

**REMINISCENCES
OF
RELIGION IN POSTWAR JAPAN**

(Continued from Vol. VI, No. 4)

ECONOMIC CHANGES AFTER THE WAR

Distress of inflation also in church

Immediately after the termination of war, the economic conditions too showed rapid changes.

In addition to a series of great changes such as the restriction of deposits, the issue of the new yen, the collection of property taxes and the farmland reform, a great part of the population had to experience severe living difficulties for several years because of the rapid progress of the inflation.

These economic changes were strongly felt also by religious organizations and men of religion, and almost all the sects and denominations suffered from serious economic difficulties with the exception of a few new religions that were expanding in a quick tempo.

Even the Christian churches which were regarded as being in a better position were no exception. Although they received strong support from the churches overseas, the aid was not sufficient to guarantee the living of churchmen. Many people, following the Christian boom, became churchgoers, but monetary contributions from believers were surprisingly small and did not keep pace with the rise of prices. Therefore, the

clergymen in general had a very hard life.

According to the survey made by the Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan in March, 1947, clergymen of the Kyōdan in the Tokyo District received salaries of between ¥20 and ¥2,500 and some had no salary at all. The average salary was ¥400 or ¥500. (For comparison, the base salary for workers, as fixed by the Katayama Cabinet in June, 1947, was ¥1,800.)

For this reason, there were many clergymen who were engaged in side jobs. According to a survey of Nihon Kirisuto Kyōdan in 1949, among 1,357 clergymen of the Kyōdan, those who had side jobs numbered 427, or more than 30%. (As to the kind of jobs, they worked as school teachers, interpreters for the Occupation Forces, translators, writers etc.)

Because even Christianity, which was regarded as being in a favored position, experienced such difficulties, the economic situation of shrines, temples and churches of Sectarian Shinto was very serious.

The farmland reform and the religious world

The various economic reforms in the postwar days brought many effects to religious organizations, but the greatest was the damage following the farmland reform.

The farmland reform in 1946 worked a tremendous damage to shrines and temples. There were many shrines and temples which possessed extensive land in prewar days. Especially in the case of temples, there were some that were maintained only with the income from farmland. They lost almost all the farmland by the reform except a very small area of the rice field for producing rice to be used for offerings to the *kami*

or *hotoke*.

According to the research made by the Shrine Association in 1955, the farmland possessed by the shrines which was released was as follows :

Released Farmland

	<i>chō</i>	<i>tan</i>	<i>se</i>	<i>bu</i>
Rice fields	1,028	96	23	10
Farms	633	15	29	
Forests	371	3	12	
Building lands		26	26	59
Field	193	9	13	
Others	12	94	12	
Total	2,253	46	25	69

T. N. 1 *chō* (10 *tan*) — 99.15 ares 1 *bu* (10 *gō*) — 3,305m²
 1 *tan* (10 *se*) — 9.915 "
 1 *se* (30 *bu*) — 99.15 m²

In contrast with this, how much land did Buddhist sects lose? As mentioned above, the statistics of the whole Buddhist world are not clarified. However, it is said that the Sōtō sect alone lost 20,000 *chō* (49,000 acres) of rice fields and farms, 1,400 *chō* (3,350 acres) of forests and fields. Therefore, the loss of the Buddhist world was far above the very big loss of the shrines.

The damage caused by this farmland reform left a big scar in the temples' finance.

The Grand Shrine of Ise gave back two million yen

Side by side with the farmland reform, the most important among the economic problems concerning the religious world

in postwar days was the problem of the transfer of the State-owned temple and shrine precincts and forests.

In the spring of 1948, the Grand Shrine of Ise felled trees standing in the State-owned precincts in great quantities without permission of the local governor. When this caused public discussion, the Grand Shrine was made to give back the current price of the felled trees, two million yen, to the national treasury. This was, of course, a case caused by the economic distress of the shrine.

A similar case happened at Hakusan-hime Shrine, a famous shrine in the Hokuriku district.

This shrine, the sacred place of the Hakusan faith, seceded from the Shrine Association and founded the Hakusan-kyō in 1946 to unify more than 2,700 Hakusan shrines scattered all over the country. To cover the expenses of the new sect, it concluded a sale of trees standing in the precincts in great quantities and appropriated their income.

However, various Hakusan shrines which hitherto had no vertical contact with it, although they had the same Hakusan-hime-ōgami as the enshined deity, did not join the new enterprise. Thus the creation of the sect ended dissappointingly in a failure.

Moreover, as the trees of the sales contract were in the state-owned precincts it proved to be impossible to fell them. Therefore, the shrine was forced to pay a great sum of breach of contract damages to lumber merchants, and the shrine's finance stood on the brink of ruin.

Problem of the State-owned precincts and forests

The cases mentioned above concerned the felling of trees in the State-owned precincts. The treatment and disposition of the State-owned precincts of shrines and temples had been a problem pending since the Meiji era.

Many shrines and temples possessed a vast area of precincts or territories prior to the Meiji Restoration, but with the return of the land and people to the Emperor by the *daimyō*, all the shrines and temples were ordered to return all their land except the precincts possessed at that time. The land returned from shrines and temples to the State according to this order amounted to about 140,000 *chōbu* (343,000 acres).

This return of the land caused shrines and temples great damage. Moreover, in accordance with the State Property Law enacted in 1921, the precincts of shrines and temples were regarded as State properties lent gratuitously to shrines and temples. The precincts were under the contradictory condition that although historically they were the land possessed by shrines and temples, they were treated as State property.

This system may be all right for the shrines under State control but for the temples it was unwarranted.

For this reason, taking the enforcement of the Religious Organizations Law in 1939 as an opportunity, the "Law Concerning the Disposal of State Property Lent Gratuitously to Temples and Others" was enacted and in accordance with this law, the gratuitous transfer of the State-owned precinct to temples and Buddhist halls was started.

This disposal had been planned to be completed in ten years,

but at the end of 1943 it was suspended owing to the war situation.

The precincts transferred in accordance with the so-called "first disposal of precincts" constituted 9,638 cases from among 46,308 cases, or 5,434,980 *tsubo* (21,479,040 sq. yds.) from among 29,285,032 *tsubo* (115,734,446 sq. yds.). This was a little less than one fifth of all the cases.

The problem resuscitated in the postwar days

The problem of the disposal of the State-owned precincts arose again in the postwar days as a pressing problem admitting of no delay for the shrine world and Buddhist world. This was because the following provision had been written into the new Constitution: "No public money or other property shall be expended or appropriated for the use ... or maintenance of any religious institution ..." In accordance with this article the public property of the State-owned precincts could no longer be allowed to be used by religious organizations. With this even the existence of shrines and temples became precarious.

However, since the State-owned precincts had originally been the land possessed by shrines and temples, as the result of frequent petitions made by the Shrine Association, the Buddhist Federation, the Japan Religions League and others, Law No. 53 was enacted in 1947 for the purpose of dealing with this problem. According to this law, the land necessary for religious activity was to be transferred gratuitously or at a half the current price. In this way, the problem pending since the Meiji era was settled at last.

State properties which were the objects of transfer or sale were the following :

1. land used for buildings such as the main sanctuary, the oratory, the main hall, the priest's residence ;
2. land used for conducting religious ceremonies and functions ;
3. land used as an approach to the temples ;
4. land used as gardens ;
5. land used for preserving scenic beauty or dignity ;
6. land used for preventing direct disasters ;
7. land with a special historical past ;
8. land used for public welfare enterprises ;
9. land used for semi-public welfare enterprises ;
10. trees and other fixtures on the above lands.

However, even lands of these kinds remained as State-owned when it was recognized by the State as specially necessary for the security of the country, for public welfare or the management of forests.

What was to be transferred gratuitously was the land offered to the State in accordance with the order of offering land at the time of the Meiji Restoration, the land listed as government-owned land at the time of the revision of the land-tax, or the land which shrines or temples had purchased at their own expense after the Meiji era or had received as contributions (in the case of contributions by public organizations, limited to what did not substantially become a burden to public finances), which had become State-owned land and as of May, 1947, was land lent gratuitously in accordance with the State

Property Law.

The land to be sold at a half of the current price was that purchased with public funds by public organizations after the Meiji era from among the land lent gratuitously to shrines and temples, e. g. the land contributed after being purchased with public funds by a public organization at the time of the construction or repair of a shrine.

At the same time that the State-owned precincts, were being disposed of, the forests managed by shrines and temples were also being handled. These forests were those that had been entrusted to the custody and management of the shrines and temples when they were offered to the government at the time of the Meiji Restoration; and the shrines and temples had been allowed to receive a part of the profit. Such forests, too, had been transferred when it was necessary for religious activity.

Shrines and temples that recovered vast lands

The sale of the State-owned precincts and the forests was made from the summer of 1947. (The cases of the Ise Grand Shrine and the Hakusan-hime Shrine took place immediately prior to the transfer of precincts.) The number of State-owned precincts lent gratuitously as of March, 1947, was in regard to shrines: 76,082 cases (94,523,224 *tsubo*=373,755,781 sq. yds.); in regard to temples: 30,484 cases (24,800,910 *tsubo*=98,013,196 sq. yds.); or a total of 106,566 cases (119,324,134 *tsubo*=471,568,977 sq. yds.).

The disposal was nearly over by the end of 1952. According to the statistics as of December, 1953, land was gratuitously

transferred to shrines in 61,744 cases (93,987,584 *tsubo* = 371,438,932 sq. yds.), to temples in 21,232 cases (24,366,537 *tsubo* = 96,296,554 sq. yds.). Land was transferred at half price to shrines in 374 cases (2,042,013 *tsubo* = 8,070,035 sq. yds. , to temples in 213 cases (52,551 *tsubo* = 20,807 sq. yds.). Thus almost all State-owned precincts were returned to the shrines and temples.

As of February, 1953 forests had been transferred to shrines in 111 cases (1,450 *chō* = 3,552.5 acres), to temples in 115 cases (2,215 *chō* = 5,426.75 acres). The main recipients of these transfers were: Kirishima-jingū (789 *chō* = 1,933.05 acres); Kongobū-ji (583 *chō* = 1,428.35 acres); Daigo-ji (163 *chō* = 399.35 acres); Enkyō-ji (160 *chō* = 392 acres); Ryūge-in (136 *chō* = 333.2 acres); Enryaku-ji (116 *chō* = 284.2 acres).

By the way, the shrines and temples which have especially vast precincts at present are as follows.

Among the shrines, the Grand Shrine of Ise is by far the largest with 18,350,000 *tsubo* (72,519,200 sq. yds.). It is followed by Futarasan Shrine, 10,300,000 *tsubo* (396,385,600 sq. yds.), Hakusan-hime Shrine, 8,580,000 *tsubo* (318,452,160 sq. yds.), Gassan Shrine, 5,340,000 *tsubo* (21,103,680 sq. yds.), etc.

Temples are in scale far smaller than shrines: Hieizan Enryaku-ji, 860,000 *tsubo* (3,698,720 sq. yds.); Kōaasan Kongōbu-ji, 300,000 *tsubo* (1,185,600 sq. yds.); Minobusan Kuon-ji, 260,000 *tsubo* (927,520 sq. yds.) are in a group of temples with large precincts. They are followed by Ninna-ji, 150,000 *tsubo* (592,800 sq. yds.); Sōji-ji, 130,000 *tsubo* (513,760 sq. yds.); Daigo-ji, 120,000 *tsubo* (4,426,240 sq. yds.) and others.

Vexed ownership of the summit of Mt. Fuji

The transfer sale of title of the State-owned precincts and the forests proceeded rather smoothly with only a little confusion. However, the problem as to ownership of Mt. Fuji became very complicated.

The State-owned land above the eighth station of Mt. Fuji had been lent gratuitously to the former government Grand Shrine, Sengen Jinja (Fujinomiya-shi, Shizuoka pref.), to be used as the site of its Inner Shrine. Therefore, it was a natural result that the same shrine made an application for transfer of the Inner Shrine (above the eighth station), (1,226,028 *tsubo* = 4,845,263 sq. yds.) together with the site of the Satomiya (Fujinomiya Shi) (17,535 *tsubo* = 69,298 sq. yds.).

Against this, however, Yamanashi prefecture, the All Japan Sightseeing League, the Nature Protection Association and others started a strong opposition movement insisting that it was proper for the summit of the mountain to remain State-owned land. For this the following reasons were given: (1) Mt. Fuji is a world famous mountain and the center of the national park. Especially the neighborhood of the summit is valuable for its scenic beauty and to science, and it is therefore necessary to protect the natural condition as far as possible; (2) the neighborhood of the summit has recently become the object of mountain-climbing as recreation and scientific research rather than that of faith and it is therefore necessary to preserve the natural condition of the mountain; (3) Mt. Fuji is the symbol of the land of Japan and therefore private ownership of it cannot be allowed out of national sentiment; (4)

when the summit becomes privately owned, it is feared that this will hinder the special public welfare due to the owner's selfjustified control or private enterprise.

As a result, the Ministry of Finance authorities decided to transfer only 5,000 *tsubo* (19,760 sq. yds.) for the site of the shrine building and 120,000 *tsubo* (474,240 sq. yds.) used for ceremony of *Kinmeisui* and *Ginmeisui* in the precincts of the Inner Shrine. The shrine side disagreed with this judgement and emphasized the following points: (1) the neighborhood of the summit has been the object of worship since olden times and is indispensable for rites; (2) since the time when Ieyasu Tokugawa granted the control over the area above the eighth station, this power was always publicly recognized; (3) the management after the transfer of the summit does in no way affect the public welfare because of the restrictions imposed on the shrine by the Cultural Properties Protection Law and the National Park Law. The shrine side also insisted upon that it was unfair to treat only Mt. Fuji as an exception because concerning Mt. Chōkai (Omonoimi Shrine), the three Dewa mountains, Gassan, Yudonosan, Hagurosan (Dewa Shrine), Mt. Nantai (Futarasan Shrine), Mt. Tsukuba (Tsukubasan Shrine), Mt. Hakusan (Hakusan-hime Shrine) and others which were in the same class as Mt. Fuji, the transfer of all these mountains as objects of worship was made upon application. At last the problem grew into a lawsuit against the State, and the struggle around "the supreme mountain in Japan" has not yet been settled.

Itsukushima Shrine got the sea-bed precincts

One of the scenic trio of Japan, Miyajima in Aki, also offers an interesting story concerning the transfer of the precincts.

In this case Itsukushima Shrine applied for transfer of the site of the famous big *torii* on the sea and the application was recognized.

Since a site beneath the sea surface could be an object of ownership from the legal point of view, it was transferred to the shrine.

The reason for the approval was that Itsukushima Shrine, because of the belief that the island itself is a deity and therefore a divine island, does not erect a *torii* and a shrine building on the island and that therefore the shrine has artificially kept the neighborhood of the *torii* well dredged at high cost.

The transfer was made on the condition that excursion boats were allowed passage at high tide or fishing boats to take refuge in stormy weather. Anyway, this approval of "the precincts beneath the sea surface" was praiseworthy because the old faith was respected.

As unfavorable examples the following may be cited. Tōshōgū Shrine at Shiba, Tokyo, was refused transfer for the reason that it had used the precincts for other than religious purposes by building ten odd dwelling houses on the State-owned land prior to its disposal. In the case of the former Special Government Shrine, Ōyama Jinja at Kanagawa-shi, the transfer was revoked because it had permitted the construction of shops on the precincts.

Yasukuni Shrine and Gokoku Shrines were prohibited to have

their precincts transferred in accordance with the policy of GHQ, but the transfer was at last approved in 1951.

THE PRISON CHAPLAIN SYSTEM AND ITS REFORM

The prison chaplain system underwent reform

Every religion has the ideal of realizing a world without crime.

Therefore, it is natural for men of religion to make efforts to prevent crimes. The efforts which religion should make for exterminating crimes in actual society can be roughly divided into two.

The first is to prevent crimes by elevating the moral lived of society at large, and the second to reform people who have committed crimes in order to keep them from committing new crimes.

An important means of reeducating criminals through religion is the institution of chaplains for the convicts in prison. This is an important part in the field of activities of religious organizations. This institution underwent a big reform at the end of the war.

Prison chaplains started with the Restoration

It was since the Restoration that the institution of prison chaplains was formally established in our country.

It is on record that a priest of Tōdaiji at Nara visited Nara Prison and that a teacher of practical ethics (*shingakusha*)

gave monthly lectures at Tokyo Prison in 1869. As a more concrete example, the priest Taigaku of Gyōmyōji of Shinshū Ōtani-ha, applied for and received permission to work as prison chaplain in 1872. He worked at Nagaya and Sugamo, Tokyo.

Following his example applicants for this kind of work appeared in succession. Shrine priests, Buddhist priests and Confucianists preached to convicts about Shintoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, explaining to them man's duties in the world.

The prison chaplain system was thus started on a voluntary basis, as something which arose spontaneously among the men of religion. On the other hand, the penal administration authorities, because of the modernization of the penal administration system based on the idea that a prison was not an establishment for disciplinary punishment only, but a place for reeducating man by correcting his faults and turning him to the good, paid attention to the reeducation of convicts by means of religion.

As a result, the name of *Kyōkaishi* (prison chaplain) was adopted formally in 1876. With the revision of the Prison Regulations in the same year, Article 92 stipulated that "For the purpose of educating them lectures shall be given to the convicts under confinement and penal servitude by the chaplains concerning the way of correcting faults and turning to the good." Thus the chaplain system was established legally. After the second revision of the Prison Regulations in 1889, the chaplains came to attend to their office everyday like the other officials.

Both Honganji much interested in prison chaplain work

However, although the system was thus established, because of financial reasons, there were very few prisons at that time which formally employed chaplains by paying salaries. Other prisons, in order to lighten the financial burden, applied to various head temples to send standing chaplains.

For this reason, even after the chaplains became full-time workers, salaries and traveling expenses were borne by the head temples.

This was a rather unbearable burden for the head temples. Therefore, the head temples by and by stopped sending chaplains, and only East and West Honganji continued to do so with great zeal to the end.

Even today, the faith which is accepted by most convicts is that of the Jōdo-shin sect. This is mainly because both Honganji have made great efforts for this work since the Meiji era by making an organization for promoting chaplain work, by educating chaplains, or by publishing study organs.

Christian chaplains in the prewar days frustrated in the middle of the way

Christianity was also watching for a chance of advancing into prison chaplain work, but as it was the time when anti-Christian thought was strong, it was difficult to realize. As late as 1888, when the Governor of Hokkaido Prison, Teruhide Ōinoue, and the Chief of the Branch Jail, Shirosuke Arima, were both devout Christians, Christian chaplains succeeded in Hokkaido. It once monopolized all the chaplain work in various places

of Hokkaidō.

However, when Ōinoue was transferred to another post in 1895, his successor, regarding the negligence of Buddhism in our country as improper, appointed Buddhist chaplains. As a result, the Christian chaplains, dissatisfied with this, retired en masse. Soon after it, Christianity completely withdrew from this work. Since then till the termination of the war, almost all the prison chaplain activity was monopolized by both Honganji.

The prison work thus started was stabilized also financially when in 1890 expenditures for prisons throughout the country were switched over from local budgets to the National Treasury and all the salaries of chaplains were paid by the State. Since 1903, the chaplains became officials treated as of *sōnin* or of *hannin* rank.* Until the termination of the war around 140 chaplains (a greater number of them were priests of Shin sect always attended to their office in the status of officials. Besides their chaplain activity, they dealt with various business concerning the spiritual education of convicts.

Change of system in the postwar days

The chaplain system thus established, however, had to be changed greatly with the end of the war.

On the issuing of the Shinto Directive, the Ministry of Justice had remove Buddhist and Shinto altars provided within the jails in accordance with the principle of separation of State and religion, but only the designation of the chaplain was changed from that of *Kyōkaishi* (Exhortation Teacher) to that of *Shihōkyōkan* (Teacher of Justice). They were still in charge of the

* *Sōnin* = official appointed with the Emperor's approval; *hannin* = minor official.

chaplain activity with the status of officials. Moreover, fourteen clergymen each of Catholic and Protestant churches were newly appointed as non-regular staff members of the Ministry of Justice to work as prison chaplains.

However, when the contents of the new Constitution were clarified, it was found to be against to the Constitution for an official to be engaged in religious work whatever the pretext might be.

Therefore, since March, 1947, all the chaplain activity has been entrusted to non-official men of religion, and the past Teachers of Justice were converted to administrative officials in charge of educational administration not to be directly connected with religion.

To summarize the history of the chaplain system since the Meiji era, it may be divided into the period when chaplain work was done under State control but as a matter of fact was mainly in the hands of both Honganji. But the chaplain system under State control came to an end through the enactment of the new Constitution, and the chaplains' activities were to be done again by the hand of genuinely non-official people.

The new system starting under rapid increase of crimes

In 1947, when the system was thus changed, the number of crimes was on the increase, there being nearly 80,000 convicts, and their number grew by 2,000 every month.

Therefore, the chaplains' activity could not be abandoned, even for a short time, and it was required to establish as quickly as possible a new system of activities conducted by non-official men of religion.

As a result of repeated conferences between authorities of the Ministry and the religious world, in November of the same year a "Prison Chaplains Central Committee" composed of representatives of various religions was established within the Japan Religions League. Similarly, "Prison Chaplains Local Committees" were established within the prefectural Religious Leagues. The penal administration authorities and religious organizations worked together to find chaplains and to promote their activities.

Since then till today, the chaplains of various religions have been sent into prisons through the good offices of the committees. The chaplains are permitted to pass freely within the designated area of the prison during office hours and to meet the convicts without an observer. Moreover, they may (a) explain the contents of religion, (b) hold religious ceremonies and functions, (c) give religious lectures within the prison, (d) recite sutras or prayers in front of coffins, (e) recite sutras or prayers on the anniversary of the death of parents or in case of the death of relatives, (f) recite sutras or prayers for the victims of criminals, (g) comfort those who are sentenced to death, and (h) give personal interviews based on religion.

Actual condition of religious exhortation

According to *Zenkoku jikeisha shūkyō chōsha* (Report on the religion of the convicts in the country made by the Correction Bureau of the Ministry of Justice in June, 1958, in regard to the actual condition of chaplain work, among 64,243 convicts of all the prisons in the country, those who believe in religion are 53.3%, and those who do not, 46.3%.

The percentage of the religions in which they believe is as follows: Buddhism 54.6%; Christianity 27.4% Sectarian Shinto (Tenri, Konkō, Kurozumi, Ontake, Taishō, Taisei, Fusō, Jikko, Shinshū, Shinri, Shintō-taikyō, Ōmoto) 6.3%; the new sects (PL, Risshō-kōsei-kai, Seichō-No-Ie) 5.9%; shrine 3.2%; unknown 2.6%.

45.7% declared that their attitude towards religion did not change since entering the institution; 11.4% lost interest in religion, and 28.8% became interested in religion (Buddhism 14.8%; Christianity 9.7% Sectarian Shinto 1.5%; new sects 1.4%; other 0.8%).

Religious active in chaplain work

For convicts who are thus seeking religion, there are 1,038 chaplains working in prisons, reformatories and women protection and guidance institutions (as of Sept. 1, 1960). Of these 758 (58%) are Buddhists, 266 (20.3%) Christian; 176 (13.6%) Sectarian Shintoists; 101 (7.7%) Shrine Shintoists and 7 (0.5%) others.

Among the Buddhist sects, Jōdo-shin-shū stands at the top as usual with 361 chaplains. It is followed by Protestantism with 225, Zen-shū with 130, Tenri-kyō with 108, Shrine Shinto with 191, Jōdo-shū with 86, Shingon-shū with 82, Nichiren-shū with 62, Konkōkyō with 44, Catholicism with 43, Tendai-shū with 25, Ōmoto with 8, Kurozumi-kyō with 5, Ji-shū with 5, Yuzū-nembutsu-shū with 2, and other sects with 18 chaplains.

Those which attach importance to the chaplain work are Jōdo-shin-shū and Zen-shū in Buddhism, Protestantism in Christianity and Shrine Shintō, Tenrikyō and Konkōkyō in Shinto.

All these have established courses for the training of chaplains.

New sects are little interested

In contrast with these, the new sects, except Ōmoto (Ōmoto is included in Sectarian Shinto in the statistics given above), are completely inactive.

According to the statistics, only 5.9 all convicts give the new sects (PL, Risshō-Kōsei-kai, Seichō-No-Ie) as their religion. Among these new religious organizations, Risshō-Kōsei-kai used to be engaged in chaplain work for a while but has withdrawn from it, and the others scarcely send any chaplain.

There may be reasons for this, but, because of the importance of the chaplain work the new sects should study the problem more seriously.

Active exhortation works desired

Although several years have passed since the change of the chaplain systems after the termination of the war, the activity of prison chaplains desired by everybody concerned has been very dull.

This was because the correction institutions always feared to come into conflict with the Constitution or the Shinto Directive through promoting the chaplains' work, and therefore showed a negative attitude with regard to their activity, and the religious world was busy to maintain itself amid the rapidly changing world and showed no positive ardor.

After the recovery of the independence of Japan, however, the penal administration authorities gradually began to get rid of their negative attitude and in the religious world the en-

thusiasm of the chaplains was gradually heightened. After 1954, a general meeting of chaplains from all over the country came to be held once a year. As a result, the League of Chaplains of All Japan was organized in 1956, with the Rev. Kōshō Ōtani as president. Moreover, the Supporters' Association of Chaplains' Activity in All Japan (president, Tsūsei Iwamura) which aimed at giving financial aid to the chaplains' activity, was born through the support of the religious and the economic world.

The chaplain work thus made some progress but still is not satisfactory.

As one cause preventing greater progress, the economic condition is cited.

The reward paid to chaplains by the authorities is a very small amount, the total budget for 1959 being only 774,000 yen. Therefore, the sum paid to the individual chaplain is a mere pittance.

Considering the present situation in Japan, it is wrong to expect financial aid from the State in connection with the chaplains' work.

For this work is not something the State ought to do and is not a work entrusted which he has entrusted to men of religion. Reeducation of convicts as members of human society is one of the missions which men of religion should accomplish on their own responsibility for the purpose of exterminating crimes and sins, and of saving man.

It was said that at the general meeting of all chaplains in the country voices were heard several times demanding a legal status like that of welfare commissioners or probation officials.

This also would be wrong.

For, welfare commissioner or probation officials are entrusted with work which the State should conduct, but chaplains should perform the work they should do by their vocation.

In order to promote the work of the chaplains it is desirable that each religious organization should take cognizance of their own responsibility and help the activity of chaplains by devising ways to settle the economic problem by themselves.

War-criminals and chaplains' activities

The chaplain work for war-criminals attracted great interest from many sides.

Those who were designated war-criminals by the Allied Forces and put into jail amounted to a great number. The persons who died from penalty or in jail numbered as many as 1,079.

The chaplain work for these war-criminals was carried on earnestly by volunteers of religion and was talked about very much. From among them the Japanese press singled out Dr. Shinshō Hanayama, professor at Tokyo University, who worked for the A class war-criminals.

A class war-criminals and Dr. Shinshō Hanayama

Dr. Hanayama, a famous Buddhist scholar as well as an excellent preacher of Shin-shū (Honganji), worked as chaplain at Sugamo Prison in Tokyo for the A class criminals, including former General Hideki Tōiō, and attracted much interest of the people.

Death by hanging came to the seven A class criminals, in-

cluding former Premier Tōjō, December 24, 1948. As it was reported that Dr. Hanayama had continued to comfort the seven war-criminals till the very night before, the interest of the world in Dr. Hanayama was more and more heightened. The record of his work for the war-criminals, "Discovery of Peace" (published by the Asahi Press Co.) which he published soon after sold very well.

Unexpectedly, however, the contents of this book were unpopular.

What the people paid attention to was what kind of change had been produced in the criminals' mind and how they had reached a stage of spiritual peace and enlightenment through Dr. Hanayama's efforts. However, as far as recorded in "Discovery of Peace" the seven persons had experienced scarcely any spiritual change through religion. To quote a few examples, Iwane Matsui declared, "In my recollection, I have not a bit of regret about this death. I never am ashamed of sin even before heaven and earth, (*kami* and *hotoke*). Or Heitarō Kimura, "This mortal life is a human sacrifice for everlasting peace. Let me be reborn seven times to serve gratefully our country." Or Hideki Tōjō, "Even if I go, let me return to this land, for my service to our country is not enough." They only expressed their self-satisfaction, but never stated that they felt responsible for not being able to preserve the peace.

Dr. Hanayama's exhortation had thus been empty in its contents and had resulted only in the affirmation of the characters and merits of the seven criminals. In addition to this, a rumor was heard that Dr. Hanayama had only been ardent in approach

ing the A class war-criminals, and was cold to those of the B and lower classess in his work. This resulted in a great disappointment.

Christian boom also in prison

When Dr. Hanayama's activity was in the news, there were one thousand and several hundred convicts in Sugamo Prison alone. They were looked after by Christian and Buddhist chaplains. The Christian boom which was in the limelight just at that time had penetrated also the thick walls of the prison.

The prison at that time was under the control of the Allied Forces, and Christians were given preferential treatment. Therefore, when anyone was converted and became a devout(?) Christian, he was regarded as a good war-criminal and could be turned to lighter work like that of a translator.

There were so many persons who tried to get into favor with the supervisor by a faked conversion to the Christian religion that Christianity was nicknamed "Sugano Religion."

Father of war-criminals, Ryūjun Tajima

On the other side, it was natural that there were many persons who trembled with the fear of death, who were tortured by the consciousness of sin, and who suffered unjust or excessive punishment.

There were some prison chaplains who extended a helping hand to these people and made pathetically sincere efforts for them. Among them, one who was highly praised for his work was the Rev. Ryūjin Tajima. Concerning his activity Mr. Masaji Kitamura, the then chief of the Education Department

of Sugamo Prison, remembers the following :

He was a well known priest of a temple belonging to the Shingonshū-Buzanha, a scholar with long experience of study abroad and a professor at Taishō University.

However, when he was standing before the war-criminals, he was neither a distinguished priest nor a scholar but only an ordinary old man. His small figure with slowly winking eyes gave the sense of a man of love and benevolence, and all who came to see him loved and respected him like a dear father.

In his old age, forgetting his weak constitution, he busied himself day and night with petitioning clemency for those convicts who had been condemned to death. He appealed to all the Buddhists in the country, and by influencing politicians he extended his work even beyond the boundaries of Japan.

Besides, consulting with men of the same mind, he created a religious juridical person, "Byakuren-sha" which aimed at protecting the war-criminals. He continued to work actively, giving comfort to the war-criminals, taking care of their families and appealing to the world. The fact that 21 of 37 condemned criminals had their sentences reduced during his term of office shows that his movement for clemency had been effective.

Moreover, the fact that all of the sixteen executed were completely reconciled with their fate through his efforts and went to death with gratitude for his love and benevolence shows what kind of man he was.

At that time, every Thursday and Saturday (later in the afternoon of Saturday), worship, sutra recitation and sermon were held. These functions were attended by as many as 700. In this way his existence was the spiritual support for the Sugamo people. Corresponding to the Byakuren-sha; the "Byakuren-kai" was organized by the people of the

same faith within the prison in October, 1950, and, as one of its activities, a society for reciting sutras of various sects was created.

Dr. Tajima broke down at Sugamo during his exhortation on October 18, 1951, and suffered a slight softening of the brain caused by overwork which he forced himself to do in spite of his old age, to on behalf of the war-criminals.

After that the Rev. Jikō Sekiguchi visited Sugamo in his place. Although Dr. Tajima stood again before the war-criminals, his speech and conduct were apt to be disordered.

At that time, a group of Christians called Shin-yū-kai was also every active.

I assumed office a year after the control of Sugamo Prison had been completely transferred to Japan. Therefore, the interests of the Sugamo people at that time seemed to be oriented toward many actual problems, the life of their families, finding employment after release etc., but interest in religion was very dull.

At that time too, Saturday was devoted to religious activity. In the early morning Protestant services were held, in the afternoon Buddhist services. This activity was carried out autonomously, all things, such as notices and preparation, being done by the war-criminals themselves. Sometimes a small group of only two or three offered devout prayers. However, at the end it happened that nobody was present although the clergyman was waiting.

It was at that time that Dr. Tajima expressed his wish to resign from his office of chaplain at Sugamo for reasons health. However, the love and respect of all the war-criminals was so sincere that they petitioned, "Please remain as the father of Sugamo till the day when all the criminals are released, even if you do not come for services as in the past." Therefore, toward the end of 1955, the connection between him and Sugamo was maintained in the form of a tem-

porarily suspended Buddhist chaplaincy.

After that with his disabled body he attended the memorial services for the victims of war tribunal held in the spring, autumn and the Bon season, and the funerals of those who died from illness during confinement. However, I suppose that he was very sad that he passed away on July 24, 1957, before the dissolution of Sugamo Prison.

(The Shinshūkyō Shimbun, May 20, 1961)

Dr. Ryūjun Tajima left in this way, but even after that a "Society in Gratitude to Dr. Tajima" was organized by the many people who had been receiving his teaching and continued to long for his virtue.

He had lived, indeed, a life worthy of the name, "father of war criminals."

Chaplain Kagao at Muntinglupa

The work of the Rev. Shunin Kagao (Kōyasan-Shingon-shu) is also well known. He was a chaplain at Muntinglupa Prison in the Philippines from where many sad stories are arose.

Fourteen criminals condemned to death were executed without notice at Muntinglupa in January, 1946, and there were signs that the rest of the condemned criminals would also be executed in succession.

The Japanese side was worried about this situation, but the problem of the war-criminals in the Philippines was very difficult.

A dangerous anti-Japanese sentiment overflowing the whole of the Philippines made the settlement of the problem difficult and the reparation problem under negotiation was complicating

the problem all the more.

The Philippine side was trying to use the war criminals to exert pressure on the Japanese side for an advantageous solution of the reparation problem, and the Japanese Government did not make any strenuous effort to solve the war-criminals problem but took gave priority to the reparation problem.

It was Chaplain, Kagao, who stood up for the war criminals under these circumstances.

At that time, there was opposition between the Japanese agencies in the Philippines. Whereas one group wanted settle the problem of the war-criminals from a humanitarian point of view, another group thought it more in line with the intentions of the home government to give priority to the solution of the reparation problem.

Mr. Kagao cleverly solved this by appealing to the Japanese government to rescue the war-criminals by ordering all Japanese agencies in the Philippines to give priority to the problem of war criminals.

His appeal soon succeeded in moving the then Premier Yoshida who took up the war criminals problem wholeheartedly, and his voice also moved President Quirino of the Philippines. At last, in 1953, those condemned to death were removed to Sugamo, and all the other criminals were released.

The efforts of Mr, Kagao, who contributed to the reduction of the penalties of the war-criminals through his excellent political influence, should be estimated as highly as those of Dr. Ryūjun Tajima who gave great consolation to the war-criminals through his genuine character.

The problem of the war criminals, about which it was said,

“For the simple reason that one’s face resembled that of someone who committed a cruelty, many people were killed without crime,” was one of the great tragedies produced by the war.

(To be continued)