform for a period not exceeding two years.

Document 6

New Regulations Governing Offenses against Public Order

Xinhua, 5 September 1986. In FE 8363, 13 September 1986, and reprinted in China Study Project Journal, *Vol. 1:3, November 1986, p. 28.*

The regulations were adopted by the Seventeenth Session of the Standing Committee of the Sixth NPC on 5 September 1986. The only clause directly relating to the religious situation is contained in Article 24, and reads:

People who commit one of the following public offenses will be detained for not more than 15 days, fined not more than 200 *yuan* or given a warning:

1. People who knowingly buy stolen goods.
2. People who resell train, bus or steamer tickets.
3. People who contravene the government's prohibition by smoking opium or giving or taking injections of morphine or other narcotic drugs.
4. People who use feudalistic or superstititous means to disturb public order or gain property by cheating, but whose offense does not deserve criminal punishment.
5. People who drive other people's motor vehicles without permission.

Section II

Statements by Religious Policymakers

Introduction

Translations of four articles on religious policy by authorities at national and provincial levels typify a host of similar articles published in recent years.

Document 7 is a radio report of a speech by a provincial party leader, Liu Zhengwei, who justifies the religious policy on practical grounds: it is necessary to unify all the people for building a "powerful, modern socialist country."

Document 8 was written by a research scholar, a staff member of the Institute for Study of World Religions of the National Academy of Social Sciences, and published in the Party monthly, *Red Flag*. After noting several reasons for the new policy on religion, he, too, cites pragmatic reasons for the policy. Believers and nonbelievers alike have common economic interests, and allowing freedom of belief will "arouse all the more the enthusiasm of the masses of believers . . . [for] working concertedly to implement the four modernizations."

Finally, we have an excerpt from an important speech given in 1983 by the late Director of the Religious Affairs Bureau, Qiao Liansheng, to the delegates attending the national Catholic Representatives Meeting in Beijing. Section 5 of his speech has been selected for translation because it articulates the official position regarding alleged control by foreign missionaries of the churches in China before 1949, singling out the Vatican as the worst example of foreign religious forces "serving the ends of imperialism and colonialism."

Document 7

Liu Zhengwei Speaks at Religious Work Conference

Hunan Provincial Radio, 27 March 1986, in JPRS-CPS-86-033, 25 April 1986, p.64.

Yesterday morning [26 March 1986], at the closing ceremony of the provincial conference on religious work, Liu Zhengwei, deputy secretary of the

Hunan Provincial CPC Committee, emphatically pointed out: CPC committees and government organizations at all levels must further strengthen leadership over religious work, continuously and firmly grasp the implementation of the Party's policies toward religion, and make still greater contributions toward the four modernizations and the great cause of the unification of our motherland.

Liu Zhengwei said: Over the past few years, our province has seriously implemented the Party's official policies toward religions; enhanced understanding of the importance of religious work; reversed verdicts on grievances, trumped-up cases, and miscarriages of justice affecting people in religious circles; and solved the problems left over from history. In the aspect of implementing the policies toward religions, it has made arrangements for sites for religious activities, solved the problems of the self-support of some religious organizations, and, at the same time, trained a number of young patriotic religious workers. Religious organizations and some temples, mosques and churches have provided services for production, done social and public welfare work, and made certain contributions toward our province's four modernizations.

As for the problems existing in our province's religious work, Liu Zhengwei said: Regarding religious problems, some comrades are still affected by Leftist ideological influence and take a laissez-faire attitude. They set the implementation of the Party's policies toward religion against the building of the two Socialist civilizations. Thus, this has directly affected the correct and all-round implementation of the Party's policies toward religion. We must seriously study the spirit of the relevant documents of the central authorities and unceasingly heighten understanding of the importance of religious work.

He said: The fundamental starting point and underlying objective in our implementation of the Party's policy on freedom of religious belief and in our dealing with all religious problems are to unite all people who profess religion and those who do not, and to concentrate their will and energy for the target of building a powerful, modern Socialist country.

Document 8

Why Must China Practice Freedom of Religious Belief?

By Lei Zhenchang, Red Flag, *No. 5, 1 March 1981. Translated in China Study Project* Bulletin, *No. 16, July 1981, pp. 17-20.*
Lei Zhengchang is a staff member of the Institute for World Religions, Beijing.

Some people point out: China is a Socialist country with Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought as its guide. Communists are atheists. Why

has China adopted the policy of allowing freedom of religious belief?

It is true that Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought is the thinking guiding our Party and our country. Marxism is thoroughgoing materialism. Not only is it in disagreement with the religious idealist world outlook, but also it attempts gradually to emancipate those who believe in religion from the fetters of religion. Opposing theism is the elementary principle for all materialists and Marxists. However, the existence of religion is caused by ideological understanding, in addition to economic factors. The viewpoint which holds that religion will disappear by itself very quickly with the development of economic construction, science, and technology is unrealistic. For this reason, it is necessary to lay down correct principles and policies on religion. Freedom of religious belief is one of these principles and policies.

As stipulated in the constitution, freedom to believe in religion is the basic policy by which our Party and our country handles religious problems. As set forth in this policy, every Chinese citizen enjoys freedom to believe in the religion of his choosing; he enjoys freedom to believe in one sect or another of the same religion; he enjoys freedom to believe in religion today and not to believe in it tomorrow, and also freedom not to believe in religion today but to believe in it tomorrow; a clergyman enjoys freedom to preach theism in a house of worship, and an atheist enjoys freedom to propagate atheism. Whether he is a believer or not and whether he believes in one religion or another, a citizen of the PRC, according to the constitution, has the duty to love his motherland and support Socialism and the leadership of the Communist Party. Today, we are required to work with one heart and one mind and unite to implement the four modernizations under the leadership of the CCP and to build our country into a modern Socialist power with highly developed democracy and civilization. For this reason, religious activity should be clearly defined. That is, religion should neither intervene in politics, education, and marriage nor resort to exploitation and oppression. Religious organizations are not allowed to receive subsidies or gifts from foreign religious bodies. That is to say, religious organizations should be patriotic and free, and should only deal with questions of religious belief.

This policy of allowing freedom to believe in religion is a correct policy formulated on the basis of the fundamental Marxist principles, after making a scientific analysis of religions and in the light of the actual conditions in our country.

First, Marxists have carried out a profound scientific investigation of religion by treating it as a social phenomenon and analyzing the social and ideological causes of the birth and development of religion. They hold that religion is an outcome of oppression by nature and society and a backward world outlook caused by man's failure to understand the objective laws of nature, society, and mankind in given historical conditions. Religion will not disappear before man can effectively resist and conquer oppression by

the forces of nature and society, and as long as this oppression, a root cause of the birth and development of religion exists. Of course, religion will not exist forever. Religious influence weakens and eventually disappears with the development of production, the flourishing of science and technology, the improvement of people's material and cultural lives after the overthrow of the exploiting system, and the heightening of the people's ideological consciousness and cognitive power. However, this will take a very long time. As long as religion exists, there will be people who want to believe in it. This is an objective fact. At present, quite a large number of people in China believe in religion. We must respect this objective fact and proceed from the actual situation to consider and draw up a relevant policy.

Second, religious belief is chiefly a question of ideological understanding. An ideological problem can be solved only by means of persuasion and of increasing ideological consciousness. It is a waste of effort to forbid religious belief or "exterminate" religion by administrative order. For different reasons, many people in China and abroad formerly tried to suppress religion by rigid tactics, which might succeed in putting down religious activity for a short while, but, on the contrary, this aroused religious fanaticism and promoted religion. Engels severely condemned the attempt to "exterminate religion," calling it a stupid way to "serve God." For this reason, as long as there are people who believe in religion, the State should respect their religious belief and allow them freedom to believe in religion.

Apart from this, the overwhelming majority of believers are working people. They differ from Marxists in world outlook, and from nonbelievers in understanding. However, this does not prevent people from having a common economic interest and having the same political orientation. To Marxists, the common economic interest and same political orientation mean much more than difference in religious belief. In fact, generally speaking, the contradiction between believers and nonbelievers and between theists and atheists among the Chinese people is not acute and has never developed into nationwide religious conflict. This has been so during the period of the new democratic revolution and during the Socialist period. Almost all believers in our country favor Socialism, and support the leadership of the Communist Party. Particularly at present, implementing the four modernizations and building our country into a prosperous Socialist power are not only the eager hope of nonbelievers, but also the sincere wish of believers. Practicing the policy of allowing freedom to believe in religion will arouse all the more enthusiasm of the broad masses of believers and lead them to join the other people of the country in working concertedly to implement the four modernizations.

We should also see that China is a multinational country, where different religions are practiced. In our country, religion is often linked with the historical development and customs and habits of some minority nationalities. For example, ten nationalities, including the Hui, Uyghur, and Kazakh, are Islamic; people of the Tibetan, Mongol, Dai and Uyghur

nationalities generally believe in Buddhism (including Lamaism); and the Christian religion has extensive influence among the Miao, Yu, and Yi nationalities.

Therefore, we should not confuse nationality with religion, but we should realize that nationality issues are closely related with religious issues. Carrying out the policy of allowing freedom to believe in religion is of vital significance in solving correctly nationality issues, strengthening unity among nationalities, and consolidating and developing the Chinese nation as one big family.

Lastly, religion is not only a kind of ideology. It also generates a formidable social force in the international political field. About 61 percent of the world's population are believers. Religion holds a decisive position in social matters in those countries which have designated state religions. Practicing the policy of allowing freedom to believe in religion in our country will promote friendly communications and cultural exchanges between the Chinese people and the people of other countries, strengthen unity and cooperation between China and the Third World countries, and greatly benefit the cause of opposing hegemonism and protecting world peace.

These are reasons why our Party and country practice the policy of allowing freedom to believe in religion. Thus, this policy is not an expedient but a fundamental step to handle religious issues. It is not a short-term but a long-term policy. It is not spurious but real. Of course, religious activity and feudal superstitious activity should be distinguished from one another and dealt with differently. Religion is a kind of superstition, but feudal superstitious activity is not religious activity. Formerly, the reactionary superstitious sects and all witchcraft and sorcery were banned and forbidden to resume activity. Those who spread fallacies to deceive people or make use of feudal superstitious activity to swindle money out of people or harm people will be dealt with or punished by law according to the seriousness of their offenses.

Document 9

Concerning Questions about Control of Religious Organizations and Affairs by Outside Forces

Speech by Qiao Liansheng, Director of the Religious Affairs Bureau, to assembled delegates, National Catholic Representatives Meeting, Beijing, April 1983. This is Section 5 of the speech, translated from Zhongguo Tianzhujiao *(The Catholic Church in China), No. 7, 1983. Translation by Donald MacInnis.*

Two themes dominate Qiao Liansheng's speech: preventing the restoration of foreign influence and power in the Chinese Catholic Church; and maintaining the independence, self-direction, and self-governance of the Chinese church and reinforcing the patriotic service of all Catholics in support of Socialist nation building.

To maintain our nation's strength and power, and to undergird the independence and selfhood of all religious organizations in our nation, the restoration of foreign religious influence and power must be prevented. It is essential that we utilize the joint forces of all churches to assure that "no religious organizations or religious affairs shall be controlled by foreign forces."[1]

There are historical reasons for bringing this up, as well as current reasons. It is based on our country's policy of absolute independence and selfhood toward the outside, and our nation's history of over 100 years of oppression by foreign imperialism. Even in recent years hostile outside forces have directed a series of destructive (sabotage) actions against us, [forcing us] to defend the independence, peace, and rights of our nation. Therefore this regulation must be obeyed and implemented by all religious organizations, with no exception for the Catholic Church.

Reflecting on the history of our nation since 1840, it is difficult for one to forget over 100 years of Catholic and Protestant propagation in China, coinciding with the aggressive incursions and oppression of imperialism against China, no different from a nation under semicolonialism and semifeudalism.

The Catholic and Protestant churches of that period served as the vanguard and tool of imperialist aggression. No one can deny these historical facts. For the past 100 and more years there have been, in the circles of the Chinese Catholic Church, persons with patriotism and national self-respect who consistently and diligently sought for political means to escape from the road of control and domination by all foreign church powers, advocating a self-supporting, self-governing church. But, because of the

semicolonial status of all China at that time, this advocacy had absolutely no chance of success. In 1949, all the peoples of China, under the leadership of Mao Zedong, chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, after a protracted and bitter struggle, finally overthrew the rule of imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic capitalism (three great mountains), with the great victory of the new democratic revolution and the founding of the People's Republic of China. Since then, the people have seized national authority, becoming the rulers of the nation; national independence made it possible to free the Chinese Catholic Church from foreign church powers, and especially to cast off the control of the Vatican. Progressive, patriotic members of the Catholic clergy and laity joined the people of our nation to protect its independence and integrity, resolutely taking the road of an independent, self-guided, and self-governing church. The Vatican's long-standing control used the Chinese Catholic Church to serve the ends of imperialism and colonialism, ruthlessly repressing the inexorably emerging achievements of the Chinese people. The result was wave after wave of determined people sacrificing lives and blood, a great treasure. Can it be that we still hope to replay this history? Do we wish to fall again into such bitter times? Certainly not! No one in our entire nation would reply otherwise.

We oppose the domination of Chinese churches by any foreign power, including the Vatican. The Vatican is a nation with particular, monarchical, authoritarian political characteristics, called by the name "Vatican State." It is historically the seat of the pope, the symbol of the power of the pope. The reality of the so-called pope is the monarchical power of this [sovereign] state. This state mixes politics with all religious matters, masquerading under a religious guise. All religious manifestations of the Vatican, all instructions and so on have a political color; all are in political service to its colonialism. Against this, the Catholics of our nation and other citizens must be sufficiently alert and informed to make accurate analyses so as never to allow a monarchical political party with the status of a nation to become the partner of faith, because of one's allegiance to Catholicism, or to blindly follow and serve, and thus be hoodwinked by politics, even to betray our nation.

The Vatican is an enemy of the Chinese people, which came only to serve the expansion of colonialism in the twentieth century, supporting Germany, Italy, Japan, France, and Spain. When Japanese militarism invaded China, dividing our nation's soil by force of arms, when the puppet government of Manchukuo was established in our northeastern provinces, the Vatican was the first to give diplomatic recognition. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Vatican maintained a hostile attitude to new China, and from the beginning carried on a series of wrecking [sabotage] activities toward our nation; friends of Catholicism seated here know that very clearly. In recent years, they [Vatican] have used all possible opportunities, on the one hand to put forth a posture of reconciliation with

China, on the other hand to increasingly engage in undercutting the people's democratic powers in our nation and to engage in activities designed to wreck [sabotage] and alter the Socialist system of our nation. Not long ago just such a gang of counterrevolutionaries wearing the outer garments of the Catholic Church was uncovered. There is much factual evidence that the Vatican has never given up its plotting to control the Chinese Catholic Church, even to "changing the structure of Chinese Socialism," and restoring the colonial system in our nation, to serve the ends of modern-day imperialism. Therefore, in the struggle of Chinese Catholicism against the imposition of foreign domination, it is clearly a political question, a question of loving or not loving our country.

For more than thirty years the cause of independence, self-guidance, and self-government of our country's Catholicism, and the undertaking to change the long-standing colonialist nature of the Chinese Catholic Church, have been very successful. Today's Chinese Catholic Church is already completely in the hands of Chinese clergy and laity, a church governed entirely by Chinese themselves, with great influence and voice, able to bring together and educate the broad membership of Catholics for participation in the building of Socialism in our nation. They have equal status with Catholic churches in other countries. The clergy, religious, and members of the Chinese Catholic Church today will never again become "citizens" of a foreign country, never again be "living on the China mainland," so-called subjects of a foreign church, but will have powerful, patriotic self-respect and self-image, and fervently love our Socialist nation, and offer all of their strength to build Socialism in our nation, to the great glory of the people of the People's Republic of China. During the ten years of chaos ["cultural revolution"], many Catholic friends suffered grievous harm, but surely the great majority of friends [here] firmly believe in the Party's and government's policy of freedom of religious belief, and firmly believe in the correctness of the position of self-guidance and self-government in the church. In this profoundly important aspect you have received the respect of the people. In following the course of independence, self-guidance, and self-government, the Party and government's policy of freedom of religious belief is making steady progress, and Catholics who formerly were skeptical of an independent, self-guiding, self-governing church or even were opposed to it are also going on the same road now with the majority of Catholics. To agree with the Chinese Catholic Church's road of independence, self-guidance, and self-government, and to expand the patriotism of church members, is a fine thing. At the same time we offer welcome and support.

Note

1. From Article 36 of the new constitution, adopted by the National People's Congress, December 1982. Article 36 sets forth the official policy on religion.

Section III

Provincial Regulations for the Supervision of Religious Activities

Document 10

Regulations for the Administrative Supervision of Places of Religious Activity in Guangdong Province

While there is not, as yet, national legislation that defines the rights, responsibilities, and limits for religious activities, some local regulations, not now available in Chinese publications, have circulated outside China. The most detailed of these was published in Zhong Lian *(China Catholic Communication, Singapore), No. 16, December 1988, and is reprinted here. Since Bishop K. H. Ting refers to these regulations in an interview (Document 98), we assume that this document is authentic.*

Chapter I: General Principles

Article 1: These regulations have been enacted in order to protect normal religious activities according to the constitution of the People's Republic of China and relevant national laws and statutes, in keeping with the actual situation in our province.

Article 2: Citizens have freedom of religious belief. No one is allowed to force others to believe or not to believe in religion. There should not be any discrimination against either citizens who believe or citizens who do not believe in religion.

Article 3: The religious affairs departments of the governments at every level exercise administrative leadership over places of religious activity.

Chapter II: Places of Religious Activity

Article 4: The term "Place of Religious Activity" refers to Buddhist monasteries and temples, Daoist monasteries and temples, Islamic mosques, Catholic and Protestant churches and meeting grounds (hereafter abbreviated to temples and churches), religious schools, and simple reli-

gious activity points where the believing masses meet together.

Article 5: Both reopened temples and churches and newly established simple religious activity points must apply for registration to the department in charge of religious affairs of the people's government at county level or above.

To run religious training classes, application for registration must be made to the department in charge of religious affairs of the people's government at city level or above. The opening of a religious school must be reported to the Religious Affairs Department of the Provincial People's government. When the above-mentioned applications have been approved and registered, their legal rights and privileges come under the protection of the law; those which have yet to be approved must not conduct religious activities.

Article 6: Places of religious activity which have been permitted to open by the people's government before the promulgation of these regulations, if they have not yet gone through a registration procedure, must undergo registration procedures with the department of the people's government in charge of religious affairs.

Article 7: Places of religious activity and religious training classes which want to alter the approved registered content of a course of study, must inform the department in charge of religious affairs of the people's government at the county level or above for ratification.

Article 8: Construction of new temples or churches must be approved by the Religious Affairs Department of the Provincial People's Government.

Chapter III: Supervision of Religious Venues

Article 9: Places of religious activity which have been approved and opened should form, under the guidance of the patriotic religious organizations, a supervisory body consisting of both religious professionals and religious believers to implement democratic supervision.

Article 10: Places of religious activity must respect the national constitution, laws, and policies; safeguard national sovereignty and unity; safeguard ethnic cooperation; and uphold the principles of independent self-government and self-management (of religion). They are not to engage in activities which oppose the Socialist system, disrupt social stability, or cause damage to the physical or mental health of citizens.

Article 11: Places of religious activity should accept the direction of the departments of cultural relics, urban planning, public security, and parks and gardens in protecting the cultural relics, buildings, facilities, grounds, and so on of that place. They should also do the work of security and fire prevention.

Article 12: Any renovation, reconstruction, or extension of churches and temples must be approved by the department in charge of religious affairs

of the people's government at the county level or above.

Requisitions of any temple or church, or its monuments, pagodas, tombs, walls, gardens, or compounds, should be fully negotiated with the religious body in possession of the ownership or usage rights, and reported to the Religious Affairs Department of the Provincial People's government for approval. Maintenance of temples and churches should be reported to the government department in charge of religious affairs for the record.

Any actions under the above provision which involve the departments of cultural relics, urban planning, and parks and gardens should at the same time be reported as provided by the regulations to the relevant responsible departments for approval.

Article 13: No unit or individual is allowed to occupy or destroy a place of religious activity. Without the permission of the supervisory body of the temple or church and the department of the people's government in charge of religious affairs, no unit or individual is allowed to set up a place of business or of a service trade or to conduct exhibitions or display wares and so on.

Article 14: The shooting of films or videos within the property of a temple or church must have the consent of the department in charge of religious affairs of the people's government at the city level or higher. If they are units classified as protected cultural relics, the filming should also be reported to the cultural department for approval.

Article 15: The finances of churches and temples should be managed by democratic supervision, and a comprehensive budgetary system should be established and perfected. No person is allowed to appropriate for themselves the income of a temple or church.

Article 16: Approved and opened temples and churches may operate services such as guest houses, snack bars, and kiosks, and may manage sideline agriculture, forestry, and husbandry industries. However, they must be run according to the relevant policies and regulations of the government.

Chapter IV: Religious Professionals

Article 17: "Religious professionals" refers to Catholic bishops, priests, and nuns, Protestant pastors and evangelists, Buddhist monks and nuns, Daoist monks and nuns, Islamic imams, and other people of religious occupation who have the permission of the patriotic religious organization at county level or above and who have reported for the record to the department of the people's government in charge of religion.

Article 18: Daoist and Buddhist temples should set a personnel quota in line with their concrete needs. The personnel quota for those classified as prominent national temples must be reported to the Provincial People's Government for approval. Personnel quotas for other temples will be approved by the people's government at the county level or above. Additions

to personnel within the quota limits must be agreed to by the government department in charge of religious affairs.

Article 19: Religious professionals and graduates of religious schools may, after receiving the consent of the department in charge of religious affairs of the people's government at the city level or above, be allocated by the patriotic religious organization of the province or city, according to the need, to work in a relevant place of religious activity.

Article 20: Religious professionals who go out of the province to conduct religious activities must gain the consent of the Religious Affairs Department of the Provincial People's Government. Those who go beyond their own city or county must have the consent of the department in charge of religious affairs of their city or county people's government. Religious professionals who take up temporary residence in a church or temple must declare their temporary address to the public security organ of the place, according to the relevant regulations.

Chapter V: Religious Activities

Article 21: The normal religious activities of approved and opened places of religious activity are under the protection of the law. No unit or individual is allowed to spread atheistic or antireligious propaganda within places of religious activity.

Article 22: No one is allowed to conduct feudal superstitious activities falling outside the definition of religion, such as divination, sorcery, fortune telling, or interpreting omens, within a place of religious activity.

Article 23: With consent of the department in charge of religious affairs of the people's government, religious professionals may, according to the custom of the religion, conduct the necessary religious rites for believers in cemeteries, funeral parlors, hospitals, or believers' homes.

Article 24: No person is permitted to engage in propagating religion or in religious activities, or to distribute religious propaganda, in any public place other than opened places of religious activity and the places mentioned in Article 23. It is not permitted to make use of religion to conduct activities which hinder the state education system or the educational order in schools.

Article 25: Religious activities in places of religious activity should be presided over, and religious duties performed, by religious professionals checked and ratified at the time of their application for registration. Whoever receives religious professionals coming from other places to lead any religious activities or to preach or to expound scripture must first apply to the department in charge of religious affairs of the people's government at the county level or above. People who are not religious professionals are not allowed to perform religious duties.

Article 26: The patriotic religious organizations at every level can send

out personnel to conduct religious activities in places of religious activity under their jurisdiction.

Article 27: Any printing or publishing of religious literature, audio, or pictorial materials must have the consent of the department in charge of religious affairs or the people's government at city level or above, and be handled in accordance with the relevant regulations of the publications department.

Article 28: Religious organizations may sell or distribute approved religious literature, audio, or pictorial materials, religious utensils, and religious art in their own temples and churches.

Article 29: Compatriots from Hongkong and Macau, Taiwan compatriots, overseas Chinese, Chinese with foreign nationality, and foreigners who are religious believers, may practice their religious life-style in opened temples and churches in our province, but they must abide by our national constitution, laws, and the relevant regulations of the particular place of activity. They are not to propagate religion or distribute religious propaganda materials without authorization.

Article 30: Voluntary offerings and donations made within the country to places of religious activity according to religious custom by compatriots from Hongkong and Macau, Taiwan compatriots, overseas Chinese, Chinese of foreign nationality, and foreigners who are religious believers can be accepted. Religious organizations and places of religious activity which receive contributions from religious bodies or individuals in Hongkong, Macau, Taiwan, or foreign countries must, after gaining the consent of the department in charge of religious affairs of the people's government at the county level or above, report them for approval to the relevant provincial departments according to the regulations.

Chapter VI: Supplementary Articles

Article 31: Concerning violations of these regulations: light offenders will undergo criticism and education by the department in charge of religious affairs of the people's government; violations of the Penal Ordinance for the Control of Public Order of the People's Republic of China will be dealt with by the public security organs: violations which constitute a crime will be investigated for criminal responsibility by the judicial organs.

Article 32: Those who on their own initiative and without permission construct temples or churches or organize religious activities will be ordered to cease by the department of the people's government in charge of religious affairs. Those who do not comply with this order will be dealt with by force by the public security organs according to the seriousness of the case.

Article 33: The above rules will be effective from 1 May 1988.

Section IV

Religious Policy and Ethnic Minorities

Introduction

While only 6 percent of the Chinese people belong to minority nationalities, a total of sixty million people are scattered among fifty-four ethnic minority groups, many of them living in remote but strategic areas along the four-thousand mile border with the Soviet Union. Moreover, since ten of the fifty-four minority groups are Muslims, an estimated twenty million people, it is important that visitors from Muslim countries be assured that fellow Muslims in China are free to follow traditional religious practices. Their sense of well-being is important as well for domestic unity and harmony: in past years there have been Muslim uprisings in China.

The first of the three articles selected for this section, written for the *Journal of Central Nationalities College* in Beijing, calls on its readers to correctly understand and implement the religious policy among minority nationalities, using the "five natures" of religion as a typology. The religious situation among the nationalities is complex; it is long-term in nature, mass-based, and has significant international implications. In dealing with these people, it is important to correctly differentiate between the religious issue and the nationalities issue, and between religion and such customs as birth, marriage, and funeral rites, dietary patterns, and festivals.

The writers make the further point that the "reform of the social economic system and the reform of the feudal exploitative system in religion" has brought such changes that the "religious contradiction" is no longer an antagonistic contradiction, that is, a contradiction between the people and the enemy. "Now, the contradiction on the religious issue has become primarily a contradiction among the people," one that can be resolved without using force or violence.

The next article was also written for a scholarly journal, *Social Sciences in Yunnan*, published by the Minorities Institute in Kunming. Section 6, excerpted here from a long article called "The Nationalities Problem in the Period of Socialism," also referring to the issue of religious contradictions, makes the point that the correct handling of these contradictions is directly related to common economic development and prosperity for all nationalities: "Doing it this way will be beneficial in arousing the enthusiasm of the minority nationality masses and in promoting common development

and prosperity for all nationalities . . . and in helping the laboring people of all nationalities to be liberated from the shackles of religion." That is, the "religious contradiction" will be resolved peacefully and in its own good time.

Finally, the *China Pictorial* article on the Muslims in Beijing describes the respect now shown for Muslim customs and dietary laws. Muslims are supplied with extra flour, oil, beef, and mutton during their three annual religious festivals, and Muslims are appointed to local leadership posts.

Document 11

Correctly Understand the Religious Issue among the Minority Nationalities and Thoroughly Implement the Party's Policy on Religion

By Liu E, He Ren, and Wang Guodong in Zhongyang Minzu Xueyuan Xuebao (*Journal of Central Nationalities College*), *No. 3, 15 August 1982, pp. 13-18. Translated in FBIS, 28 April 1983, pp. 31-46.*

I. The Situation of Religious Belief among Our Country's Minority Nationalities

Among our country's minority nationalities, many of them have religious beliefs. The major religions that are practiced in the areas inhabited by minority nationalities are Buddhism, Islam, Christianity, Catholicism, Shamanism, the East Pakistan religion, Daoism, and the Orthodox Eastern Church. Among them, Buddhism has enjoyed nearly 2,000 years of history in our country, Daoism has had over 1,700 years of history, and Islam has had over 1,300 years of history, while Catholicism and Christianity have developed more extensively primarily since the Opium War. . . . In the old China, speaking overall, in the protracted feudal society and for more than a century of semifeudal and semicolonialist society, many religions in our country had once been controlled and employed by the ruling class and had played an extremely passive role. After Liberation, through the reform of the social-economic system and the reform of the feudal suppressive and exploitative system in religion, the condition of our country's religions has undergone a fundamental change. For instance, the situation in the past of an all-nationality belief in Lamaism or Islam among some nationalities has changed. Now, many people have freed themselves from the shackles of religion and have become materialists and atheists. Or, for instance, in some

areas inhabited by nationalities, the system of integration of the church and the State and the feudal system of suppression and exploitation which the religious temples and clergy practiced toward the masses of believers before Liberation have been abolished. Now, the contradiction on the religious issue has become primarily a contradiction among the people. This is a tremendous change. It is wrong to not recognize this change. However, the religious issue will still exist within a definite realm over a long period of time and has a definite mass characteristic to it. In many places, it is still interwoven with the nationalities issue, and is still influenced by the class struggle within a definite realm and by the complex international environment. Thus, whether or not the religious issue is handled appropriately will have an important influence which we cannot overlook on the unity among the nationalities and the stability of the nation, as well as on the building of a Socialist material and spiritual civilization. It is also wrong and very dangerous to not recognize such a situation.

II. Correctly Understand the Objective Laws of the Birth, Development, and Withering Away of Religion

. . . Our party has precisely proceeded from the [above described] laws of development of religion and taken into consideration the religious beliefs of our country's minority nationalities in adopting the policy of freedom of religious belief.

In our country, the religious issue is an issue that has a nationality character and a mass character to it. Some religions, such as Islam and Lamaism, have many followers, and among some nationalities the people of the entire nationality are believers. The influence of religion has deeply pervaded the various aspects of these nationalities, including the economy, culture, and social life. This influence of religion is oftentimes also interwoven with the nationalities issue. When religious discrimination and religious struggle take place among different nationalities, they very easily bring on conflicts and struggles among the nationalities. That is to say, religious belief is not a small matter of individuals or a small number of people, but is an important matter involving many people and, in particular, involving the majority of workers, peasants, and laboring people.

Among the religions that the various minority nationalities in our country follow, many are international in character. For instance, of the four major religions of the world, Buddhism began in ancient India, Islam began in today's Saudi Arabia, Christianity began in the Roman Empire, and Catholicism was [later] separated from other branches of Christianity. These religions are separately followed by people of many countries and nationalities throughout the world. Among them, some are even regarded as the state religion in some countries. Whether or not we do a good job regarding religion has a significant meaning in expanding our international contacts and our country's political influence.

These characteristics of religion, plus its long-term character, make up its complexity. Historically, some leaders of the oppressed nationalities and oppressed people once made use of the banner of religion to mobilize and organize the oppressed masses of people to wage struggle against the oppressors. In our country, in the last years of the Eastern Han Dynasty, the leaders of the Yellow Turbans Uprising, Zhang Jue and his brother, made use of the Road to Peace; at the close of the Qing Dynasty, Hong Xiuquan, the revolutionary leader of the Kingdom of Heavenly Peace [the Taiping Rebellion], made use of the Church of God; the Yihetuan Movement made use of Daoist incantations; and so on and so forth. These were methods of employing the form of religion to mobilize the masses of peasants to stand up and resist the suppression and rule of the feudal landlord class and imperialism. In order to mobilize the masses on a broader and more effective scale, and in order to increase their own authority and explain the rationality and righteousness of the struggle for resistance, the leaders of the uprisings put a religious cloak over the struggles. In this way, the inevitability of the class struggle was mingled with religion. Nevertheless, such conditions could not explain how religion itself has any positive meaning. Besides, in the European Middle Ages, in many places, philosophy, politics, and the law were lumped together with theology and were made subjects of theology. All these factors constituted the complexity of the religious issue. In modern times, colonialists and imperialists use religion as their tool to carry out aggression against and colonialist rule over the weaker and smaller countries and nationalities. Some churches have become their espionage organs. Some missionaries, priests, and nuns have formed special detachments for carrying out subversive, aggressive, and counterrevolutionary sabotage activities under the guise of religious activities. This is a category of contradiction that is different in nature from the issue of belief of the broad masses of religious believers. However, in real life, these two issues are often mingled together. Such a situation also brought complexity to the religious issue.

These realities of religion and the religious issue exist objectively. In the long historical period in the future, these conditions will continue to exist. Furthermore, because religious belief is an issue of ideological understanding, the contradictions of the religious issue have become primarily contradictions among the people in the new period of Socialism. In solving the issue of ideological understanding among the people, we can only use the democratic method of persuasion and education. The purpose of studying and emphasizing these conditions of the religious issue is to correctly understand and have a good grasp of the trend of development of religion and the religious issue and bring it to people's attention so as to adopt an attitude of discreet, rigorous, and careful consideration toward the issue. Thus, on the one hand, we should not exaggerate the gravity and complexity of the issue and panic, and yet, on the other hand, we must not belittle the

existence of practical problems and their complexity, lower our guard, and let the issue go unchecked. . . .

In the course of implementing the policy of freedom of religious belief, we must correctly differentiate between the religious issue and the nationalities issue and handle them accordingly. Some people confuse nationalities with religion, saying "the Hui nationality is Islamic," "Islam means the Hui nationality." This is totally wrong. Religion is an ideology and nationality is a people's community that embraces four characteristics. Religion does not have an absolute link with nationality. A religion can be followed by people of many nationalities. For instance, there are ten nationalities in our country who believe in Islam, but we cannot say that these ten nationalities are therefore one nationality. The people of one nationality also can follow several different religions. Among them, there are also some people who may not believe in any religion. For instance, among the Han nationality, some people believe in Christianity and Catholicism, some people believe in Daoism and Buddhism, and some people are not religious. But we cannot say that they are different nationalities. Furthermore, religious beliefs may change, and change of religious belief does not change the nationality component. For instance, the Uyghur nationality followed Manichaeanism, Ao Jiao, Buddhism, and Nestorianism before it followed Islam. The Mongolian nationality followed Shamanism before it followed Lamaism. If we confuse nationalities with religion, we not only have made a mistake in our understanding, but will make the issue more complex, which will be unfavorable to the Party's religious work and work with nationalities.

We also should not confuse religious belief with customs and habits. The Party and government treat the customs and habits of various nationalities the same way they treat religious belief, with the policy of respect and protection. Our country's citizens have freedom of religious belief. The various nationalities also have the freedom to preserve and reform their customs and habits. In terms of the spirit of the policy, there is no difference in essence between the two. However, we should not regard customs and habits as religious beliefs. Without a doubt, some nationalities have certain customs and habits, such as food abstention, festive activities, and marriage and funeral rites, that are definitely related to religious and feudal superstition. Some are originally religious disciplines. For instance, the nationalities who believe in Islam do not eat pork and the blood of animals, and do not eat animals that die on their own. Some festivals are also religious disciplines. However, as time goes by the original meanings are lost and they become customs and habits of the masses. Under the circumstance we cannot look at them as either an issue of religious belief or feudal superstition. The differentiation of the two will have an important meaning for the Communist Party members and the masses of nonbelievers among these nationalities. It is inappropriate to confuse the customs and habits of a nationality with religious activities without being analytical about them, and

is unfavorable to the unity among nationalities and to the correct handling of the religious issue.

Document 12

On the Nature of the Nationalities Problem in the Period of Socialist Construction

By Yang Jingchu in Yunnan Shehui Kexue *(Social Sciences in Yunnan), 4 July 1982. Translated in FBIS, 2 March 1983, p. 117 (excerpt).*

. . . Sixth, nationality contradictions of religious belief seemingly have no connection with nationality development and prosperity. In fact, they are directly related to common development and prosperity for all nationalities. Generally speaking, religious belief in itself is not a question of nationality, because one nationality can simultaneously believe in several different religions, and different nationalities also can simultaneously believe in a certain religion. The reason that religious belief in our country has become a nationality question is because there are some minority nationalities in which most people believe in a certain religion, influencing the production, livelihood, customs and habits, and ideological state of the whole nationality, and religion is often interwoven with nationality questions. Before Liberation many minority nationalities in our country had their own religions, separately believing in Islam, Buddhism, Protestantism, Catholicism, and polytheism and other primitive religions, and some religions to this day still have a rather strong influence among working people of all nationalities.

Document 13

Policy toward Beijing Muslim Settlement

In English in China Pictorial, *Beijing, January 1983, p. 137 (excerpts).*

According to statistics recently published by the Beijing Municipal Statistics Bureau, Beijing has more than 300,000 residents who belong to the country's 54 ethnic groups; the Huis, who number some 180,000, make up

the majority. Some Huis live among the Hans and other ethnic people in and outside the city; others live in compact communities near Niujie (Ox) Street and other places.

The Party and government have stood for a policy of ensuring equality and strengthening unity among all nationalities and a policy of freedom of religious belief. Religious activities in China are protected by law. Faithful Muslims are called to prayer five times a day, and on important occasions such as the end of Ramadan, Corban, and Djumah (every Friday) they all come to the mosque for congregational prayers. The mosque's imam is often invited to preside over marriage and funeral services or butchering rites in the people's homes. During their religious festivals, the Muslims are supplied with more flour, vegetable oil, beef, and mutton than rationed.

Thanks to the government's education in its policy toward nationalities among the people, disputes between the Hans and Huis in the area are seldom heard of. They respect each other's customs, oblige each other, and live in harmony.

The Party and government often appoint Hui cadres to leadership posts in their area. Today, most of the leading posts in the Niujie neighborhood office are held by Huis. For the Muslims' convenience, the government has in recent years opened a new department store selling specialties for them, a butcher's shop selling beef and mutton, a restaurant, and some snack bars. The hospital and secondary school for the Muslims have now regained their former names (they were changed during the "cultural revolution") and are growing steadily.

Section V

Statements by Religious Leaders on Religious Policy

Introduction

Three statements by religious leaders, Catholic, Protestant, and Buddhist, have been selected from the many now available in print. Bishop Fu Tieshan, the Catholic bishop of Beijing, has often been interviewed for the Chinese press as a spokesman for the Catholic Church in China. Bishop K. H. Ting, President of the China Christian Council and Chairman of the Chinese [Protestant] Christian Three-Self Movement, has spoken many times in many countries about China's religious policy and its relationship to the growth of the church in China since 1979. Mr. Zhao Puchu, a distinguished poet and calligrapher, is President of the Chinese Buddhist Association. All three are members of the National CPPCC.

These religious leaders all speak of the changes that have taken place for each religion since Liberation, and particularly since the "cultural revolution." Bishops Ting and Fu were writing early in the post-Mao period, 1980 and 1981, respectively, while Mr. Zhao Puchu's address was given at the national assembly of the CPPCC in March 1988. The revival and growth of both Catholic and Protestant Christianity was just beginning when Bishop Ting said, in his paper, that eighty Protestant churches had been repaired and reopened in the entire country; today the figure is at least five thousand, with more opening almost every day. The same kind of restoration and revival has taken place in other religions.

Bishop Fu's address was given at the ecumenical conference "A New Beginning" held in Montreal in 1981. Ten Catholic and Protestant church leaders from China joined 150 other participants from around the world for nearly a week of meetings. Bishop Ting spoke, but his paper, reprinted here, was written a year earlier. The "fourteen points" presented in this paper represent the position of China's Christians today. They are thankful for the improvement of the standard of living for themselves and all Chinese people since Liberation. They regard the policy of religious freedom as reasonable, and are grateful for the Communist Party policy which "emphasizes the common ground while preserving differences." They are proud of their three-self independence, no longer needing or accepting help from foreign mission societies; they are financially self-supporting and there are no missionaries working with the churches in China. They are proud, as

well, of the postdenominational unity of the churches. While there is not yet a "United Church of China," neither are there denominations, although denominational loyalties still prevail in the hearts and religious practices of many of the older Protestant Christians. With total Christian membership still only a fraction of 1 percent of the population, they see the enormity of the tasks that lie before them; yet they have made great progress, and, while acknowledging the problems, face the future with hope and faith.

One theme that returns over and over in the speeches, interviews, and writings of China's Catholic and Protestant leaders is their insistence on total separation from dependence on foreign mission societies for financial subsidies or missionary personnel. Bishop Ting writes: "Ours is a very small Church with limited financial resources, but we are able to support ourselves. The strength of our position lies in the fact that we will not do anything beyond our ability and thus be forced to become parasitic."

The other three religions, Buddhism, Daoism, and Islam, were autonomous and self-supporting long before Liberation, so the threat of what is called missionary imperialism poses no problem for them. Instead, Mr. Zhao Puchu, in his address to the national assembly of the CPPCC in 1988, spoke directly and with surprising candor of continuing problems in the carrying out of religious policy, particularly at local levels, where the recovery of religious buildings is stalled by stubborn work units occupying the buildings and dilatory or hostile local officials. He describes in detail a particularly egregious case of high-handed and erroneous mishandling of religious policy by the mayor of Kaifeng, who refused to allow a visiting delegation of Japanese Buddhists to worship in the Xiangguo Temple in Kaifeng, saying that it was only a museum. "The mayor apparently did not care about the international political implications involved, nor about how his decision would affect hard-won Sino-Japanese ties of friendship," said Mr. Zhao. This case raises an important question: Do some government and Party officials want only a museum-type religion to survive in China?

Document 14

There Is New Freedom of Religious Belief in New China

By Bishop Fu Tieshan, in A New Beginning, *Theresa Chu and Christopher Lind, editors, Canada China Programme, Toronto, 1983, pp. 27-28.*

China is a country that has several religions: Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, Daoism, and Islam, all of which are regarded as equal. Believers

and nonbelievers work together on a basis of friendship and mutual respect. Although atheists and theists hold different opinions in matters of faith, they share the same basic interests in the political, economic, and cultural realms of life. The great goal of building a strong, prosperous, and modernized native land has created close ties between us Catholics and the Chinese people as a whole. To strive together toward such a common goal is the foundation on which we are united as one people.

New China came into being and continues to grow under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. It is common knowledge that Chinese Communists are atheists. However, the people's government respects the democratic rights of the people, including the religious belief of the Christians. Accordingly, it has formulated a long-term, stable policy which is welcomed by Christians as well as people of different ranks in China.

We Catholics, like other religious believers, are citizens of a sovereign nation. We have the power to make decisions in our own households. There are three Catholic bishops who are members of the National Political Consultative Conference, and one of them is a delegate at the National People's Congress. There are quite a few bishops, priests, and laypeople who are delegates at the People's Congress and/or at the Political Consultative Conference on various levels of province, city, and county. The People's Congress is the national assembly of China and its delegates are elected from among the people. Bishop K. H. Ting, here present, is a member of the standing committee of the National People's Congress. Mr. Lu Weidu, a Catholic layman, is a member of the Standing Committee of the Shanghai Municipal People's Congress. The Political Consultative Conference is an advisory organ of our government. It is composed of members representing different political parties, different fields of industry, commerce, literature and arts, education, various religions, minorities, overseas Chinese, and compatriots of Hongkong and Macau. Delegates of the Catholic Church participate in discussions with other delegates representing their respective constituencies. They discuss questions regarding the general policy of the nation, finances, and budgetary statements. They also voice their opinions and requests in religious matters. Their opinions are valued. I myself have frequently participated in the activities of Beijing's Political Consultative Conference along with Protestant ministers, Muslim imams, Buddhist monks, Lamas, and others.

Our freedom of religious belief and normal religious activities are protected by constitutional and penal law. In my case, for example, I was in the minor seminary on the eve of Liberation. In new China, I continued my life in the seminary for six years until I received the grace of ordination. As a priest, I did pastoral work for many years until the end of the seventies when again God gave me a special grace, that of being consecrated a bishop. My personal experiences should be sufficient to prove there is freedom of religious belief in China.

For thirty years, the government has backed the church's principle of self-support. Buildings used by the church are taxfree. But during the ten years of turmoil, the satanic Lin Biao and the "gang of four" disregarded constitutions and penal codes and ruined different policies, including that of the freedom of religious belief. The "gang of four's" irrational actions brought untold damage to our country and people. Now, history has judged them correctly, and once more the policy of freedom of religious belief has been restored.

I understand that since the crushing of the "gang of four," the people's government has taken positive measures to implement the policy of freedom of religious belief. Help has been meted out to different local churches to overcome difficulties so that church buildings can be repaired and sacraments administered to people. At present, over eighty Catholic church buildings have been repaired and are functioning. Once more, people receive the different sacraments. Still more churches are being prepared for reopening. Those clergy and laity who suffered persecution during the "cultural revolution" because of the counterrevolutionary policies of Lin Biao and Jiang Qing are having their cases reopened and reexamined in view of their rehabilitation. Unfortunately, Bishop Zhao Zhensheng of the diocese of Xian Xian, Hebei Province, died during the "cultural revolution." He has been rehabilitated during the earlier part of this year. A memorial meeting was solemnly held in Shijiazhuang and a high mass was solemnly celebrated in Beijing's cathedral for Bishop Zhao, jointly sponsored by the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, the Church Affairs Committee, the Bishops' Conference, and the Beijing diocese. St. Peter said: "Live as free men, yet without using your freedom as a pretext for evil; but live as servants of God" (1 Pet. 2:16).

Just as it is in other countries, in new China too it is not allowed to infringe upon the interests of the country and the people in the name of religion. Cases of serious offense may result in imprisonment. All are equal before law. The overwhelming majority of clergy and laity love their country and abide by its laws. They observe the instruction contained in the Scriptures: "Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for any honest work" (Titus 3:1).

Catholics in China share all the rights of citizenship, on the one hand, and fulfill their responsibilities, on the other. In the political life of the nation, they are masters. They are not discriminated against because of their religious belief. In matters concerning education, jobs, army service, and other areas, they enjoy the same rights as nonbelievers. They work hard to contribute to nation building both in the spiritual and the material aspects of our civilization. At work they live up to the noble spirit of loving God and neighbor. They witness to the good news of Jesus Christ.

Document 15

Fourteen Points from Christians in the People's Republic of China to Christians Abroad

By Bishop K. H. Ting, in A New Beginning, *Theresa Chu and Christopher Lind, editors, Canada China Programme, Toronto, 1983, pp. 108-16.*

The "Fourteen Points" were originally presented by Bishop Ting in a conversation with Rev. Andrew Chiu and Rev. Arthur Wu of Hongkong on 12 December 1980.

There has already been a good deal of reporting on the Chinese Christian situation and on our guiding principles, but there is still some confusion among fellow Christians overseas, including those in Hongkong. I would like to present some of our views.

1. New China

We Chinese Christians take a positive attitude toward new China. It is not as it was before Liberation, when we took a negative attitude toward the cause of the Chinese people's liberation as a result of misinformation and misunderstanding. Christians cannot deny that new China has brought many good changes to the Chinese people. For over thirty years the price of our food and other necessities has basically been stable. In the past, there were many Chinese people who did not have enough to eat. Now, although special delicacies may be out of reach, our 900 million people have enough to eat, so that there is no longer the need for people to go scrounging for roots and tree bark. Our approximately 10 percent of the world's arable land feeds almost 25 percent of the world's people. This must certainly be regarded as an amazing accomplishment, even though it is not a miracle. In the past, many people were without adequate clothing. On the streets there were rickshaw pullers, beggars, and other poor people who often went barefoot in the rain and snow. Now there are no more rickshaws or beggars, and everyone has shoes and adequate clothing, even a cotton-padded jacket for the winter. The jacket may be patched, but it is no longer worn by several generations as it was before. People's thinking and mental outlook have also undergone significant changes. Despite the ten-year catastrophe, the level of people's mortality and self-respect is much higher than it was before Liberation.

For poverty-stricken people deprived of their rights for thousands of

years, to have made mistakes in their first attempt at governing a vast country is only natural. But mistakes cannot stifle the wisdom and character of a people which has stood up. There have been many shortcomings in the thirty-year history of new China, and more than a few mistakes. But summing up both our negative and positive experiences and learning from them, we will once again move forward. Thus, those people overseas who gloat over our misfortunes are really too shortsighted.

For us, patriotism is not just the love of an abstract ancient country with a long history. It is first and foremost a love for new China. Our positive attitude toward new China is genuine and based upon facts. The clamor of certain persons overseas who say that our patriotism is pretentious with the aim that the church may survive is insulting to us. Of course, our patriotism is not without a prophetic and critical character. It does not mean blind praise for everything in our motherland.

2. The Policy of Religious Freedom

We regard the policy of religious freedom in new China to be a reasonable one. Communists do not have a high regard for religion, and we harbor no illusions about the Communist Party on matters of religious faith. But the Communist Party is a good political party which aims at uniting the Chinese people. For the sake of national unity, it maintains a respect for the people's customs and special characteristics, including religious ones. It would benefit neither national unity nor Socialism if this respect were neglected. The Communist Party understands this better than anyone else and, therefore, advocates the policy of "emphasizing the common ground while preserving differences." "Emphasizing the common ground" refers to the common ground of patriotism. "Preserving differences" means a recognition of and respect for the differences among people, and refraining from trying to eliminate them. Just as the differences between the national minorities and the Han Chinese cannot be eliminated, neither can those between believers and nonbelievers. Therefore, the Communist Party maintains a policy of religious freedom. We consider this to be a policy as good for religion as it is good for the country.

I am of course speaking of the Communist Party and not of the "gang of four." The "gang of four" is not the Communist Party and the Communist Party is not the "gang of four." The "gang of four" wished to eradicate religion, but the Communist Party seeks to protect religious belief by adopting the policy of religious freedom. Since the smashing of the "gang of four," we are returning to the Communist Party's original policy of religious freedom. Overseas there is the mistaken idea that the religious policy of the Communist Party itself has changed or loosened up. This confuses the Communist Party with the "gang of four," and is of no help for coming to a correct understanding of new China. Today, the Communist Party is leading the people throughout China in revolution and reconstruction, and the "gang of four" has been put on trial in the people's court. To speak of the two as one and the same really creates a lot of confusion.

3. Organizations in New China

China is a properly constituted country. Each of the organizations listed below has its own proper function and sphere of authority, and these should not be confused.

1. The National People's Congress (NPC) is our supreme national legislative body. Only the NPC is empowered to approve and revise the constitution, the marriage laws, the penal code, the civil code, and other laws. Appointments of important officials, such as the premier, vice-premiers, and department heads, must also be approved by the NPC. Deputies to the NPC, which may be both Party and non-Party members, are elected by each province. There are deputies who are religious believers.

2. The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) is our political consultative body. While NPC deputies are elected by each province, members of the CPPCC come from every corner of Chinese society. Membership is drawn from the youth, women, workers, peasants, and soldiers; from the Communist Party and democratic parties; from cultural, athletic, scientific, and religious circles; and from the national minorities, overseas Chinese, and people from all walks of life. The CPPCC is an important institution for the promotion of Socialist democracy and an important organ of the United Front. There is within the CPPCC a religious group, comprised of Buddhist, Islamic, Daoist, Catholic, and Protestant representatives. The 46th article of the present national constitution stipulates, "Citizens enjoy the freedom to believe in religion and the freedom not to believe in religion and to propagate atheism." Members of the CPPCC religious group are dissatisfied with this article, which preserves a lingering influence of the "gang of four" period, and have made a proposal that it be changed. If this proposal for modifying the wording of Article 46 of the constitution is passed by the next session of the NPC, then we will be happy. If not, we will continue in our efforts.

3. The State council is the administrative, or executive, organ set up under the NPC. It is the central government of our country.

4. The Religious Affairs Bureau (RAB) of the State Council is set up expressly for the handling of the religious affairs of the State Council. It does not deal with the faith, life, and work of Buddhism, Catholicism, Protestantism, and all other religions. There are some people overseas who, consciously or not, have created confusion by saying that the RAB of the State Council supervises us and that Chinese Christian churches and organizations are parts of the RAB. This would be totally at odds with our social and political system. The bulk of the work of the RAB is to represent the state and the government in implementing the policy of religious freedom. For example, when we want to open a church, the RAB assists us by

negotiating with all parties concerned. Or, when we need special paper for the printing of Bibles, the RAB helps us arrange for its purchase. In 1980, we bought 82 tons of paper for the printing of 135,000 Bibles. As we will be printing more Bibles in 1981, the RAB will continue to help us with the purchase of paper and arrangements for meeting our printing needs. The RAB of the State Council only handles the religious affairs of the State. As to the development of the Chinese Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement and the administration of the Chinese church, these are our own concerns.

5. One important organization in the life of our country is the Chinese Communist Party. It is the leading force behind the Chinese revolution and national reconstruction. This leadership is not forced upon the people. After much investigation and study, the Party puts its proposals regarding principles and policies before the NPC, the CPPCC, and the people for their study, revision, approval, or adoption. Party members through their exemplary role mobilize the people for the implementation of the adopted policies.

6. The National Committee of the Chinese Christian Three-Self Patriotic Movement (hereafter the Three-Self Movement) is the patriotic association of Chinese Christians ourselves, not a governmental organ. That there are friends overseas who think of the Three-Self Movement as a department of the RAB is the result of the distortion made by certain individuals. The Three-Self Movement was founded by Chinese Christians ourselves. Although there were some missionaries and Chinese church leaders who advocated Three-Self before Liberation, the Three-Self principle of the Chinese Church could not be implemented full-scale under the historical conditions which prevailed at that time. When Y. T. Wu and others launched the Three-Self Movement after Liberation, they did receive appreciation and encouragement from Premier Zhou Enlai. But this certainly does not mean that the Communist Party told the Chinese church to launch such a movement.

7. We have also set up the China Christian Council for the pastoral needs of the Chinese churches. This is the church affairs organization of Chinese Christians.

In sum, organizations in China are properly constituted and the differences and relationships among them should be clearly noted. Our Chinese churches are independent not only of foreign churches but also of the NPC, the CPPCC, the government, and the Party. It is wrong for people outside China to say that the Three-Self Movement is an "official church." China has no "official church." The Chinese church is run by Chinese Christians ourselves. It is understandable that those who adopt a hostile political attitude toward new China would call the Chinese Church, which generally supports new China, an "official church." We regard the term "official church" to be a political expression with which to attack new China. Among

the many churches of the world, ours is not one which can be labeled an "official church."

4. Religion and Imperialism

Religion has been exploited by colonialists and imperialists in their aggression against China. We have not denied the scientific character of this assertion. Many of our policy decisions today are related to this fact. This is no longer a question which requires much explanation inside China. Even overseas, more people are today recognizing this fact.

5. Our Three-Self Principle

We are resolved to uphold the reasonableness and justice of Three-Self for the Chinese church. On the basis of past history it is necessary for the Chinese church to follow the Three-Self road. Today, for the Chinese church to bear witness to the gospel among the Chinese people, self-government, self-support, and self-propagation are also necessary. We cannot return to the old situation representing a "foreign religion." Following the ten-year catastrophe, we are returning to our guiding principle of the fifties, not that of the forties. It is wrong for those people outside China who long for a return to the past to think that we are returning to the forties. A return to the forties would mean discarding Three-Self, again making Christianity a "foreign religion." In returning to the guiding principle of the fifties, we wish to continue to uphold self-government, self-support, and self-propagation, and to make the Church one which is well-governed, well-supported, and well-propagating, too.

6. The Unity of the Chinese Church

The present unity of the Chinese Christians is unprecedented. When I first came to Nanjing in the early fifties, there were still many denominations, separated by deep divisions. The members of one denomination in particular would not even pray with the rest of us. Now, the brothers and sisters of this group are not only willing to pray with us, but even to share the sacraments together. The unity which has emerged in the Chinese church is closer than ever before. We are no longer separated by denominational walls. We do experience "how good and beautiful it is for brothers and sisters to dwell in harmony."

The number of churches which have been reopened is still quite small, perhaps not more than eighty at present in the entire country. But Christians have not stopped gathering together, as many meet in their homes. It is a tradition in the Chinese church for Christians to gather in homes to pray and read the Bible. Even in the past when there were many churches, people still liked to worship in their homes in addition to going to church.

When I was little, my mother used to ask friends, relatives, and neighbors over to our home once a week for a worship service. There was an increase in such gatherings in homes during the "cultural revolution" period. We found there were twenty-five home-worship gatherings in Nanjing alone. Although many Christians now go to the churches which have recently been reopened, there are in Nanjing, for instance, still five such home-worship gatherings. Some older people find that it is inconvenient to go to services in churches because of the distance they would have to travel. Others prefer the intimacy of the home-worship gatherings, while still others attend both types of worship. Frequently, people record a church service to take back to listen to in their home-worship gathering.

There are people outside China who are not thankful to God that the Chinese church is more united now than ever before, but instead try to split the Chinese church by dividing it into a "Three-Self Church" and a "House Church." Why should the simple question of where one worships be turned into a contradiction between the home and Three-Self? Does the fact that first-century Christians all worshipped in their homes mean that they would oppose the Three-Self principle and rely on support from foreign quarters? Today in China, no matter where Christians gather for worship, the vast majority are patriotic and seek to defend and implement self-government, self-support, and self-propagation. When there were twenty-five home worship gatherings in Nanjing and the local committee of the Three-Self Movement called a meeting, those who attended the home-worship gatherings all came.

We are pleased to tell you that now, after these ten catastrophic years of the "cultural revolution," the Chinese church is even more united. Christians saw with their own eyes that many leaders of the Three-Self Movement were harassed by the "gang of four" because of the church, and yet they did not complain or advertise it. It was also these leaders who did what they could to preserve Bibles. Such actions could not but inspire people and deepen our unity in Christ. China being a big country with many Christians, it will always be possible to find a few people who disapprove of or oppose Three-Self. But today, the center of opposition to Three-Self is not within China, but overseas.

We Chinese Christians have chosen the road of postdenominational unity, not because we are better than anyone else, but because we live in our particular historical situation. In retrospect, we can only say that this has been a result of the leading of the Holy Spirit, who has allowed us to bathe in the ocean of God's grace.

7. The Work We Have before Us

The Chinese church does not only want to be self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating, but well-governed, well-supported, and well-propagating. We must make up for lost time and do our pastoral work well.

Each day we receive many letters asking us to send pastoral workers, and requesting Bibles, hymnals, devotional materials, and theological literature. These are the calls of Macedonia which we must give heed to. Chinese church workers have a great deal of work ahead. Our churches must have good services of worship; there must be better spiritual nurture for laypeople; we must witness faithfully to the people around us; and we must be deeply concerned for the welfare of the Chinese people. To do all this we have set up the China Christian Council. It is not a church, but an ecclesial organization for the service of Christians. We cannot proceed at a faster pace than one permitted by the present capacity of the Chinese church. There are some questions, the sacraments and orders for example, over which we are unable to arrive at a unanimity of opinion all at once. But there are many other matters which do await our common initiative.

We have begun to print Bibles and have republished the *Tian Feng* periodical. The seminary has published teaching materials for nationwide theological education by extension, and it is also in the process of recruiting students. A newly edited hymnal has also come out for temporary use. Books for the training of laypeople are now being edited. So the China Christian Council and the Three-Self Movement both have a great deal that they would like to do.

8. Evangelistic Work in China Is the Responsibility of the Chinese Church

We do not approve of those people overseas who try to mold public opinion into thinking that they should send missionaries back to China. No matter how large the population of China is and how small our church is, the responsibility for spreading the gospel and building up the church in China is the mission of Chinese Christians. We will not invite missionaries to China from overseas. We wish to declare that no group or individual overseas should engage in evangelistic activity in China without the expressed consent of Chinese church authorities, who retain responsibility and jurisdiction in this area.

There was recently the case of an American passing out religious tracts on the streets of Guangzhou who drew the attention and intervention of the police. Then he got angry and said that China had no religious freedom nor freedom for missionary work, and he threatened to telegraph president-elect Reagan requesting that America cut off its "financial aid" to China. We believe this person was in the wrong. If a large number of foreigners all acted in a similar fashion, then what would become of the image of Christianity in China? Would it not once again be regarded as a "foreign religion"? Would that not wipe away Chinese Christians' thirty-year efforts in promoting Three-Self? Therefore, we feel sensitive over the question of missionary work in China.

All missionary and church activities, including radio broadcasts beamed

at China, which are carried on willfully and unmindful of Chinese church authorities, are expressions of disrespect and unfriendliness. It is not we who are closing the door of the gospel in China. We are but learning the lessons of history. We uphold self-government, self-support, and self-propagation as the road of an independent and self-administered church in order to guarantee that the door of the gospel may be open and remain open in China. It would simply be self-destructive for the Chinese church to return to a colonial status, and that in the long run is to shut the door of the gospel. And for this American to speak of mutually beneficial trade as "financial aid" is just arrogance and lack of education.

9. Overseas Church Groups' Activities with Non-Christian Chinese Enterprises

Some church-related groups overseas are now in the process of negotiating with Chinese schools, hospitals, factories, communes, and other enterprises for cooperative investment and exchange programs. We would not have any opinion if these groups were not church-affiliated, providing that they were not injurious to our national sovereignty. But we are concerned when church-related groups are so involved. For example, can those church groups which are engaged in activity of a technical nature in China honestly say that they have no goal of bearing witness or doing mission work? Insofar as it is in the nature of a church to be involved in things, how can their people deny having that goal, even if it is not explicitly stated in the contract? This has serious implications for a whole series of questions. One is a question of Christian ethics on the relationship between means and ends. Another is the harm which could be done to the Three-Self principle of the Chinese church if our jurisdiction is violated. There are priests, ministers, and nuns who came to China to teach English who have said that English teaching is their method and means but that their real purpose is evangelism. Is it honest for them to conceal their identity? Is it right that they should not consult the Chinese church and, in some cases, should even have attacked us?

We cannot rely on foreigners for the preaching of the gospel and the building up of the church among the 900 million Chinese people. Let the church take root today in Chinese soil, so that tomorrow it may blossom and bear fruit. Foreign churches, by doing missionary work in China in unauthorized ways, will be going against the direction chosen by Chinese Christians thirty years ago and will have a damaging effect on Three-Self. We are deeply concerned and must study the matter more carefully.

10. No Return to Denominationalism

We feel that the Chinese church can only go forward and not backward. The denominational consciousness of Chinese Christians has been quite

weak. I myself am an Anglican, and there are many Christians and church workers in China who are also Anglican. But I don't know of any who wants to restore the Anglican church.

There are a small number of people overseas who have worked to restore their particular denominations in China, but they have not found popular support among Chinese Christians. We would like them to stop working to that end.

When former missionaries come to China, it is natural for them to seek out people they have known who belonged to their particular denominations. This is something we can understand. But let them not go so far as to attempt to revive denominational feelings and loyalties, thus inviting misunderstanding and unpleasantness.

11. International Relationships

We are a small church with many responsibilities within China. We think our major efforts must be devoted to our domestic work. We wish to immerse ourselves in our work so as to push this experiment of ours forward. Then, perhaps sometime in the future, we will be able to speak of some contribution to the international Christian community. But for now, our international commitments must be limited, meaning that we must differentiate and be selective.

We want to have contacts and exchange for the purpose of mutual learning with church groups and individuals overseas who have a friendly attitude toward new China and who respect the Three-Self principle of the Chinese Christians. But we will adopt a different attitude to those individuals and groups who are unfriendly toward new China and oppose our Three-Self principle. Today we are making observations which will enable us to accurately differentiate one from the other. We are by no means suggesting that we regard only those who approve of everything that new China does as friendly. What we are looking at is their basic attitude in recent years. People can change, and we will not dwell on the past or settle old scores. We like our friends to grow more and more numerous.

12. Our Participation in International Organizations and Conferences

Here we must differentiate too, and, because of our limited resources, be selective. There are a number of organizations and conferences which have taken a friendly attitude toward us in which we have not been able to participate. We have also not been able to invite many friendly church groups from overseas for visits in China. We ask for our overseas friends' understanding in these matters.

13. Material or Financial Contributions from Abroad

Ours is a very small church, with limited financial resources, but we are able to support ourselves. The strength of our position lies in the fact that

we will not do anything beyond our ability and thus be forced to become parasitic. But because our Chinese church is now already self-supporting and independent, there is probably no longer the need to maintain a simple "closed-door policy" on the question of receiving contributions. We are pondering over the wisdom of accepting certain contributions from friendly church groups and persons overseas, with no strings attached and with due respect for the independent stance of our church, simply as an expression of the universality of our Christian fellowship. This may stop the slander of our enemies and dispel the misunderstanding of our friends, too.

Contributions would have to be from groups and individuals which are friendly toward new China and our church, and there could be no strings attached. I think we can open the door a little to allow people to make contributions to our local churches. But larger amounts should generally be handled by the China Christian Council, perhaps for its pastoral-work fund, because we could not allow foreign contributions to create or restore disparities between rich and poor churches. This tentative idea will be discussed by the leaders of the Three-Self Committee and the China Christian Council. If it is put into effect, it would certainly be carried out with extreme care, and we hope our friends overseas will be able to understand.

There are some people overseas who presumptuously speak of financial contributions in the name of saving the Chinese church, playing up their own role by going so far as to solicit contributions for this purpose. We want to declare that we have not and will not entrust anyone overseas to solicit contributions for the Chinese church. We basically believe that our church should be content with what it has, enjoying its poverty and thriftiness. It should live within its means by relying primarily upon contributions from Chinese Christians. We are opposed to making a big thing out of the financial problems of the church, which would obscure its true character and witness.

14. Differentiation among China Programs in Overseas Churches

There are many "China programs" in churches overseas which seem to take quite different attitudes toward China. We are observing and studying these programs so that we may differentiate among them. We are very grateful for the good work which some of them are doing. But there are also others which in name are engaged in research, in the promotion of prayer for China, and in the work of Christian fellowship, but in actuality are collecting intelligence, spreading hate-China propaganda, and seeking to infiltrate China and violate our church's jurisdiction. This tells us that we must not only listen to what they say, but also watch their actions. We must be careful observers and draw the necessary line of demarcation.

We will not disappoint those who are friendly toward us, and we will treat them in a friendly manner. Together with them in true Christian fellowship, we can more deeply enter into Christ's abundance and grace.

Document 16

Call for a New Look at an Outdated Religious Policy

A Speech by Zhao Puchu to the Seventh National Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in Beijing, 31 March 1988; from Sing Tao Standard, *Hongkong, 4 April 1988. Translated by Donald MacInnis in* Tripod, *No. 46, August 1988, pp. 56-63.*

On 31 March, Mr. Zhao Puchu, President of the Chinese Buddhist Association and vice-chairman of the Chinese Association for Promoting Democracy, addressed the entire assembly of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference as official spokesman for nearly sixty delegates representing various religious constituencies. Speaking with great candor, he pointed out serious problems still remaining in the implementing of the policy of freedom of religious belief and called for the drafting of a new law governing religion in China.

Mr. Chairman and Members:

Allow me to speak on behalf of the members [of this body] from religious circles.

We fully agree with Vice-Chairman Qian Xueshen's report on the work of the Standing Committee of the Sixth Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, and we fully support Acting Premier Li Peng's report on government work given at the First Session of the Seventh CPPCC.

We are highly encouraged by the great achievements in state and foreign affairs of the Standing Committee of the Sixth CPPCC and of the State Council in the past five years, and in the goals for reforms, tasks, and principles set for the next five years. Under the Party's leadership, religious believers among all the national minorities will join together, striving to make further contributions on the basis of past achievements, for the unity of the nation, for the development of the national minorities, and for world peace.

The five major religions in our country have millions of believers among many ethnic groups. The entire population of at least a dozen ethnic minorities living in the border areas are religious believers. There are four world religions in China. Two-thirds of the world's people are religious believers. Religion has made great contributions to our nation's history and culture, leaving a rich and brilliant legacy. Religion is related to the fields of politics, economics, and culture; it is longlasting, and has relationships with the masses as well as international relationships.

Practice has proven that, if we are to maintain and develop political stability in China, there is an enduring need for full implementation of the

policy of religious freedom, unifying the great majority of religious believers and inspiring them to love their country and build Socialism. This will have great significance and positive effects in deepening and fostering reforms, opening up foreign relations, ensuring a stable development of the national economy, promoting the unity of the nation, and securing world peace.

For these reasons, and because it accords with the basic spirit of the documents of the Thirteenth Party Congress, we believe that there are three main leadership tasks in religious work which must be carried out.

The First Major Task: Continue To Implement the Policy on Religion

Since the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Party Congress the Party and government have taken on a large and difficult task and have achieved great results in carrying out religious policy and making some important policies and regulations. We religious members of the CPPCC, and religious organizations and leaders at all levels, have also done good work in investigating, drafting laws, policy making, and solving actual problems in the course of helping Party and government bodies.

But the work of carrying out religious policy has moved slowly and unevenly; it still faces great obstacles and problems when compared with the implementation of other policies. The task of carrying out the policy on religion is far from completion, with many difficulties and unsolved problems that still must be dealt with.

As we continue to carry out religious policy, the first problem requiring a solution is the need for more places for religious activities. The level must be reached where there are enough such buildings in every place to meet the needs of religious believers, as well as to maintain relationships with foreign religious circles. Places which were closed or were occupied and remodeled for other uses during the "cultural revolution" must be returned. Government leaders should give priority to the needs of religious believers and not to those units which occupy their buildings. There is an urgent need to return and reopen these buildings, and this problem must be solved quickly.

Equally important is the problem of those places which require restoration, clarification of ownership rights, and economic compensation. We must properly and carefully deal with the problem of those places that were originally designed for religious activities, such as Buddhist temples and shrines, but where religious activities no longer take place. This happened in some places before the "cultural revolution," but the current problem is primarily the result of the "cultural revolution." On the one hand, those temples which have reopened with the permission of state and local governments are limited in number and are insufficient to meet the religious needs of Chinese and foreign Buddhist visitors. On the other hand, many temples that were closed or occupied by other units during the "cultural revolution" still have not been returned.

Some highly influential temples which were occupied [by other units] before the "cultural revolution" and should be reopened are still occupied. Some have even been remodeled for other purposes. This situation is not normal and is a problem that must be solved. It is both unrealistic and irresponsible to suggest that only those temples already on the list for reopening are needed, while others need not be reopened or can be destroyed.

Before the "cultural revolution," many famous old temples were designated as ancient cultural relics which should be protected, but this did not change their nature as places for religious activities, nor did it change the rights of Buddhist circles to administer them. Temples were originally built as places for religious activities. Only later were they occupied by other units and listed as protected cultural antiquities. But because they were designated as such, the occupying units assumed the rights of administration and ownership. When asked by Buddhist circles to return the temples for their original functions and restore them to their original state, they refused, saying that the temples had been "turned over for their use" because of their status as protected cultural antiquities, and that anyone seeking to recover them would have to get permission from the occupying units. Is this reasonable? That's too much!

There is one paragraph in Document 101 which talks about the relationship between protected cultural antiquities and places of religious activity. Vice-Chairman Panchen and I think there are many problems with this paragraph, but there are still those who defended this paragraph in the Seventh National People's Congress. So then Panchen and I wrote a letter to Acting Premier Li Peng regarding this problem. The State Council and the Party's Central Secretariat have taken notice of this and are investigating the problem.

There are places of religious activity on famous Buddhist and Daoist mountains like Wutai Shan, Emei Shan, Putuo Shan, and Jiuhua Shan. Although these mountains have beautiful scenery, the main attraction which has made them famous at home and abroad for believers and tourists alike is not their scenery but their religious characteristics, the site of the four bodhisattvas. If their religious features were damaged, the scenery of Jiuhua Mountain could not match that of its neighbors Huang Shan and Putuo Shan, for it's just a small island in an archipelago of islands. There are many mountains larger and more splendid than Wutai and Emei, so plans for developing famous Buddhist and Daoist mountains must preserve and protect their religious features and special characteristics, thus benefiting both religion and tourism. If we turn these mountains into nothing but tourist attractions, the tourist business will suffer as well.

Speaking of places of religious activity, there are very large problems in the religious affairs of Henan Province. Their two most famous temples, Baima Temple in Loyang, which was the first temple built after Buddhism came to China, and Shaoling Temple in Dengfeng, belong to the ancient

Chan [Zen] sect. There are many problems relating to these two temples, especially Shaoling. The present situation is very bad. The first monk to arrive from Taiwan in recent years, having made arrangements to stay in Baima Temple, could not bear the present conditions he found in Henan. No matter whether he himself was partially to blame or not, it does point out that great problems exist there that have to do with the work of the local leaders.

In Kaifeng there are two other famous temples, Xiangguo and Tieta, yet these temples have not yet been made available to Buddhists for religious activities. The Venerable [*Fashi*] Jin Yan of Kaifeng, aged ninety-six, is chairman of the Henan Buddhist Association and an honorary council member of the Chinese Buddhist Association. For years he has gone around to many places asking for the return of at least one of these two temples, but to date the problem remains unsolved. This religious elder, who has a high reputation in Buddhist circles, still lives in a shabby little private house.

There is a Xiangguo sect in Japan which recently sent a group to visit the Xiangguo temple in Kaifeng. The local government asked Master Jin Yan to accompany them as the acting abbot of the Xiangguo temple, but this title was given only on a temporary basis.

This year friends from the Xiangguo temple in Japan also asked to visit the Kaifeng temple. I heard that after receiving their request, the mayor of Kaifeng gave instructions to inform the Japanese Buddhists that the Xiangguo temple is not a place for religious activities, and they would be welcome to come simply as sightseers, but not to worship there. The mayor apparently did not care about the international political implications involved, nor about how his decision would affect hard-won Sino-Japanese ties of friendship, nor did he show awareness of the important contributions toward the normalization of diplomatic relations between the two nations that Buddhist circles in China and Japan have made. This shows his ignorance about religion and his political immaturity.

The second problem requiring a solution is the matter of the buildings, their contents, and the property belonging to Buddhist temples. Temples and attached buildings are defined as "social property." There is no regulation for such ownership in the current national constitution, so it is described as "state property." This regulation has become the excuse for arbitrary occupation of temples and their buildings [by other units]; therefore, this regulation must be corrected. In some of the temples which have been permitted to reopen, the property line is limited to the eavesline of the buildings only; their mountain and forest lands have yet to be returned to them. They need to have new, reasonable boundaries drawn up and title deeds to their land given to them. Some cultural relics and other items taken away during the "cultural revolution" have not yet been returned. All must be returned and compensation paid for any that have been lost.

The third problem has to do with the way intellectuals in religious circles are treated. Each religion has a number of intellectuals who are engaged

in research, teaching, and editing. Some are scholars and experts with high academic and cultural credentials, yet the problems with regard to their professional titles, status, and proper treatment have still to be solved. Some religious professionals who work in religious organizations, institutes, and cultural units, and even some leaders of these organizations, receive only a small living allowance, but no salaries. They do the same work as non-religious personnel in those units but they do not receive the same pay. This problem must be solved.

There are great difficulties in carrying out religious policy. The main reason for this is that Leftist influences in the thinking of some people have not yet been completely wiped out. These people do not yet understand that during the primary stage of Socialism the de facto existence of religion and its development is inevitable, and they do not understand the five natures of religion as it exists in China today, that is, its mass, ethnic, international, complex, and long-lasting natures. Nor do they understand that the starting point for religious work is to respect and protect the religious freedom of believers, to unite religious believers with all the Chinese people to build Socialism with Chinese characteristics, and to avoid the use of force aimed at weakening or wiping out religion.

Some new leaders among our comrades know little about religious work, but they do know the Leftist line on religion. Some comrades advocate an open economic policy, but they have fossilized thinking when it comes to religious questions. Moreover, the government's system of management and administration of religious work is old and outdated, and the laws governing religion are incomplete.

The Second Major Task: Carry Out Systematic Reforms

For a long time the administrative and management systems for religious work have suffered from malpractice and overcentralized power. The Party and government have taken over religious work. This situation is not appropriate for the current policy of reform and openness. The core problem of reform, according to the principles and spirit of Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang's report to the Thirteenth Party Congress, is to separate party from administration, and administration from enterprises; to reform the personnel system of cadres; to clarify the relations between Party, administrative organs, and mass organizations; and to carry out a policy of the "separation of politics and religion." "Separation of politics and religion" means separation of the functions of government administrative departments from religious organizations and temples; it does not mean our nation still has a sociopolitical system in which religion and politics are merged. The key to solving the problem of separating politics and religion lies in clarifying the leadership role of government administrative departments and the role of religious bodies, who should carry out independently religious activities according to their own special characteristics.

The administration of churches and temples should be given over to religious believers themselves. We must systematize this policy. The government religious affairs departments provide leadership on religious questions for all government administrative units to implement the policy of freedom of religious belief, guaranteeing and supervising the implementation of the constitution, laws, regulations, and policies, in order to harmonize relationships of religious with other sectors of society. We must change the administrative and management system and the methods which regard religious bodies as administrative units, and turn all religious bodies into true people's organizations which are under the leadership of the Party and government but can independently carry out their work according to their own characteristics. They should be able to enjoy the right to administer their own personnel, property, and religious affairs according to the constitution, laws, and policies of our government. Only in this way can we strengthen and improve the leadership of government administrative departments and at the same time give full play to the functions and vitality of religious organizations.

The Third Major Task: Strengthen the Law on Religion

The problem of drafting a new law on religion is urgent. Only with such a law can the constitutional right of freedom of religious belief for all citizens, with protection under the law, be guaranteed. Only with such a law can problems between religious believers and non-believers, and between the masses and religious professionals, be solved according to law, for whoever breaks the law will be punished.

The first step in drafting a good law on religion is to further emancipate our thinking by breaking loose from old bonds which were once regarded as untouchable. We must demonstrate the basic need for systematic reform of the work of administering religion, to widen our views and to develop new concepts and move into a new context. The key point is to protect the proper rights of religious believers and religious bodies, their temples and churches. During the process of drafting this law, the lawmakers must consult persons from religious circles and listen to the opinions of religious workers and legal experts. At present the Religious Affairs Bureau under the State Council has already organized a special group to carry out this task, and religious bodies are doing their best to help them. Several religious leaders are preparing a draft proposal of this law for presentation. I believe that a religious law which reflects Chinese characteristics and which can correctly define the relationship between government and religion under Socialist conditions will appear in the near future.

Thank you.

Section VI

Marxism, Religion, and Communist Party Membership

Introduction

Two articles, one from a 1981 Fujian newspaper, the other from a textbook on religion published in 1984, rehearse the ideological, political, and practical reasons why Party and Youth League members cannot be religious believers. The question often arises, and can be found again in the section on Youth and Religion in China Today in Part II of this book.

How does it happen that Party members convert to religion? According to Document 18, the loss of social discipline during the period of "leftist" leadership, the wrecking of the Party's work caused by the "gang of four," and the failure to educate Party members in basic Marxist teachings are at the heart of the problem. How to remedy the situation? Those religious fanatics who refuse to give up their religious convictions should be expelled from the Party. As for the others, they should be led to study Marxist theory and Party teachings with the goal of establishing a "firm Communist worldview." At the same time, the Party should help these members to solve the practical problems of their lives, such as ill health and marriage problems, and "make them really feel the love, concern, and warmth of the Party. . . . We cannot simply abandon this group of comrades, but should bring their political activism into full play, and at the same time . . . help them to acquire a dialectical and historical worldview and gradually throw off the bonds of religious ideology."

Document 17

Party and Communist Youth League Members Should Conscientiously Resist the Influence of Religious Ideas

By Ye Shuangyu in Fujian Daily, *23 October 1981. Translated in China Study Project* Bulletin, *No. 17, December 1981, pp. 27-29.*

The article reiterates the known policy that Party membership is not compatible with religious belief. It is an important statement in that it makes clear the ideological and political criteria on which the policy of freedom of religious belief is based.

The freedom of religion is our Party's consistent policy. While continuing to clear up the Leftist influence, we should correctly implement the Party's policy on religion. However, what merits attention is that in some parts of our province religious activities have gone beyond the bounds permitted by law and some religions have even infiltrated into our Party and CYL [Communist Youth League] organizations and have recruited believers among Party and CYL members. We must pay close attention to this matter. Each and every Party and CYL member must conscientiously resist the influence of religious ideas. . . .

Marxism, the CCP's guiding ideology and theoretical basis, was established and has been developed in the course of criticizing idealism and other decadent ideologies. It is a crystallization of social progress and human civilization. . . . The philosophic basis for Marxism and Communism is dialectical and historical materialism, which is the essence or core of the proletarian world outlook and thoroughly atheistic. It stands diametrically opposed to the idealistic theism consisting of religion and various feudal superstitions. The most fundamental viewpoint of dialectical and historical materialism is that man's social being determines his consciousness and the masses of people are the makers of history and the real masters of the world. Without the scientific truth of Marxism and dialectical and historical materialism there would have been no CCP, not to mention its correct leadership. . . . We are now undertaking the great cause of the four modernizations. Today, we need the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought as we did while striving for the victory of the new democratic revolution. This is where the vital interests of the entire people lie. Dialectical and historical materialism—the most thoroughgoing atheism—was, is, and will be the only world outlook of us Communists.

We uphold atheism, oppose theism, and do away with superstitions; this is determined by the nature of our Party. Communist Party and CYL members must not believe in religion or join a church, which is the Party's and

the CYL's most fundamental requirement for each and every Party and CYL member. When a Communist Party or CYL member believes in religion or joins a church, it essentially means that he has renounced his Marxist world outlook, thus forfeiting his minimum qualifications for Party or CYL membership. Therefore, it is absolutely impermissible for Party and CYL members to believe in religion or join a church. As for a very small number of Party and CYL members who believe in religion and participate in religious activities, we should do painstaking educational work among them and persuade them to give up their religious belief and to quit church activities. Those who refuse to do so should be persuaded to withdraw from the Party or the CYL. We must do this work meticulously, not in an oversimplified way.

Some people say, "The Constitution stipulates that citizens enjoy freedom to believe in religion. Since Party and CYL members are also citizens, they should therefore be allowed to enjoy this freedom." This view not only cannot serve as the basis for allowing Party and CYL members to believe in religion, but exactly shows that those holding such a view lack a basic understanding of the nature, guiding ideology, basic tasks, and components of the Communist Party and the CYL. True, Party and CYL members are citizens. However, there is a big difference between Party and CYL members on the one hand and citizens on the other because the latter cannot be called Party or CYL members. A Communist Party member in particular should not be confused with an ordinary person. Engels said that Communists are called practical atheists. As far as belief is concerned, Communist Party and CYL members not only should not believe in any religion but should regard it as their unshakable duty to publicize atheism.

In view of the long history of religion and its mass and national character and complexity, our Party and government have laid down and upheld the basic policy of freedom of religion and have formulated such regulations as permitting legal religious activities, dealing blows to and banning illegal religious activities, banning religion from interfering in politics and education, forbidding the inculcation of religious ideas into young people's minds, and prohibiting religious activities from disrupting production and public order. This policy and the regulations show that our Party trusts the masses, has respect for history, and proceeds from reality. The policy on religion, like other correct policies, should not go beyond the stage of historical development or fail to take the consciousness of the masses into account. However, it cannot be said on account of this that our Party has changed its understanding of the essence of religion and has given up its ideological struggle against religion. Particularly in our province, which is open to the outside world and in which a special economic policy is being implemented, the religious forces from abroad are stepping up their infiltration into the interior of the province; they are establishing a relationship with people, gathering information, and carrying out illegal activities. We must not lower our guard and give up the struggle against them.

Each of us Communist Party and CYL members must firmly establish the Communist world outlook, cherish great ideals, uphold materialism and atheism, conscientiously resist the influence of religious ideas, unite with patriotic personages in religious circles, and isolate and hit hard at those reactionaries who carry out illegal disruptive activities in the garb of religion, in order to maintain stability and unity and to promote the four modernizations.

Document 18

Communist Party Members Cannot Be Religious Believers

From Zongjiao Mantan *(Brief Talks on Religion), Zhejiang People's Press, third edition, 1984, pp. 124-31. Translated by Donald MacInnis.*

In recent years situations have arisen in a number of places where Communist Party members, even some basic-level cadres, have become religious believers. They read "the Bible," offer prayers, solicit donations, build shrines and temples, and worship Buddha [*qiu shen bai fo*]. Some of them not only take part in religious activities themselves, they also pull other people into their religion, increasing the membership. These actions have a very bad influence on the masses.

We must understand that this is not a normal phenomenon. The appearance of this phenomenon is due to errors of the longstanding "Leftist" leadership, in particular the negative consequences of the wrecking of the Party's constructive work caused by the counterrevolutionary gang of Lin Biao and Jiang Qing; it also is a result of relaxing our work in politics and thought, and neglecting the education of Party members in the basic teachings of Marxism and the Party. This should arouse the full concern of all levels of Party organs and the broad membership of the Party, because it reflects the ideological confusion of certain Party members and some new aspects of religious activities at the present time.

The very nature of the Party determines that Party members must be atheists and cannot be members of a religion.

Everyone knows that the Chinese Communist Party is the vanguard of the Chinese working class; its historical mission is to destroy all systems of exploitation and exploiting classes as well as all unfair and unreasonable social phenomena in our nation, and bring about a Communist social system. The basic principles and nature of our Party determine that members

must be atheists and cannot be religious believers. We will discuss the reasons why Communist Party members cannot be religious believers.

First, a religious worldview is directly contrary to the Communist worldview. The Chinese Communist Party takes Marxism, Leninism, and the thought of Mao Zedong as its guide and compass, upholding the scientific worldview of dialectical and historical materialism. Marxism is the only scientific theory for understanding and reforming the world. Only Marxism can scientifically reveal the laws of historical development of human society, show clearly the historical position and great mission of the proletariat, and point out the direction and the way to be taken by the proletariat and the working class in the struggle to change the old world and build a new one. Our Party is the party of the progressive working class; not only is it a party founded on the working class but it is also a party that uses the weapons of Marxist theory. A Communist Party member must guide his own life and work by firm belief in, and by adopting the standpoint, viewpoint, and methods of Marxism, Leninism, and the thought of Mao Zedong in order to correctly understand society and nature. This is the Party spirit which is required of every Party member.

But religion is a thought system diametrically opposed to science and atheism. In the words of Marx, it is a kind of "topsy-turvy worldview." All religions believe that mankind cannot understand or grasp the real world and its permutations, since everything in human experience, including human life and prosperity, disasters, and death, is considered to be unpredictable divine mystery controlled by "God" [*shangdi*], "true God," [*zhen zhu*] or Buddha. Humans are powerless in the face of "gods," and can only subordinate themselves to divine manipulation. The [alleged] existence of mystical supernatural forces is an absurd and distorted reflection of the forces of nature and society. In old China religion was the tool by which the dominant classes oppressed and hoodwinked the people, tying them tightly in a spiritual bondage. So a Communist Party member should be an atheist fighter, using dialectical materialism to expose the illusions of theism, and leading the people to gradually dispel the fog and bondage of religion. To give up this fighting task and believe in religion is to abandon the Party's scientific worldview and to lose the advanced nature of a Party member.

Next, it is contrary to the highest ideals of Marxism and our present struggle for a Party member to believe in religion. The ultimate goal of our Party is to bring about a Communist social system. The goal of our Party during the present period of struggle is to build a modernized, high-level, civilized, democratic, and socialist nation. This is an important stage of Communist development and is the universal wish of the whole Party and all the people after years of struggle. Party members should be the vanguard of the working class, with a Communist consciousness firmly based in the long-range ideals of Communism and of total struggle. Under the leadership of the Party's correct way, direction, and policy, they should give them-

selves completely, with whole heart and spirit, to spreading the spirit of serving the people, uniting with the masses, immersing self in hard work, plunging wholeheartedly into the great struggle to build a modernized nation, and in every way giving full play to the role of being a model and vanguard, to research new conditions, to resolve new questions, and to use their own wisdom and two hands to clear away the obstacles to building a modernized nation on the road ahead.

But religion is vigorously preaching that the real world is illusory, insignificant, and that human life is "like the life of a mayfly," brief and ephemeral, without meaning. Religion induces people to give up interest in the present life and to cease all efforts to find happiness and prosperity in this world. If a Party member believes this kind of propaganda, how can he give himself to the untiring struggle of the Party in the cause of modernizing China? How can he be a vanguard of the working class worthy of the name? . . .

In summary, if a Party member believes in religion he is going in the opposite direction from the Party and is not worthy to bear the name of Party member. A Party member should arm himself with a scientific worldview, and become a materialistic, atheistic, heroic fighter who never stops in the struggle to bring about the highest ideals of Socialism and Communism.

The fact that the Party carries out the policy of freedom of religious belief does not mean that Party members are free to believe in religion.

"Doesn't our national constitution guarantee freedom of religious belief?" Some Party members use this as the reason to justify their own religious belief. Or, when the Party organs get them together to teach them to give up religious belief and withdraw from religious organizations, some people still believe that this "violates the stipulations of the constitution."

This, in fact, is a confused understanding without foundation. Lenin said: "Religion is not a private matter when it relates to the party of the Socialist proletariat. Our Party is the liberating alliance of vanguard fighters with the working class. This alliance cannot, indeed must not, fail to be aware of the ignorance, nonsense, and lack of consciousness of religious believers. We insist on total separation of church and state, using pure ideological weapons, indeed using nothing but ideological weapons, our words and publications, to engage in the struggle with the miasma of religion. Like the Russian Social Democratic Party, we have established our organizations precisely so as to fight against anything that religion does to hoodwink the workers. We say that ideological struggle is not a private matter, but is a concern of the entire Party and the entire proletariat" [*Selected Works of Lenin*, vol. 10, p.64]. This is a basic attitude of the working-class party and its members for dealing with religion.

It is true that we should resolutely carry out the policy of religious belief

set forth in the constitution. Communist Party members should be models in obeying the constitution. But there are national laws for the nation, and Party rules for the Party. Besides obeying the national constitution, a working-class-party member must faithfully carry out the duties of a Party member, unconditionally obeying the Party program, Party constitution, and other rules of the Party, or he cannot be a Communist Party member.

It should be pointed out that the stipulation in our national constitution on freedom of religious belief refers to citizens of China. Party members are not ordinary citizens, nor are they ordinary workers among the masses; they are the vanguard of the working class with Communist consciousness, who maintain an important criterion of the Communist vanguard, namely, loyalty to and faith in Marxist scientific truth and in no way believe in religious theology. If one believes that religion is a private matter as it relates to the Marxist Party, and that freedom of religious belief is all right for Party members, then one is downgrading the Party to the level of any ordinary mass organization and downgrading Party members to the status of any ordinary citizen; how can one then speak of the vanguard nature of the Party and the leadership example to be set by Party members? If one says that some Party members insist on believing in religious theology because they enjoy the freedom of religious belief of ordinary citizens, then he is arranging his own funeral as a Party member. Since he cannot enjoy his "freedom" and at the same time remain in the Party, he must resign from the Party. So we must make it very clear that a Party member cannot retain religious belief; he cannot believe in religion, or attend any religious activity or any religious organization. This upholds the principle of the vanguard nature of the Party and the Communist purity of the Party's troops.

Some comrades ask, "Can members of the Communist Youth League believe in religion?" The answer also is negative. We know that the CYL is a mass organization of vanguard youth which assists the Party under the leadership of Marxism, Leninism, and Mao Zedong Thought. CYL members should assiduously study and acquire knowledge of culture, theory, science, and technology, and establish a historical and dialectical materialist worldview, faith in science, love of truth, and a wholehearted ideological commitment to serve the people; they should strive to be shock workers in building a Socialist material and spiritual civilization, rather than religious believers who reject the world. By its very nature the CYL determines that its members cannot at the same time be religious believers.

Party organs should educate Party members who are led astray into religion to give up their religious belief.

Since Party members cannot believe in religion, then how should Party organs correctly deal with Party members who have already joined a religion?

It must be said that there are some Party members who believe in religion who are truly odious. Not only do they believe in religion, they instigate religious fanaticism, even to the point of using religion to stir up opposition to the four basic principles, the Party's way, its direction, and its policies. These people, whose standpoint as a Party member has already perished, should be expelled from the Party if they don't change, or if they continue to say both "yes and no" [feign compliance] after going through criticism and education.

Aside from these few we should look at some other Party members who are religious believers, especially those whose political consciousness and ideological thinking are questionable, because they have not sufficiently studied the theories of Marxism and basic knowledge of the Party, have not established a firm Communist worldview or outlook on life, and cannot find a clear way out or a rational explanation of the difficulties they meet in daily life. Engels said, "There are bound to be people of every class who search for spiritual liberation and consolation as a substitute for material liberation in which they have lost hope" *(Selected Works of Marx and Engels*, vol. 19, p. 334). We must first give these comrades adequate education in the Party's way, direction, and policies, in a Marxist and atheist worldview, and in basic knowledge of the Party, so that they can know clearly what direction to go, see the road ahead, and strengthen their faith. We need to help them to draw a clear line between atheism and theism, to know the essence of religion and its illusory and deceptive nature, and raise their political and ideological consciousness.

At the same time we should thoroughly and meticulously analyze and understand the reasons why these comrades believe in religion in order to strengthen the ideological work directed against religion. The Party organs should help to solve problems encountered by Party members in their work, daily lives, marriage, health, and so on, and make them really feel the love, concern, and warmth of the Party. The Party should help them to give up religion and resign from religious organizations of their own free will. If these comrades obey the admonitions of the Party and give up their religious belief and in fact do engage in earnest study and concrete work, then they should not be looked down upon. But if they still hold on to their religious belief after undergoing a period of study, they should be expelled from the Party according to the basic principles of the Party organization. This is absolutely necessary in order to preserve the purity and the vanguard nature of the Party organization and its membership.

As for those national minorities where the entire population are religious believers, enforcement of this policy of course must be carried out according to actual conditions, adopting appropriate measures. There is no simple way to deal with this. One must look at the fact that there are still a significant number of Party members among the national minorities who, although they follow the Party's road, and actively carry out the Party's work and follow the Party's regulations, are still unable to completely free

themselves from religious influences. We cannot simply abandon this group of comrades, but should bring into full play their political activism, and at the same time conduct patient and painstaking ideological work, helping them to acquire a dialectical and historical worldview, and gradually throw off the bonds of religious ideology. As Party membership grows in number, it is of course necessary to take very seriously the fact that excessive pressure should not be used to bring religious believers who have pronounced religious feelings into the Party.

These principles are equally appropriate in dealing with members of the Communist Youth League. The CYL organization should thoroughly study the reasons why some members believe in religion and should give them earnest help to give up their religious belief by patient and convincing teaching. If, after receiving education over a period of time, they are still unwilling to give up their religious belief, they can be expelled from the League. The League should be careful the way they handle the expulsion so as not to hurt their feelings.

Section VII

Policy on Avoiding Waste and Extravagance in Religious Practices

Introduction

One of the arguments used by Chinese Marxists, who find no utilitarian value in religion, is that it wastes time and money that could be better spent contributing to the nation's gross national product. Since the constitution guarantees freedom of religious belief, it also, by implication, guarantees the right to have and build places of worship. However, permission to refurbish and reopen churches long used for other purposes and to use scarce land and building materials to erect new churches, temples, and mosques must be granted by the government. The Religious Affairs Bureau, at local or provincial levels, is the mediating agency between the religious group and relevant government offices. It is not clear who sets the quota on how many such buildings can be built, or what the deciding factors are, but we know that there is a shortage and that many religious districts and dioceses are waiting for permission to repair and reopen decrepit churches and temples or build new ones. Even so, new churches, temples, and shrines are springing up in many places, causing concern in government circles. Moreover, excessive spending on weddings, funerals, and religious festivals is seen as unnecessary extravagance, which indeed it often is, leading to long-term indebtedness for an entire family.

Again, it is hard to draw the line between legitimate religious activities and illegal superstitious practices. Document 20 warns against wizards and witches who infiltrate some localities "in the name of the gods," intimidating people into giving them money, spreading fallacies, and upsetting social order.

Finally, we have an argument that materialists would find hard to refute: that rural areas with a shortage of schoolrooms would do better to build schools than spend money on new shrines, temples, and family tombs.

Document 19

Shanxi Party Committee Issues Circular on Extravagance and Waste around Religious Festivals

Shanxi Provincial Radio, 29 December 1985. Translated in JPRS-CPS-86-014, 28 January 1986, pp. 83-84.

The general offices of the Shanxi Provincial CPC Committee and Shanxi Provincial People's Government have jointly issued an urgent circular on the strict prohibition of extravagance and waste and of giving banquets and gifts around New Year's Day and Spring Festival.

The circular says: It will soon be New Year's Day 1986 and the Spring Festival. The number of commemorative meetings, receptions, and tea parties in all places will obviously increase. The problems of giving banquets and gifts and of extravagant eating and drinking in some places and units have frequently arisen. This runs counter to the spirit of the circular of the general offices of the CPC Central Committee and State Council. A high degree of attention by CPC committees and governments at all levels must be drawn to this.

With a view to resolutely curbing the unhealthy trends of extravagance and waste and of giving banquets and gifts, after studies by the provincial CPC Committee and provincial People's Government, they issued a circular saying the following:

1. Around New Year's Day and the Spring Festival, the provincial CPC Committee and provincial People's Government must not hold receptions and group meetings for the purpose of mutual congratulations around these holidays. Except for the necessary army-people get-togethers and receptions for foreign guests and overseas Chinese, and [words indistinct], departments concerned at the provincial level and prefectures and cities must not hold tea parties and receptions. When these are necessary, they must hold them in a thrifty way and provide only tea.

2. Leading cadres at all levels must not extort anything from the lower levels or purchase Spring Festival goods at low prices. The lower levels are not allowed to give banquets and gifts to the higher levels under any pretexts. It is essential to advocate holding weddings in a thrifty way and to oppose holding weddings extravagantly, and to oppose all extravagance and waste. It is imperative to strictly deal with the serious cases in which leading cadres who give extravagant banquets and extort engagement gifts under the pretext of weddings, which produces very bad efforts.

3. Party and government organs and leading cadres at all levels must act as models in implementing the instructions of the central authorities, State

Council, provincial CPC Committee, and Provincial People's Government on improving work style, take the lead in establishing good work style, and promote a basic improvement of Party style and the general mood of society.

The circular demands that all places and departments seriously inspect all activities arranged around New Year's Day and the Spring Festival and correct as soon as possible anything which does not conform to the above spirit.

Document 20

Indiscriminate Building of Temples in Rural Areas Should Be Curbed

By Wu Ming in Nanfang Ribao, *5 June 1983. Translated in FE 7049, 11 June 1982 and reprinted in China Study Project* Documentation, *October 1982, pp. 46-47.*

Several days ago, I was on a business trip to other places and discovered smoke curling up from some newly built temples in rural communes and production brigades where men and women, young and old, come to worship. An old comrade who traveled with me observed that this practice was far more common than in the 1950s. As far as I know, the indiscriminate building of temples has increased the economic load of the masses and encouraged feudal superstitious activities in the rural areas. Many commune members strongly object to this. However, some cadres in these localities are indifferent to this phenomenon and say, "The State has built large temples, and so the peasants have built small ones. Why should we bother about this?" It seems quite necessary to discuss the question of whether or not we should interfere in the indiscriminate building of temples in the rural areas.

What does "the State building large temples" actually mean? It seems that in the past few years, some famous temples which exert a great influence and are valuable cultural relics have been repaired in some localities. These famous temples are not only places of religious activities, but have always been places of historic interest and scenic beauty which the masses like to visit very much. They are being repaired in implementation of the Party's religious policy by providing necessary places for normal religious activities and to preserve historical relics so that there may be more beautiful places to visit. However, we should make it clear that when the State approves the repair of some famous temples, it does not mean that the State encourages the building of temples, and much less does it mean that

the resources and funds of the State or collectives can be used to build temples.

Respecting and protecting the freedom of religious belief is the Party's basic policy on religion. However, we oppose the indiscriminate building of temples. At present, many localities have engaged in large-scale construction of temples, wasting a lot of manpower, materials, and funds. This is very harmful. A commune in Haifeng county, for example, has recently built over fifty new temples. Some villages have built temples for the Earth God, temples for Erlang, temples for the God of the Southern Heaven, temples for Guangong, temples for the Holy Mother, and so on. The building of a new temple costs 2,000 to 3,000 *yuan*.

After a temple is built, the so-called celebration activities of giving theatrical performances again need thousands of *yuan*. The money is subscribed from the villagers. The commune members have to bear expenses for building the temple and for giving the performances. Besides, they also have to provide food and lodgings for their relatives who come to see the performances. Consequently, some commune members have to sell rice and even borrow money for such purposes and they pour out endless grievances. How can we not interfere in these activities?

What is noteworthy is that after the temples are indiscriminately built in some localities, some wizards and witches begin to make trouble. In the name of the gods, they blackmail those who do not subscribe money by putting up notices stating that "such and such persons will have no son." So the masses dare not disobey them. Under the pretext of restoring temples, some wizards, witches and lawless elements wantonly occupy schools, medical centers, and headquarters of production brigades and production teams and put up notices everywhere, spreading fallacies to deceive people. This has seriously impaired normal social order and production. What they are doing has greatly exceeded the range of religious activities. Their activities should be resolutely banned and offenders who have seriously violated the criminal law should be punished according to the law.

Implementing the religious policy and protecting the freedom of religious belief should never be interpreted as slackening the propaganda of atheism. We are duty bound to educate the peasants with Marxism and to strengthen the building of a spiritual civilization in the rural areas so that the peasants may shake off ignorance and superstition. We should properly work to curb the indiscriminate building of temples in the rural areas. It is wrong to remain indifferent and not to interfere.

Document 21

Building Temples or Schoolhouses?

China Daily, *1 June 1987, p.4.*

In recent years, there has been a craze for building temples in the countryside, while the improvement of poor-quality schoolhouses has been ignored. There is a striking contrast in some villages—the temple is the best building, while the school is the worst. An article by Jia Dechang in *Economic Daily* commented on the phenomenon. Excerpts follow:

Some poverty-stricken areas pinned their hopes of becoming rich on spiritual blessings, instead of relying on their own efforts.

A pavilion for the "god of heaven" was built in a village when there was a drought. The villagers wanted to petition the god for rain, but while doing so they missed the right season for planting.

The craze has also found its way to some comparatively rich areas such as Wenzhou in Zhejiang Province, which is famous for its highly developed township-run economy. Apart from building temples, some people there even use cement to build tombs for themselves. A few young people have gone so far as to build high-quality tombs for themselves although they are only in their twenties.

This is a waste of labor and money. There are still many who are struggling just to feed themselves, although the living standard of most farmers has improved. It is of no help to the collective or the individual to throw money into building useless temples.

In the May 4th Movement of 1919, the pioneers of democratic revolution devoted themselves to the struggle against feudalism and superstition. Just after the founding of new China, the farmers rose to pull down temples and destroy idols in the agrarian reform. Later on, ideological education was given to farmers to counter superstition.

Why should feudal superstitions revive today?

The opinion that this is the outcome of the development of market-oriented economy and the open policy is groundless.

This is not a new problem, but an old one left in history.

Administrative measures are not enough to combat superstition. The scientific and cultural level of the nation must be raised.

Education is the most important means of improving the cultural level.

Education is undeveloped in the countryside, and the average school-

house area for primary- and middle-school pupils is far from the standard set by the State.

The State pays 100 million *yuan* every year for the building of schoolhouses for primary and middle schools in remote and poor areas. This aid began in 1983.

However, schoolhouses in most primary and middle schools in the countryside are in poor condition, and this affects the development of education.

Education in the countryside would take on a new look if the craze for building temples could be turned into one for building schoolhouses.

Section VIII

Religion and Religious Policy Explained in a Textbook for Young People

Introduction

Zongjiao Gujintan (Religion Yesterday and Today) is a 235-page book, written in short chapters and easy style, published in the Friends of Youth Series by the Shanghai People's Publishing Co. in 1985. Its purpose is to provide basic information about the origins of religion, the development of the great world religions, the religions of China, and answers to basic questions about the religious policies of China under Socialism. This last section is translated here.

The author makes it clear in the introduction to the book that he writes from a Marxist viewpoint: "The theories of Marxism about religion gave clear direction for my research. . . . If we use the methods and viewpoints of historical and material determinism to analyze concretely the facts of ancient and contemporary religions of China within definite historical periods, then we can cut through all kinds of fog and obfuscation to see that sources for the birth and evolution of religion are not found in heaven but are here among humankind."

After a concise historical overview of religion among the Han Chinese, the author addresses a series of questions about religion and religious policy since Liberation. Why does the constitution guarantee freedom of religious belief? It is "to ensure that questions of religious belief are personal matters for all citizens," for the basic task is "to strengthen the unity of the entire nation, both believers and non-believers, to carry out the modernization and unification of our country for the sake of China."

Which religious activities are considered normal, and why should temples, monasteries, and churches be repaired and reopened? The answers to these and similar questions are utilitarian, pragmatic, with never a reference to the spiritual needs or spiritual contributions of religious believers, although the list of normal activities includes worship, prayers, and preaching. If the religious policy is to be carried out, places of worship will be needed. But (and much more space is given to this line of reasoning), many of these churches, temples, and monasteries are famous "both inside and outside China for their historical and cultural value" and should be preserved. And many of them are, in fact, tourist meccas with thousands of

visitors each year, including many from abroad. Religion is a cultural artifact that earns both foreign exchange and international goodwill.

Illegal superstitious activities are defined, differentiating such "superstitious customs" of the rural people, as worshiping ancestors from the illegal activities of shamans and sorcerers. Patient education and "vigorous building of a Socialist spiritual civilization" will eventually take care of this heritage of old habits and customs.

Finally, the young readers of this book are given reasons why members of the Party and Communist Youth League cannot be religious believers. "The basic task of the CYL is to educate young people in the spirit of Marxism. When an advanced young person joins the CYL he has already made the free choice not to believe in religion. He has already consciously become an atheist, not a theist."

Document 22

Excerpts from *Religion Yesterday and Today (Zongjiao Gujintan)*

By Zhang Sui; a volume in the Friends of Youth Series, Shanghai People's Publishing Co., 1985, pages i-iii, and 219-35. Translated by Tam Waiyi and Donald MacInnis.

Preface

Religion is both a historical phenomenon and an ideology which has had a heavy influence on the development of human history down to the present time, when many people still believe in various religions. What then, after all, is this false, illusory, and upside-down reflection of objective existence? What influence has religion had on the course of human history in different historical periods? Why is it that religion still has a protracted existence in society under Socialism? These questions have aroused my deep interest in religious research.

In my daily life and work I come into contact with many young friends who are eager to learn, including university students, young workers, teachers, cadres, journalists, editors, and librarians. They express their deep desire to know the basic principles, viewpoints, and facts about religion, having encountered many religious questions and religious phenomena in their daily lives, such as: visiting famous mountains and temples, where they saw impressive, gilded statues of Buddha; or hearing the sounds of pipe organ music while passing by a church; or viewing religious works of art by great masters displayed at art exhibitions; or seeing religious themes portrayed in movies, television, and novels; or in meeting devoted religious

believers among their circle of young acquaintances. I have been inspired by contacts with these young friends to write this book.

Because there are many religions with long histories, and many volumes of sacred scriptures, both in China and elsewhere in the world, it is impossible to carry out a thorough and systematic exposition of religion in this small book. Rather, we will take a few cases to represent the whole, dividing the book into three sections: exploration, information, and policy, explaining and discussing those questions in which young people have interest and need for understanding. We wish to provide the reader with a general understanding of religious questions and religious policy, and basic information about the birth and the spread into China of the three great world religions—Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. We will also speak of the emergence and development of indigenous Daoism in China, and of questions related to the religious policies of China under Socialism.

It is said that religion is a very complex historical phenomenon. If we just go around in circles focusing on the grotesque and bizarre religions, we will certainly feel befuddled. But if we use the methods and viewpoints of historical and material determinism to analyze concretely the facts of ancient and contemporary religions of China within definite historical periods, then we can cut through all kinds of fog and obfuscation to see that sources for the birth and evolution of religion are not found in heaven but are here among humankind. In this way all kinds of strange religious phenomena can be clearly explained.

With regard to religious questions, it is the basic policy of the Party and the State to respect and protect freedom of religious belief. This is clearly stipulated in our national constitution. The essence of the policy of freedom of religious belief is that each citizen has freedom of choice; it is a personal matter for each citizen. We must carry out this policy of dealing with religious questions, and base it on a firm footing so that all religious believers and nonbelievers alike will enthusiastically love Socialist China and join together in the common struggle towards the goal of building a strong, Socialist nation.

It has been a learning exercise for me to write this book. The theories of Marxism about religion gave clear direction for my research. The result of the research work of scholars of religion, history, and archeology have enriched my knowledge, clearing the paths of my thinking and informing me greatly.

Since my [scholarly] level is limited, I'm afraid it is impossible to avoid errors and shortcomings in this work. I sincerely ask that all readers, specialists, and senior scholars will freely offer suggestions. . . .

What Is the General Situation of Religion in China?

Many religions have entered and spread throughout China. Buddhism has a history of about two thousand years in China, Daoism over seventeen

hundred, and Islam over thirteen hundred years. Christianity came to China as early as the Tang dynasty, but it did not really spread throughout the nation until after the Opium Wars. In the course of their dissemination in China, these organized [systematic] religions evolved in different degrees, reflecting special aspects of Chinese culture. But whether historically or in the present time, the number of believers belonging to these organized religions has amounted to only a small proportion of our total population. Statistically, there are about ten million Muslims, over three million Catholics, and three million Protestant Christians [in China today]. It is difficult to compile accurate statistics on Buddhists, while Daoists in China are very few, and not very influential. Some of the national minorities are believers in primitive religions.

Looking at religions geographically, they occupy about two-thirds of the area of our country. Catholic and Protestant Christians are found mainly in central, south, north, southwest, and east China, and in Beijing, Tianjin, and other districts. Tibetan Buddhism is found mainly in the Tibetan Autonomous Region and the areas of Qinghai and Gansu provinces, the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, the western part of Sichuan province, the northwest part of Yunnan province, and other districts inhabited by Tibetans.

Theravada Buddhism is found mainly in southern Yunnan and neighboring regions. Buddhism among the Han Chinese is found in all parts of China, but the number of real believers among them is very small. Muslims inhabit broad areas of China, mainly the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, Qinghai, Shaanxi, Yunnan, and other provinces where the Hui minorities live. There are ten national minorities in China in which almost the entire population are Muslims: Hui, Uyghur, Kazakh, Dongxiang, Sala, Kirgiz, Uzbek, Pao'an, Tartar, and Turkic.

Believers in primitive religions are still found among over thirty national minorities in China, mainly in the Tibetan Autonomous Region; Yunnan, Sichuan, Guizhou, and Hunan Provinces; the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region; Guangdong, Taiwan, and Heilongjiang provinces; the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region; and other provinces and districts. The reasons for the historical and geographical spread of the religions in China and the situation of primitive religious belief among the national minorities before Liberation, as well as that of other religions, are all intimately related.

There are "five characteristics" of religion in the period of Socialism in China. These were proposed by Comrade Li Weihan after completing his analysis of the religious situation in China. These are: its mass nature, its democratic nature, its international nature, its protracted nature, and its complex nature. In order to know how to deal with religious questions under Socialism it is very important to understand these "five characteristics.". . .

What Are the Special Features of Religion among the Han Chinese?

Since most Chinese are ethnic Hans it is very important to analyze the situation of religion among them. We will give a general picture of that situation in this chapter.

The First Characteristic

The main impression we get from the legacy of ancient deifications inherited from the time of the Xia people, the ancestors of the Hans, is that such legendary figures as Pan Gu, Nu Huo, and Fu Xi Si, were human and not divine [people and not gods]. Although there are some divine elements in this tradition, they are mainly used to describe the contributions and achievements of these traditional personages in technology, craftsmanship, military prowess, and so on. In fact they represent the "humanization" of the level of productivity of certain historical periods, as they had developed. Among the deities of the ancient Chinese people, there were numerous legends about the Yellow Emperor, the Yen Emperor, and such other legendary figures such Sui Rensi, Yu Changsi, Shen Lingsi, but many national groups in China regard them simply as great people, and consider themselves to be their descendants. This is different from the tradition of the ancient Hebrews [Israelites], who regarded themselves as descendants of "God" [Jehovah]. For example the "History of Wei," one of twenty-four volumes of the "Ancient History of China," which records the origins of the Xianbei nationality who once lived in north China, says that these people were descended from one of the twenty-five sons of the Huang Emperor, Changyi, who was ruler of the north. There was a Xianbei Mountain, hence their name. Obviously there is nothing about divinity in this legend.

The Second Characteristic

The proportion of Han religious believers among China's total population has been quite small for over two thousand years up to the time just prior to Liberation. Although the worship of Buddha and other deities among the Chinese people has been quite widespread, they have never limited themselves to a single religion or sect; rather, they have worshiped Buddhism's "Amitofu" and "Guanyin," Daoism's god of wealth, the "stove god," and the "three gods" of prosperity, longevity, and good fortune, [*fu, shou, lu*]. The "nonexclusivity" of religious belief among the Han Chinese is one of the few characteristics of their religious beliefs.

The Third Characteristic

Although there are not many followers of systematic religion among the Hans, concepts of "gods and ghosts" and "soul and spirit" were rather widespread before Liberation, when the people stood in awe of many gods and ghosts, and gave heavy religious content to their funeral ceremonies. These ideas about "gods and ghosts" and "soul and spirit" are still influential today.

The Fourth Characteristic

The ruling class throughout China's history has never legally forced one religion, a so-called state religion, on all the people. This is true for each of the many emperors from Qin and Han down to the Qing. Although there were many believers in various deities and practitioners of Daoism's "eternal life," the ruling thought system of the emperors, beginning with Han Wu, was Confucianism. Many emperors used religion to reinforce their rule, hoping to gain the protection of the gods by worshiping them. But whenever the forces of organized religion threatened the control of the ruling class, they either put strict limitations on it or stamped it out. Four times in the history of the Han Chinese there were incidents of "exterminating Buddhism" [*mie fo*]. Strong and prosperous dynasties were tolerant of organized religion and followed policies of "treating everyone alike" and "accepting things of diverse nature." The Tang Emperor Tai Zong, the Yuan Emperor Shi-zu, and the Qing Emperor Kang Xi all followed such policies.

Although there are many historical records showing how the ruling class repressed the religions of the people, most of them were not for religious reasons but because of other things that happened which had a direct connection with the people's religion.

The Fifth Characteristic

In the Han society it was the ruling thought system, Confucianism, which imposed restraints on the development of organized religion. The principle concept of Confucianism, the concept of "the will of heaven" and the general principles of feudalism, were in conflict with the teachings of Buddhism and the other great religions. The Confucian concept of "the will of heaven" was spread among the people by the feudal literati. These included such ideas as "Fate determines life and death, heaven [*tian*] determines prosperity and wealth" and "People can try, but success depends on heaven"; such ideas controlled the actions of the people. This "heaven-determined fate" way of thinking led many of the people away from reliance on religion to reliance on themselves to "change" their own destiny. This is one of the reasons why there weren't many followers of organized religion among the Han Chinese. . . .

Why Have There Been Fundamental Changes in the Religious Situation in China?

During the long period of feudal society in China, and the semifeudal, semicolonial society of the years 1840-1949, the use of the major religions as a prop was an important factor in maintaining the system of exploitation

by the ruling class. The landlords, slave owners, counterrevolutionary warlords, and bureaucratic capitalists principally used and controlled Buddhism, Daoism, and Islam. Later, the forces of foreign colonialism and imperialism principally used and controlled the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches. . . . .

After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the Party and State adopted a policy of freedom of religious belief, which is the basic policy for dealing with religious questions. After a series of major social changes, and reforms in the religious system, the religions of China have been profoundly transformed.

First, following the destruction of the exploiting classes and the exploiting system under Socialism in China, the class sources of religion have been eliminated. Generally speaking, religious questions have now become internal questions of thinking and belief.

Second, China has become a strong, great, and independent Socialist nation. The foreign Protestant and Catholic imperialist forces have been cleared away. The many patriotic members of these churches have mounted anti-imperialism campaigns, and now follow the road of independence, autonomy, and self-propagation. There are now eight national religious organizations: the Chinese Buddhist Association, the Chinese Daoist Association, the Chinese Islamic Association, the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, the Chinese Catholic Church Affairs Commission, the Chinese Catholic Bishops' Conference, the Chinese Protestant "Three-Self" Patriotic Movement, and the Protestant China Christian Council.

Third, since there is economic benefit for all, religious believers and nonbelievers work hard together with the Party and the State for the four modernizations. A great change that has taken place in Socialist society is the respect given to religion and the guarantee of social status for religious believers. This is reflected in the religious thought of each religion, and is principally shown in the joining of love of country with love of religion. The fact that all religious workers participate in the great cause of Socialist nation building is seen in such slogans as "Love your nation, love religion; glorify God and benefit all the people" (Protestant circles) and "We share with others the joy and benefit of this our holy land" (Buddhist circles). Such slogans have received enthusiastic support and response from great numbers of religious believers.

In summary, this section explains how the religious situation in China has been fundamentally transformed. . . .

How Can We Correctly Understand the Policy of Freedom of Religious Belief?

On 4 December 1982, the Fifth Session of the Fifth Plenary of the National People's Congress approved Section 2, Article 36 of the revised

national constitution, under the heading "The basic rights and obligations of citizens." Article 36 reads:

> All citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief.
>
> No organ of state, mass organization or person is allowed to force any citizen to believe or not to believe in religion. It is not permitted to discriminate against any citizen who believes or does not believe in religion.
>
> The State protects legitimate religious activities. No person is permitted to use religion to conduct counter-revolutionary activities or activities disruptive to social order, harming people's health, or obstructing the educational system of the country.

Religion May Not Be Subject to the Control of Foreign Countries.

This article of the national constitution sets forth the basic policy for dealing with religious questions in China during the Socialist period. We must fully and correctly understand this policy. What is freedom of religious belief? Citizens of the People's Republic of China have freedom to believe in religion and freedom not to believe in religion; they can believe in this religion or in that religion; they have the right to believe in one or another of the various sects within a religion; those who are unbelievers have the right to believe in religion and those who are believers have the right to give up their religious belief. The long-term policy of the Party and State is to respect and protect freedom of religious belief.

We should clearly understand that the essence of this policy of freedom of religious belief is to ensure that questions of religious belief are personal matters for all citizens. By making freedom of religion a basic right of citizens, the constitution is making it very clear that this is a matter of personal choice for each citizen. All normal religious activities and religious beliefs are protected by the constitution. No one can force citizens to believe or not to believe in religion; there can be no bias against citizens who believe or against citizens who do not believe in religion.

Religious believers and nonbelievers alike share equally in the political and economic benefits of the great household of our Socialist nation. We all join efforts under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and the people's government in the struggle to build a strong, modernized Socialist nation. We should not neglect nor deny the basic political and economic benefits for either religious believers or nonbelievers, for if we do we forget that our basic task is to strengthen the unity of the entire population (including both religious believers and nonbelievers), and to carry out the modernization and unification of our country for the sake of China! No one is permitted to use force in dealing with questions of religious belief; to do so will not only fail to solve questions relating to belief, thinking, and

the spiritual world, but it will increase misunderstanding among religious believers and nonbelievers, will harm the unity of all ethnic groups, and damage the cause of Socialist modernization.

The national constitution also clearly stipulates that religion cannot be used to carry on activities destructive of the social order, or injurious to the health of our body of citizenry, or obstructive to our nation's educational system. Religious organizations and activities cannot be controlled by forces outside China. This also is an important part of our religious policy. Only in this way can religious activities move in the right direction.

In summary, only this policy of freedom of religious belief based on the theories and principles laid down by Marxism, Leninism, and the actual conditions in China is the correct religious policy for benefiting the people. We should earnestly study, thoroughly comprehend, and conscientiously carry out this policy.

Which Religious Activities Are Considered Normal?

The national constitution stipulates that the State will protect normal religious activities. So what are normal religious activities? Religious functions carried on by religious believers in religious places such as temples, monasteries, churches, and mosques which are considered normal include: reading scriptures, worshiping Buddha, burning incense, other forms of worship, prayers, preaching, expounding scripture, celebrating Mass, baptisms, observing religious commandments, practicing vegetarianism, seeking grace [*cui en*], and carrying on religious customs in the homes of religious believers such as meditation, prayers, reading scriptures, fasting, and theological study. All these are considered normal religious activities. These functions of patriotic and self-supporting religious organizations are protected by law, and no one can interfere with them. All religious places (such as temples, monasteries, churches, etc.) are administered [*guan li*] by religious organizations and religious clergy under the administrative leadership of the Religious Affairs Bureau of the people's government. No one can carry on atheistic propaganda in these temples, monasteries, and churches, or initiate debate about atheism and theism among religious believers. On the other hand no religious organization or person can preach, evangelize, or propagate theism or distribute religious tracts or any other religious publications not approved by government authorities outside those places of worship. . . .

Why Should Temples, Monasteries, and Churches Be Repaired, Restored, and Reopened?

In recent years our country has planned and carried out repairs, restoration, and reopening of a number of temples, monasteries, and churches in various parts of China. This is to completely carry out the policy of

freedom of religious belief of the Party and State by providing the necessary material conditions for conducting normal religious activities. It is easy to see that it will be difficult to implement a policy of freedom of religious belief if there are no appropriate places in which to carry on normal religious activities.

Among the temples, monasteries, and churches already reopened, there are many that are not only places of religious activities but are also famous both inside and outside China for their historical and cultural value: for example, Daming Temple in Yangzhou, the Guoqing Temple on Tiantai Mountain in Zhejiang, the Huajue Temple in Xi'an, the Putuo Mountain temples in Zhejiang, the Shaoling Temple on Song Mountain, the temples on Omei and Qingcheng mountains in Sichuan, the Catholic Xujiahui Cathedral in Shanghai, and other famous mountains and ancient cultural sites. These temples, monasteries, and churches are managed by religious organizations and religious clergy under the leadership of the Religious Affairs Bureau of the government.

Many temples, monasteries, churches, and holy places on famous mountains have been fully restored through the careful, meticulous repair work, preservation, and management of specialists. The rare antiquities, precious scriptures, and Buddha figures bright and gleaming with new gilding have been carefully preserved. Not only do religious believers go there to worship Buddha, burn incense, and offer prayers, but even more nonbelievers from among the masses go to these scenic places and visit these sacred sites to enjoy their quiet environment and to study and learn about the ancient and precious cultural and artistic heritage of China.

On visiting the temples, monasteries, and churches in these famous places we should be conscious and respectful of the policy of freedom of religious belief set forth in our constitution and not interfere in the normal religious activities of religious believers and clergy in these places, nor should atheistic propaganda be carried on there. Also, the buildings and cultural artifacts (such as engraved stone steles, sculptures, and paintings) should be protected from damage such as random graffiti or carving. These buildings and artifacts are a precious historical heritage of our nation, the fruits of the labor and wisdom of our ancestors. When young friends visit these places, they should consciously study them from the angles of sociology, culture, fine arts, and so on, in order to enrich their knowledge for their lasting benefit. . . .

How Can We Rigorously Differentiate Normal Religious Activities from Those That Are Superstitious and Illegal?

We have already discussed normal religious activities in previous chapters. No one can meddle with normal religious activities which are protected by law. So what are feudal superstitious practices?

So-called illegal superstitions are feudalistic superstitious practices

which hoodwink the masses, spreading fallacies, deceiving the people, cheating and swindling, harming people's lives, corroding people's thinking, corrupting social norms, and undermining the building of a spiritual and material Socialist civilization. Such illegal practices should be abolished according to the law. Nor does the law allow counterrevolutionary practices which have already been abolished to be revived. All destructive, counterrevolutionary activities and illegal, criminal practices which operate under the cover of religion should be resolutely attacked according to the law. Anyone who breaks the laws of the nation, no matter what religious form their actions take, must be punished according to the law. Only in this way can normal religious activities be reliably protected.

As for those persons who depend on illegal superstitious practices for their livelihood, they must be helped and educated so they will give up their evil practices and take part in productive labor, becoming self-supporting workers. Those persons who "use superstition to spread false rumors and swindle people" must be dealt with severely and punished as the law provides, according to Article 165 of the criminal code. We must never "mistakenly take the eyeballs of a fish to be pearls," that is, allow those persons who, pretending to carry on normal religious activities, in fact swindle people and bring harm to the four modernizations with their illegal activities while going scot-free.

Superstitious thinking is still widespread among the masses, and particularly in those districts which are rather backward, where some of the people still carry on superstitious practices such as worshiping their ancestors on New Year's day and other festivals, offering prayers to the gods of heaven, earth, wealth, and the likes. These are questions of ordinary thought and understanding, habits and customs, and should be differentiated from the illegal activities of shamans and sorcerers. Only when these old customs and habits and backward ways of thinking are dealt with by patient and persuasive education, vigorously building a Socialist spiritual civilization by spreading scientific knowledge and promoting the "five sayings and four beauties" campaign, will we begin to solve this problem. . . .

Why Can't Members of the Chinese Communist Party and the Communist Youth League Be Religious Believers?

Since the national constitution stipulates the right to freely believe in religion for all citizens, then why can't Chinese Communist Party and Communist Youth League [CYL] members also be religious believers, because they too are citizens?

We have already noted above that this provision of the constitution has two meanings: citizens have freedom of religious belief and freedom not to believe in religion. When a person becomes a Party member he has already made the free choice not to believe in religion. A Party member is not the same as an ordinary citizen; he is a member of the Marxist political party. Since the Party takes dialectical and historical materialism as its theoretical base, there is no question but that Party members must be atheists, not theists. Therefore Party members must not believe in religion or take part in religious activities.

Those grass-roots Party members who live among national minorities where nearly everyone is a religious believer must draw a clear line of distinction with regard to religion, while respecting and abiding by the customs and habits of the local people in their daily lives. Because weddings, funerals, and holy-day observances of the people all are colored by religious traditions and are an essential part of the people's habits and customs, it is useful for Party members to join with the people in these activities, thereby strengthening unity with the nationalities. This is quite different from actually taking part in religious activities and should be clearly differentiated.

The same reasoning applies to CYL members. The constitution of the CYL stipulates that its members are the helpers and reserve troops for the CCP, who firmly support the principles of the CCP, Marxism, Leninism, and the thought of Mao Zedong as their guide and compass. The basic task of the CYL is to educate young people in the spirit of Marxism. When an advanced young person joins the CYL he has already made the free choice not to believe in religion. He has already consciously become an atheist and not a theist. There is no question about it, CYL members cannot be religious believers nor can they take part in religious activities.

It goes without saying that Marxism is diametrically opposed to any form of theism. We should make unremitting efforts to bring about a scientific worldview and point of view, and a positive, general, scientific, and cultural knowledge among the masses, and especially among the young people, using persuasive propaganda and education.

But in political activities, Marxists and religious believers can and must join together in a united front for the common struggle for Socialist modernization. The facts show that this kind of unification work has been an important part of the Party's broad-scale, patriotic, united-front leadership since the founding of our nation.

Therefore, Party members and CYL members must understand that religion still has its long-term [protracted] nature, even in the period of Socialism, and that they must be models in the way they publicize and carry out the policy of freedom of religious belief set forth by the constitution. It would be even better if they would rally the national minorities with different religious beliefs to join in the common struggle toward the goal of building a strong, modern Socialist country and the great cause of national unity.

Section IX

Definitions of Religion Published in Contemporary China

Introduction

Standard Marxist definitions of religion and explanations for the emergence, growth, and demise of religion are found in every substantial article on religion published in China, usually with liberal quotations from Marx, Lenin, and Engels. Four sources are used in this section, two dictionaries, an encyclopedia, and a book on religion in the Socialist period.

Extensive excerpts from the *Encyclopedia of Religion*, published in 1988, and the introductory chapter of *Religious Questions Under Socialism in China*, published in 1987, particularly the latter, reflect a more scholarly and less doctrinaire approach when compared to the two earlier dictionary definitions from 1979 and 1981.

In his introductory chapter to the Shanghai book, Luo Zhufeng sets the guidelines for this important work, the first volume on religion since Liberation which includes phenomenological studies of religion. The opening sentence, "Religion is both an ideology and a complex social phenomenon," immediately moves this work beyond the dogmatic, clichéd approach found in similar works. While Marxist theory still sets the theoretical framework, the nine field studies (some of them included in Part II of this book) are valuable reports, remarkably free of Marxist dogma and rhetoric, of first-hand investigations by social scientists.

Luo Zhufeng moves beyond economic and social determinism as an explanation of religion and shows his impatience with a strictly theoretical approach to religious research: "Therefore it is not enough to rely on philosophical debate and logical inference for research on religion. Philosophers should come down from their lofty, abstract stratosphere and get close to their research subjects in order to understand the thoughts and feelings of religious believers and the position and function of religion in society."

He develops this entire introductory chapter around the "five natures" of religion. "The special features of religion in new China are summed up in the 'five natures.' . . . We must increase and deepen our understanding of these 'five natures' if we are to give clear and practical guidance to this work during the new period of Socialist construction."

Definitions and explanations of the nature and function of religion are more conventionally Marxist in the *Encyclopedia of Religion*. Sections on "The point of view of historical materialism," "The social historical function of religion," and "Religion and science and culture" summarize the Marxist theory of religion, using examples from the history of religions. The remaining sections begin with the "five natures" of religion, used to describe religion in Socialist China and the conditions for religion in a Socialist society, concluding with an elucidation of the policy of freedom of religious belief. "No Socialist government supports a specific religion. At the same time, religions are forbidden to interfere in civil government, judicial procedures, or public schools. In short, this policy aims to unite all persons, both religious believers and others, for the common goal of building a powerful, modern Socialist nation. This is both the beginning and the end of the government's policy on dealing with religious issues."

Document 23

Chapter 1 of *Religious Questions under Socialism in China*

Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, 1987, pp. 1-9. Translated by Zheng Xi'an and Donald MacInnis.

I

Religion is both an ideology and a complex social phenomenon. The field of religious research is vast. In China, religious studies is a subject just beginning to open up, while the question of religion under Socialism is a completely new topic for study.

People are faced with many questions in actual life. In China, now that the bases for social classes are virtually destroyed, why does religion continue to exist? Why have the number of religious believers increased in some districts in recent years? What influence does religion have on social life and the building of the four modernizations? How can religion be in harmony with Socialist society, and what are the effects to be expected? How should the Party, government, and the rest of society properly deal with religious questions? These are all questions of general concern for specialists in research on religious theory, as well as for government and Party cadres, for members of religious circles, and for the broad masses of the people.

The Sixth Five-Year Plan for Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China included in the section on philosophy and social sciences the recommendation "that research on large theoretical and prac-

tical questions regarding the establishment of Socialist modernization in China should be particularly strengthened." Research on religion was placed first in a list of twelve key topics.

This book is a response to that call, an initial exploration of this current and significant subject—the question of religion in China during the Socialist period. . . .

The substance of actual religion is complex. It is usually said that all religions have a concrete, synthesized system, at least a few organized elements, and ideological factors such as a religious philosophy or doctrine, religious rules and morality, and both clergy (religious professionals) and the masses of religious believers. The important factors which constitute religious life are the interacting elements of psychological and religious feelings, rites, organizations, structures, and so forth. These elements are certainly interrelated. It can be seen that religion is not only an ideology, but it is also a complex social phenomenon, one kind of social reality, and an organized part of social life which cannot be ignored.

As a social ideology, religion is not linked, in its origins, only to economic bases; to be restricted by economic bases in fact generates a counter effect, as there are parallel links with other ideologies, political viewpoints, laws, philosophies, ethics, arts, and the like, in society. In differing degrees all these affect the genesis of religion, while the influences that religion has in each of these fields, especially in areas where all of the people are religious believers, or where religion is quite widespread, cannot be underestimated.

In addition to the effects of religious ideology on society, there is an intimate relationship between the existence, growth, and change of religious institutions, religious believers, and religious activities and the growth and change of politics and economics, for example, in a society. Religion is certainly not fixed and unchanging; on the contrary it is constantly undergoing growth and change. Therefore it is not enough to rely on philosophical debate and logical inference for research on religion. Philosophers should come down from their lofty abstract stratosphere and get close to their research subjects in order to understand the thoughts and feelings of religious believers and the position and function of religion in society. Marx investigated nineteenth-century German religion; Engels investigated early Protestant Christian movements and the era of religious revolution under the capitalist class; Lenin investigated religion in Russia. All paid close attention to the unity of religion and society, and theorized about the existence of religion and its social effects from the angle of society itself. They did not look at religions in different times and different societies as if they were all the same, nor did they draw inferences from generalizations.

II

To conduct research on questions about religion in the Socialist period in China, the topic must be placed in a specific and coherent frame of

reference. Enormous changes have occurred in human history and in society under Socialism, changes which are bound to affect religion which is carried over from the old society; these, in turn, bring about various changes in religion and related factors, with the result that society is further affected by religion.

Of course all factors bringing change to religion are interrelated, but they are not of equal relevance. To research the conditions, trends, and laws of change which affect religion, one must approach it from every side, and only after grasping the overall reality of religion, the complex relationship of religion and society, can we thoroughly understand the special characteristics of religion under Socialism.

In the early years of national construction, Zhou Enlai, Li Weihan, and others suggested the "five natures" of religion; its mass nature, long-lasting nature, international nature, complex nature, and [minority] nationalities nature. These are of first importance for guiding people to understand and to deal with religious questions. It seems that religion in any social system has these five natures. In fact these five natures have been, from the Marxist point of view, a part of the reality of China since Liberation. When summed up scientifically, these religious characteristics have special implications.

China is a nation with many religions. The three great world religions, our own Daoism, and the various religions of the national minorities all have their believers, a total of over one hundred million. This many religious believers among the masses unquestionably poses a mass question. There are middle-aged and elderly people, workers, peasants, and intellectuals among them. Some of the people who could not stand the suffering caused by the oppression of the exploiting classes in the old society sought comfort in religion, showing little interest in social revolution.

Under Socialism, however, religious believers among the masses actively take part in Socialist construction, helping both politically and economically. But they still hold their religious beliefs, take part in religious activities, and have special needs for places of worship, religious scriptures, publications, and so on. In order for these one hundred million religious believers to take part in the great enterprise of the four modernizations, we must not fail to understand their religious feelings or to show concern for their special needs.

There are fifty-five national minorities in China, six percent of our population. They live in the border regions, about 60 percent of the land area of China. A significant number of them live in the regions of the high plateaus, the border plains, and the mountains. The proportion of religious believers among the national minorities ranges from fairly high to very high, while in some groups virtually every person is a religious believer—clearly a situation with a specific "mass nature."

Religious beliefs and minority-group feelings and customs are integrated into an organic whole among these national minorities. Religion sets the norms for their core culture and morality. In the old society, while religion

was used by the dominant class to maintain control, it also functioned as a means of resisting oppression from outside. Today, while the situation of all religious believers has certainly changed, the fact is that religion and the national minorities are still intimately related. We must respect and take seriously their religious beliefs, or else it will affect the unity [with the nation] of the national minorities.

Religion is a product of human society. There is scarcely a nation on earth without at least one national minority which has its own religion. According to statistics in the 1980 edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* ("A Summary of Religion in the Nations of the World"), there are 2,578,049,960 members in the world's religions, which is 60 percent of the world's population. Many nations once had a state religion, so that even today religion and politics are closely related.

Now that China has initiated an "open policy" toward the outside, religious questions are often involved in matters concerning our international relations, making it imperative that we understand how to deal correctly with such questions. Before Liberation, some of the religions in China were controlled by foreign mission organizations and were used by the imperialists as tools for their penetration of China.

Today this situation is basically changed, and religious enterprises are entirely administered by Chinese religionists. The opening up of international exchanges among religious circles on a basis of equality, friendship, independence, and self-governance has helped to advance understanding and friendship between the people of China and the people of other nations and will help the movement for world peace. But in the course of opening up international exchanges, we must, at the same time, be on guard and resist any actions by hostile foreign forces to use religion against China.

Religion is a long-standing historical and social phenomenon. Why do we speak today of religion's "long-lasting nature?" We do so because even after the overthrow of the exploiting system which had lasted several thousand years, and after establishing a Socialist society, there are still some people who believe that religion has lost the objective social conditions for its existence. They say that we cannot count the days until it disappears altogether, and would adopt simplistic methods of force and coercion to try to wipe out religion. . . .

In the early years after the founding of our country, the complex nature of religion was seen in the relationships between religious and political belief. The key task was how to discern the contradictions between these two disparate natures, and, under the protection of [the constitutional guarantee of] freedom of religious belief, to educate and unite the religious believers and eliminate the political influence of the imperialists and counterrevolutionary elements in our country who were using religion to maintain their control. Religion is still influenced today by the complex international environment and the class struggle which prevails in certain regions. But the main question is how to properly deal with religion, unite

the large numbers of religious believers, and vigorously promote the development of China.

The special features of religion in new China are summed up in the "five natures" mentioned earlier. Over thirty years of actual experience have proven over and over that the main reason for the success or failure of our religious work has been how well we understand the "five natures" of religion. We must increase and deepen our understanding of these "five natures" if we are to give clear and practical guidance to this work during the new period of Socialist construction.

Document 24

Chapter 1, "Introduction" of the Religion Volume in the *Chinese Encyclopedia*

Zongjiao *volume in* Zhongguodabaike Quanshu, *Chinese Encyclopedia Publishing Company, Beijing and Shanghai, February 1988, pp. 1-13 (excerpts). Translated by Yu Linkai and Donald MacInnis.*

Introduction

Religion is a social and historical phenomenon, a form of human social ideology. Religion emerged in human self-conscious. When people felt powerless in the face of the forces of nature, society and life, they sought help from supernatural powers in determining their fate and spiritual destiny.

Most religious people are moved by a sense of awe and worship, believing that supernatural forces (such as gods, angels, spirits, or ghosts) exist, and that these supernatural forces influence people's fate. Religions are defined by commonly held beliefs, codes of ethical behavior, rituals, and religious organizations and sects. The emergence and development of religious ideas and practices are determined by certain social and historical conditions. At the same time, religion influences the social life, political structure, cultural habits, and social morality of the nation at any given time. Religion exists in every nation in the world today, a universal social and historical phenomenon.

Estimates place the number of religious believers in the world today at two and one-half billion, three-fifths of the total population. In some nations the majority of the people are religious believers. Religions vary from country to country. There are universal world religions, such as Buddhism, Christianity (including Protestant, Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox branches), and Islam; regional and national religions, such as Judaism, Shintoism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism and so on. There

also are many primitive religions such as Shamanism, and the Bon and Dongba sects, etc. Buddhism is spread throughout northeast, southeast and south Asia, accounting for 6.2 percent of all religious believers in the world. Islam, with 17 percent of the world's religious believers, is found mainly in Asia and Africa, especially in western Asia, northern Africa, the south Asian subcontinent and southeast Asian countries. Of the world's religious believers, 34.4 percent are Christians, two-thirds of them in Europe and the Americas. . . .

The Nature and Function of Religion

Different Points of View

Many efforts have been made to explore the nature and function of religion. For example, Herbert Spencer called religion a faith with the power to transcend human knowledge. Bradley [Francis Herbert] stressed the function of religion as man's search for benevolence (goodness). Frazier [James G.] said that religion is primarily the use of rituals and prayers to influence the power that controls nature and human life. *Maike Tagete*[translit.] claimed that religion is human sentiment seeking harmony between humanity and the universe. These are some of the ideas about religion which use different approaches; but since they do not examine religion as a social phenomenon, they fail to demonstrate the real nature and cause of religion.

The Point of View of Historical Materialism

Historical materialism provides many scientific explanations for the nature, function, and rules affecting changes in religion. Marx and Engels applied the viewpoint of dialectical materialism to the study of social history, and made a great contribution to religious studies. Engels said, "Any religion is the projection of human imagination about the external forces which dominate human life. In this projection, earthly power takes the form of transcendental power." Any organized religion is a social substance. It is part of the superstructure produced and developed on a specific economic foundation. Although religion is "high above or farther away from the material economic base," it is still the distorted projection of the economic base. The origin of religion at each stage of its development can only be found in the material world; that is, the content and function of religion can only be explained by its social relationships, which are formed in economic production relationships.

In a class society, the formation of religious concepts is influenced by the forces of nature and controlled and restricted by the blind and alien forces of the class society. It also comes from the fear, desperation, and misery of the workers brought on by the system of exploitation and from the need of the exploiting class to use it as a spiritual means to benumb and manipulate the masses. Therefore, the main reason for the existence

and growth of religion in a class society is class oppression and exploitation.

Apart from the social sources of religion, there are conceptual sources. The spiritual substances worshiped in religion are the abstraction and idolizing of objective matter in human perception, infinitely expanded and then presented after deification, isolating them from nature and objective reality so that they become something absolute, the ultimate cause of the universe—that is, God.

The Social-Historical Function of Religion

In a class society, the social historical function of religion is very complex; it must be analyzed in a concrete and matter-of-fact way, examining the effect of each religious event on the historical process. Historically, the reactionary exploiting class used religion as a spiritual cornerstone for its domination; however, some revolutionaries also used the banner of religion in their struggles, therefore religion helped, to a certain degree, in advancing historical progress. . . .

Religion and Science and Culture

Religion has made an important contribution to the advancement of mankind's knowledge and culture. It is closely related to science and social ideologies such as philosophy, literature, art, ethics, etc. Human perceptions of nature and society in earliest times were represented by witchcraft, mythology or religious concepts. In literature this took the forms of poetry, music, dancing for the gods, painting and sculpture. In ancient Greece and Rome, the outstanding architecture was found mainly in sacred temples, tombs and memorial halls. In such cultures, the religious and secular spirit were merged. . . .

Throughout history, religion has influenced each race in spirituality, culture, science, ethics, morals, and customs. In seeking "natural law" and a means for immortality, Daoists objectively contributed to the development of medicine, chemistry, and astronomy. *Chantongqi* is a widely recognized early work. The "Sketch of Zhenyuan Miaodao" recorded the earliest gunpowder experiments in human history. It is widely acknowledged that Daoist theory contributed to Chinese medical theory, and the laboratory skills of the Daoists contributed to the maintenance of health and the curing of diseases. In the ethnic minorities regions of northwest and southwest China, religion has been central in their history, culture, ethics, morals and customs. There are ten ethnic minorities in China's northwest where virtually all the people are Muslims. Although Islam is a foreign religion, it adapted to Chinese traditional culture while keeping its unique characteristics. It has become an indispensable part of our national culture, contributing a great deal to the history, culture, medicine, astronomy, mathematics, and calendar science of China.

Buddhist culture in Tibet is a fundamental part of Tibetan culture, where it has made great contributions in medicine, calendar science, literature,

handcrafts, art, painting, sculpture, and the like. The Potala Palace and the Jokhang Temple are masterpieces of architecture. Tibetans adopted the calendar of the Buddhist Mizong sect, combining it with the duodecimal cycle system of the Hans. It accurately records the agricultural seasons.

While Christianity had the reputation of being the tool of the imperialists after coming into China, it did make real contributions to the spread of Western science and culture, for example, establishing hospitals, schools, publications, libraries, and the concept of equality between men and women.

The Characteristics of Religion in China

China is a nation composed of numerous ethnic nationalities and religions, including both primitive shamanistic religions and world religions. The world religions, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity, all came from outside China. Once established in China, they interacted with Chinese traditional culture and with each other, forming religions with national characteristics. Daoism, a native Chinese religion, spread beyond China to adjoining regions. There has never been a single dominant national religion in China as in some Western nations. China's rulers throughout history followed a policy of tolerance, supporting and protecting religion.

Religious believers today form only a small proportion of China's population. In the northwest and southwest provinces, where national minorities predominate, religion and government administration overlapped over long periods of our history. Religion is closely related to the culture of the national minorities, where believers form the majority of the population.

Among the Han population, which forms the majority of China's people, the main religious tradition is belief in predestination, or fate, and the worship of ancestors. This is the reason why Buddhism and Daoism have never become dominant religions in China. During the Xia, Shang, and Zhou dynasties, great political and economic changes took place. During the earliest agricultural period in China, the people combined their own hard labor with prayers to heaven for favorable weather. In *Shangshu Hongfan*, it is written, "Their concern is lords, people, and clergy." The will of God and the will of man were placed side by side. After the Zhou dynasty, the Confucianists advocated "governing by virtue, and respect for heaven but not blind belief in heaven." The predominant orthodox ideology throughout Chinese history has been to "respect the gods and immortals, but keep one's distance from them," from the *Analects* of Confucius. Each emperor called himself the Son of Heaven, with all imperial authority granted as a divine right and the imperial power transcending even divine power. The imperial policy toward religion had two purposes, both to use religion and to keep it at a distance at the same time.

Relationships based on blood ties became important after irrigated agriculture was introduced. A patriarchal social system based on kinship and

an ethical system based on "fidelity" developed in the Zhou dynasty. Ancestor worship, representing the patriarchal social system, became an integral part of Chinese culture, a custom practiced by every family among the Han people. Some people are religious believers, some are not. People take part in religious practices on occasion, while ignoring religion the rest of the time. They believe in anything from Confucianism to Daoism, from the traditional immortals to various gods, from Buddha to Mary, anything is all right if they think their prayers will be answered. Because of the contradiction between the patriarchal social system and the Confucian emphasis on ethics and moral principles and the religious idea of worshiping supernatural powers, the orthodox Confucian had to suppress the social functions of religion. These characteristics of religious belief which developed throughout China's history still influence the practice of religion among the Han people.

Religion in Socialist China

In the period since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the exploiting class and the system of exploitation have been wiped out and the Socialist system has been established. The historic changes brought about with the Socialist economic system naturally are reflected in the area of religion. After the forces of imperialism in the church were expelled, the Catholic church became independent and self-governing, and the Protestant church practices the "three-self" principles—self-government, self-support, and self-propagation. After the social-democratic reform, Buddhism, Islam, and Daoism also eliminated feudal privileges and the system of oppression and exploitation. Religion has become a private affair, a personal matter of religious belief. Everyone respects the beliefs of others out of a sense of unity and patriotism, whether religious believers or not, or believers in one religion or another; this is something seldom found in the history of religions, either in China or elsewhere. The subjective world of religious believers has been changed by the new social reality and social practice. At the same time, the patriotic religious believers of all ethnic nationalities have made great progress toward joining in the patriotic united front. Great changes have taken place in the area of religion in China.

Characteristics

In a Socialist society religion still has five basic characteristics: its long-term nature, its complex nature, its widespread mass influence, its base among ethnic nationalities, and its international ramifications. Although the class basis for the existence of religion has basically disappeared, the social, psychological and perceptual bases among the people still continue. Since the improvement of the people's material life and the development of science and culture will not take place overnight, the ideology and cus-

toms inherited from the old society will not disappear in the immediate future. Moreover, natural disasters and mistakes in the practice of Socialism which frustrate the Socialist movement and cause suffering for the people cannot be avoided. There will be, as well, foreign religious influences, because our Socialist society is involved in complex international relationships. Meanwhile, the people's growing demand for higher levels of material life and culture cannot be immediately met, so some seek for psychological gratification in religion, offering prayers to supernatural powers. The elimination of these nonmaterialist concepts is dependent on the steady growth of economic productivity of the whole society and on the achievement of much higher levels of culture and enriched spiritual life. This means that the conditions for religion still exist and will continue for a rather long time under Socialism.

The Conditions for Religion in a Socialist Society

The people of all ethnic nationalities in China, as well as all religious believers, want to build a prosperous, democratic, and civilized Socialist country. Freedom of religious belief is guaranteed by the national constitution. This is the basic condition for religious harmony in our Socialist society. Some of the moral principles of religion and its ideology are in accord with the requirements of Socialism. Religious ethical norms which accord with traditional ethics and culture should be respected, protected, and promoted. International contacts between China's religions and those outside China improve understanding and friendship between the Chinese people and those in other parts of the world, thus playing a role in safeguarding world peace. Therefore, under specific historical conditions, religion can cooperate with a Socialist society. The great majority [masses] of religious believers love both their religion and their country, obey the laws and regulations of the nation, and support the Socialist system. At the same time, the government enforces the proper implementation of the religious policy, which is essential for mutual cooperation between religion and Socialist society.

The Policy of Freedom of Religious Belief

The citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy the right to freedom of religious belief. The government follows the policy of respecting and protecting freedom of religious belief. Every citizen has freedom to believe or not believe in religion, freedom of belief in one religion or another, freedom to change one's belief from atheism to religion, and freedom to give up one's religious belief as well. The policy of religious belief as adopted by the Chinese Communist Party is based on the theories of Marxism and Leninism. This policy also accords with the interests of the people, for it stipulates that religious belief is each citizen's private matter, and

guarantees their right to freely choose a religious belief.

No Socialist government supports a specific religion. At the same time, religions are forbidden to interfere in civil government, judicial procedures, or public schools. In short, this policy aims to unite all persons, both religious believers and others, for the common goal of building a powerful, modern Socialist nation. This is both the beginning and the end of the government's policy on dealing with religious issues. The People's Republic of China has experienced setbacks in past years. Not until the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Party Congress of the Chinese Communist Party was the proper policy on religion put into effect. Since then the theory, policy, and practice of religious affairs have returned to normal.

Document 25

Definition from the *Dictionary of Religion (Zongjiao Cidian)*

Shanghai Dictionary Press, 1981, pp. 712-13. Translated by Zheng Xi'an and Donald MacInnis.

Religion is a social ideology which belongs to the superstructure. Religionists believe in a mysterious supernatural realm and worship superhuman powers which they believe dominate nature and society apart from the real society. Religion emerges when primitive society has developed to a certain stage. At the very beginning it appears as the spontaneous belief of primitive peoples. The very low productive power of primitive society rendered men helpless before natural forces, and the intellect of primitive people was so undeveloped that they could not distinguish the forces of nature from those of mankind, so they personalized the forces of nature that dominated human life, treating them as supernatural deities.

With the evolution of society and history, religion continued to evolve from the earliest nature worship to spirit worship, totem worship, ancestor worship, and the worship of gods; from polytheism to monotheism, the worship of one god who governs all other gods; from tribal religion (such as the shamanism of the Hezhe, Ewenke, and Elenqun ethnic groups, the Ben worship of the Tibetans, the religion of the bushmen of Africa, etc.), to national religions (such as Judaism, Shintoism, Hinduism, etc.), and even world religions (such as Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity). The influence of Chinese Daoism has also spread to other countries.

As religion evolved, religious organizations, religious professionals and clerical hierarchies appeared. Each religion shaped its own creeds, theologies, taboos and commandments, while religious rituals became increasingly complex and diversified.

Historical materialists hold that religion is man-made, an illusory reflection in the minds of believers of an outside power that dominates human life. In class societies, social distress caused by class oppression and the system of exploitation is the chief reason for the emergence and growth of religion. Religion expresses the sighs of the oppressed in response to real sufferings, functioning as an anesthetic which drugs the human spirit. Religious believers hold that their religious faith is everlasting, a divine revelation transmitted to human nature.

Throughout history, the ruling class generally used religion as an instrument to neutralize the people's will to resist. In ancient and medieval times, many nations with slave and feudal systems maintained official state religions. In modern times state religions still exist in many countries. Meanwhile, the oppressed peoples, shackled by traditional beliefs and historical conditions, often seek spiritual comfort in the illusory world of religion, sometimes even using religion as an instrument for revolt.

Religion as a historical social phenomenon follows its own course of emergence, growth, and withering away. Due to the persistence of social and cognitive sources of religion, the illusory religious reflection of the real world will disappear only when Communism is fully realized, when relations in daily life are seen as plain and rational relations between persons and between man and nature, and when the forces of nature and society are no longer alien to humankind.

Document 26

Definition of Religion in *Ci Hai*

Translated by Zheng Xi'an and Donald MacInnis.

Religion is a social ideology. Religionists believe in and worship supernatural deities. It is a distorted and illusory reflection of the forces of nature and society in the human sphere of consciousness. . . . Religion is a historical phenomenon and follows its own course of birth, development, and withering away. When humankind enters the period of Communism, with the total elimination of the exploiting classes and their influence, the sources of religion will disappear, and, with highly advanced material production, culture, and science, religion will naturally wither away.

PART II

Religious Practice since the Cultural Revolution

Introduction

In the summer of 1974 I returned to China for the first time in twenty-five years. The physical, social, and cultural changes were overwhelming. New roads, railroads, factories, suburbs, apartment buildings, bicycles, trucks, buses, irrigation projects, tractors, and rural power lines were visible everywhere. Myriad family farms had been collectivized, and teams of workers tilled the neat, green fields and paddies. We saw no ragged beggars, homeless families, unwashed street urchins, landless peasants pulling rickshaws, or underfed hawkers selling tiny hoards of oddments and sundries. Children attending school were at an all-time high, and, for the first time in modern history, we were told, everyone in China had enough to eat and some kind of medical services.

This was the most secular society we had ever seen. All churches, temples, and shrines were closed, some in shambles, others boarded up or converted to other uses. The Catholic cathedral in Guangzhou was a collection point for garbage, while the Shanghai cathedral served as a storehouse for grain. The "Anti-Lin Biao, Anti-Confucius" campaign was in full swing, and two young women dockworkers in Shanghai, when questioned, enumerated the reasons why Confucius and his teachings were unacceptable in Socialist China.

I asked a young woman, our student guide at a university, if young people still believed in the old religions. She replied, "There is no need to. Since the new society is based on scientific materialism, the old superstitions were proved to be false." Asked whether young people might not be curious, and seek out the old religious believers to "learn from the past" (a slogan current at the time), she replied, "Why would anyone want to discuss the old religions? What do they have to do with our new society? It simply would not interest young people. It's irrelevant."