

Answered 11/19/75

# CHRISTIAN & MISSIONARY ALLIANCE CHURCH

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November 14, 1975

Mr. Henry Paasonen  
Communications Office  
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Box C  
Nyack, New York 10960

Dear Mr. Paasonen:

I have heard about you, but we haven't met yet.

I am a pastor in Salem, Oregon. I think the Alliance has a great story to tell--a story that needs to be told. I am therefore especially thankful for your work.

Your recent news release on our missionaries coming out of Viet Nam was especially appreciated. At first we placed it on our Missionary Information Center and noted it in the bulletin.

Then yesterday it came into special use when Dr. and Mrs. Richard Phillips visited Salem briefly. We were able to call a news conference where four television stations from Portland and four different newspapers as well as the United Press were present. As an introduction we gave them a copy of this news release and a little brochure about the Christian and Missionary Alliance as a mission.

The response has been fantastic. Not only did all of the channels use the news coverage but one channel used it as their lead-in story.

I am enclosing some of the newspaper releases.

I hope this encourages you to keep on in your good work. I hope to personally meet you in December when I expect to be in New York for the Board of Managers meeting.

Cordially,



Donald L. Bubna  
Senior Pastor

DLB:m



"For the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 1:9

# Missionary Couple Released By N. Vietnamese Visit Salem

By GRAHAM VINK  
Staff Writer, The Statesman

Almost 17 years of missionary work in Southeast Asia ended abruptly for Richard and Lillian Phillips this year when they were imprisoned by the North Vietnamese on March 12.

The two made a 30-hour stop in Salem to visit Phillips' sister on Thursday, and held a press conference to describe their imprisonment and release from captivity earlier this month.

The couple, sponsored by the Christian Missionary Alliance Church in Albany, Phillips' hometown, began missionary work in Vietnam in 1958. In 1961 they moved to Ban Me Thuot, a town in the central highlands of South Vietnam where they were captured when the region unexpectedly fell to the North Vietnamese.

What followed was seven months of traveling, interrogation, imprisonment, illness and semi-starvation until their release.

Their group of foreign prisoners, eventually totaling 14, was first taken to a "re-education" camp used to indoctrinate South Vietnamese officials. They were later transferred by truck to two other camps, ultimately being taken to Son Tay Camp, near Hanoi, two months before their release.

Phillips said they were treated fairly decently by their captors, although living conditions were sometimes "rather difficult." Those difficulties included sleeping on the ground on some occasions, and living in grass huts infested with snakes and insects. The couple also lost about 35 pounds each during their imprisonment, due to a diet consisting almost entirely of rice.

Both of them also contracted malaria, as they no longer had access to anti-malarial drugs. Mrs. Phillips spent about one and a half months in a military hospital and suffered from abscesses in her eye and carbuncles on her back. At the press conference, both appeared pale, tired and considerably older than a couple in their middle 40s.

Phillips said, however, that "no one in our group was abused," and they saw no torture. They added that all prisoners in their camps were fed basically the same diet, although the guards were given more vegetables.

They spent their time in captivity reading the Bible, working on manuscripts and chasing butterflies, with the help of their guards.

Their release earlier this month came unexpectedly, and the couple said they

didn't know why they gained their freedom.

The two will now travel to Minneapolis, where Mrs. Phillips has relatives. Asked about their future plans, Phillips replied, "This was our regular year for furlough, and we feel we ought to take it."

