

CHRONOLOGY FOR 1966

(January—June)

- January 1** The police department reported that an estimated 27,000,000 persons visited Shinto Shrines on New Year's Day. According to the Association of Shinto Shrines (Jinja Honchō 神社本庁) the number was greater than the preceding year by 4,000,000.
- Jan. 15** The Public Relations Center of the United Church of Christ in Japan (Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan Kōhō Center 日本基督教団広報センター) was opened in Tokyo for the exchange of foreign and domestic informations.
- Jan. 18** A lay Buddhist association, Chō-on sha 潮音舎, commemorated its 10th anniversary, at which leading business executives gathered and exchanged opinions concerning the freshmen training program with religious exercises and instructions.
- Jan. 20** Sōka Gakkai announced that the number of the accredited members of the mission department (Kyōgaku-bu-in 教学部員) had reached 1,170,000 by January 9.
- Jan. 20** The Union of New Religious Organizations of Japan (Shin-shū-ren 新教連), composed of some 90 new religious organizations with a total membership of 6,000,000 decided to combat Sōka Gakkai, and published a booklet entitled *Sōka Gakkai Hanzai Hakusho* 創価学会犯罪白書 (Criminal Report of Sōka Gakkai).
- Jan. 23** Protestant, Catholic, and Greek Orthodox leaders held a joint prayer service for peace at Maruyama Park in Kyoto, and paraded to demonstrate the unity of churches.
- Jan. 23** *Min'on*, the People's Music Association, sponsoring agency of mass music concerts affiliated with the cultural activity department of Sōka Gakkai, announced the plan to hold a concert every week, in every district throughout the nation. The association has a membership of 800,000.
- Jan. 29** According to the Christian Yearbook 1967, the Christian population in Japan reached 800,000; 460,000 Protestants, 330,000 Catholics, and the remainder Orthodox. The increase during the last two years is estimated to be 20,000.
- February 3** Ōtani University (Jōdo-Shin Buddhism, Ōtani Sect) completed a special library for ancient Buddhist manuscripts and rare books. The collection includes the materials brought back from the middle East by the Ōtani Mission and the Chi'ng edition

of the Buddhist Tripitaka.

Feb. 5 The organ of the United Church of Christ in Japan, *Kyōdan Shimpō* 教団新報, reported the result of the committee's investigation on the Rev. Sakae Akaiwa's *Kirisuto-kyō Dasshutsu-ki* キリスト教脱出記 (Emancipation from Christianity), which concluded that the book was beyond the permissible limit of the Christian profession.

Feb. 9 The Chizan School of Tantric Buddhism (Shingon-shū Chizan-ha 真言宗智山派) published a report on the priests of the sect. According to the report, the majority of the priests are engaged in outside activities, of which teaching at elementary and middle schools is very frequent. 95 per cent claimed that they were engaged in some kind of missionary activity.

Feb. 11 Demonstrations urging the revival of the Nation's Founding Day (建国記念祭) were held at more than 100 cities and towns over the nation. Some 3,000 notables including Conservative Representatives such as Mr. Mr. Okinori Kaya, ex-Minister of Finance of the Tōjō cabinet 1941-1944, attended the gathering at the Hibiya Public Hall and worshipped the Grand Shrine of Kashiwara from afar.

The Assembly of Religious Peace Lovers (Shūkyō-sha Heiwa-Kyōgi-kai 宗教者平和協議会), represented by

the Rev. Tadayoshi Abe, Baptist, took action against the re-installation of the Nation's Founding Day.

Feb. 15 Bukkyō Daigaku (Jōdo Sect, Pure Land Buddhism) published sources of the *Nembutsu* (recitation of the name of Buddha Amida) practice. The study had been subsidized by the Ministry of Education.

Feb. 17 Commemorating its 15th anniversary, International Christian University, Tokyo, started a fund raising campaign with a target of 1,000,000,000 yen. Chairman of the Fund Raising Committee is Mr. Taizō Ishizaka, President of the Federation of Economic Organizations.

Feb. 18 Tokyo Union Seminary (Tokyo Shingaku Daigaku 東京神学大学) celebrated the dedication of its new campus. The new address of the seminary is 707 Mure, Mitaka-shi, Tokyo.

March 3 A Buddhist new religious organization, Shinnyo-en 真如苑, donated 10,000,000 yen to Daigoji Temple, a traditional headquarters of Shingon Buddhism, as a partial contribution to building a new hall.

March 6 The authorities of Tendai Buddhism announced the plan of closing some of the Tendai temples. There are about 450 not-ministered temples, of which about 70 are not even re-

gistered as juridical persons.

March 6 The Department of Religion in the Ministry of Education completed a survey on the activities of temples and churches. 3,240 religious juridical persons answered the inquiry. Engagement of the ministers in educational and cultural professions, social work, medical practice and management of kindergardens were the most noteworthy.

Kōgakkan College 皇学館大学, which had been the sole imperial institution of Shinto learning and was re-organized as a private institution since the San Francisco treaty, was granted the permission by the government to open a graduate program of Shinto studies.

March 7 A bill concerning national holidays was presented to the House jointly by the Cabinet and the Liberal Democratic Party. The bill proposes to add three days, Nation's Founding Day (Kenkokū Kinen-bi 建国記念日), Physical Practice Day (Taiiku-no-hi 体育の日), and Old People's Day (Keirō-no-hi 敬老の日), to the list of national holidays. The United Church of Christ in Japan, the Japan Teachers' Unions, the Association of Historians, and some other intellectual associations strongly opposed the enactment and expressed their opinions respectively.

March 11 The Nichiren Sect decided

to send medical assistance to Vietnam.

March 13 Tōdaiji Temple 東大寺 at Nara, reputed for its grand statue of Vairocana Buddha, sued the prefectural government of Nara to the effect that the levy of the sightseeing tax on the entrance fee was illegal. The temple claimed that the taxation on the money donated by visitors violated the constitutional guarantee of free practice of religion.

March 20 Chion-in Temple 智恩院, headquarters of Jōdo Buddhism, newly established the Institute of Buddhist Music. The expected activities include organizing choir groups, research and development of Buddhist music.

March 22 Tenri-kyō 天理教 sent a missionary to Nepal.

March 22 Miss Shirahi Miki, adopted daughter of the president of PL Kyōdan (PL 教団), one of the dominant new religions, started a regular TV program as a home counselor. She is 28 years old, good-looking, attended the University of Paris, and edits one of the organs of the institution.

March 26 The Chizan Sect of Shingon Buddhism 真言宗智山派 builds a community hall for the followers with a budget of 150,000,000 yen. The hall has lodging and meeting facilities.

March 29--April 1 The Interboard

Committee of the United Church of Christ in Japan held a National Congress of Missionaries. In the opening session it adopted a proclamation against the continuation of the Vietnamese War.

April 1 Kokugakuin University, private and affiliated with Shrine Shinto, opened a new junior college at Tochigi City, Tochigi Prefecture. It has two departments, of Japanese Literature and of Home Economics, with an enrollment of 100 students per class and a faculty of about 50 professors and part-time instructors.

Kifukuji Temple 喜福寺, Sōtō Sect, built a luxury apartment building worth 200,000,000 yen in front of the University of Tokyo. Economic activities by religious bodies are in fashion.

April 2 Rishō Kōsei-kai held a Youth Leaders Congress, with 5,000 leaders from the Tokyo area alone participating. Four additional regional meetings are planned on the 15th.

April 3 A thanksgiving party for Father Zeno was held at Sophia Hall under the auspices of the residents of the slum area in eastern Tokyo known as the "Town of the Ants." Brother Zeno, a Franciscan, has resided in Japan for 35 years and helped the poor.

April 8 Kōdō Kyōdan, a Buddhist lay organization, celebrated the birthday

of Gautama with a parade of young Japanese dancers, a Ceylonese lantern procession, a Korean folk dress show, Chinese dragon dances and other attractions. Several delegates were sent to worship at Mt. Hiei of Tendai Buddhism.

April 8 Sōka Gakkai, in the name of Taisekiji Temple at Fujinomiya-shi, requested the governor of Shizuoka prefecture to register accommodations for 6,000 people and its food-center as buildings belonging to the temple and necessary primarily for the sake of religious purposes as provided for in Article 3 of the Religious Juridical Persons Law, on the basis of which the governor's office referred to the Ministry of Education, and the latter confirmed that, no matter how large in size such accommodations may be, they may be registered as a religious institution, provided that their functions are mainly religious.

April 11—24 The United Church of Christ in Japan and representatives of three Protestant denominations of Korea held a meeting for mutual understanding and cooperation in Tokyo.

April 14 The Japanese Association of the War Bereaved, Okinori Kaya, President, held a National Congress of the War Bereaved in the precincts

- of Yasukuni Shrine and reaffirmed the pending motion to recover state sponsorship of Yasukuni Shrine.
- April 18** Sōka Gakkai started building Sōka High School, which is to open in 1968.
- April 19** Sōka Gakkai announced to build Seikyō Bunka Center whose function, according to the announcement, is to include publication activities and meetings of a cultural nature.
- April 24** Ōtani University permitted the Rev. Gyomei Kubose, a 60-year old missionary, entrance into its graduate school. The Rev. Kubose opened a Buddhist Preaching Point at Chicago, Illinois, in 1944, and served as a Buddhist missionary since.
- April 27** *Bukkyō Seiji Dōmei*, Buddhists Organized for Political Action, originally organized in 1960, held a general assembly, and decided to sponsor a movement to boost political awareness among Buddhist laymen, while refraining from organizing a specific political party of the Buddhists themselves.
- May 15** Mr. Sanzō Nosaka, Member of the House and Chairman of the Communist Party of Japan, donated, in a personal capacity, 10,000 yen to the Yamaguchi District Office of the Nishi Hongan-ji School of Pure Land Buddhism.
- May 18** 36 Buddhist priests from Taiso County in Shiga Prefecture initiated a sermons-over-wire-broadcasting program. The affiliation of the priests varies from Pure Land Buddhism to Tendai Buddhism, and the sermons are given by these priests alternately.
- May 21** Nishi Hongan-ji School of Pure Land Buddhism organized a theatrical group named *Asaka Troup*. 21 professional and semi-professional actors and actresses joined the troupe. The authorities expect to propagate Buddhism through theatrical performances.
- May 23** *Jinja Honchō*, the Shrine Association, celebrated its 20th anniversary with the participation of the Minister of Education, the Minister of Local Autonomy, Prince Takamatsu and other dignitaries. The meeting prayed for the spirits of those who contributed to the prosperity of Shrine Shinto, and adopted a memorandum to restore the National Foundation Day as national holiday.
- May 23** Christians United for World Peace was newly organized and held its opening meeting at the Tokyo YMCA building. The charter members include Mr. Tetsu Katayama, a socialist lawyer and ex-Prime Minister, the Rev. Kōtarō Miyakoda, Chaplain of Aoyama University, and Mr. Tomio Mutō,

President of Meiji Gakuin University.

May 24 The annual directors' meeting of the Shrine Association demanded from the Ministry of Finance to provide funds for construction of the new building of the Ise Shrine.

May 25 The annual assembly of Catholic bishops in Japan confirmed the drive toward the ecumenical movement, and resolved to further dialogues with the representatives of Buddhism, Shinto, and the New Religions.

May 27 The National Anti-Nuclear Weapons League held a meeting which adopted a resolution demanding cessation of French and Chinese nuclear tests.

Members of the League include the President of St. Paul's University, the All Japan Federation of Buddhist Churches, Myōchi-kai, Seichō-no Ie, Risshō Kōsei-kai (leading new religions) and labor unions.

June 2 The Japan Buddhist Federation held the 13th Conference of Buddhist Women at Nagoya. 3,000 Buddhist women representing various schools of Buddhism discussed Family Education and Religion, and made a monetary gift to leprosaria in India.

June 3—4 The Japan Buddhist Federation held its 14th General Congress at Nagoya. 20,000 representatives participated in discussions and adopted

slogans, including "Encouragement of Lay Buddhism."

June 4—10 Yasukuni Shrine and the Japanese Association of the War Bereaved sponsored a memorial trip to the sites of war in the Philippine Islands. 127 relatives and friends of the war-dead joined the trip.

June 11—12 The Japanese Association for Indian and Buddhist Studies held the 15th Annual Congress at Kōyasan University, Wakayama Prefecture. The association initiated a new panel discussion on Buddhism.

June 23 At the Committee on Culture and Education of the House of Councilors, the Rev. Tomura, Chief of the Mission Department of the United Church of Christ in Japan testified that he in earnest was against the reenactment of the Nation's Foundation Day on the 11th of February, primarily because such an action might interfere with religious liberty.

June 24 Komazawa University, Zen Buddhist Seminary, established the Institute for the Study of Buddhist Economy.

June 24—August 16 The United Church of Christ in Japan conducts a missionary movement in Northern Japanese villages, with the aid of 16 American and Canadian ministers. The movement, started in 1954 under

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the initiative of Dr. Lawrence Lacour, features concerts and talks of seminarians.

June 25 The bill to amend the list of national holidays, including addition of the Nation's Foundation Day, was ratified in the House of Councillors. The Cabinet promulgated it on the following day.

June 26 Sōka Gakkai started publica-

tion of a new monthly, *Bunka-Sōzō*, as an organ of its Culture Department.

June 29 Risshō University, Nichiren Buddhist Seminary, opened the Institute for the Study of the Lotus Sutra and its Culture. The function of the institute is announced to be the collection of materials concerning the life of Nichiren and the publication of the results of its research.