

17 Fifth Avenue
Pelham, New York
October 26, 1956

Rev. L. L. King, Foreign Secretary
Christian & Missionary Alliance
260 West 44th Street
New York 36, New York

Dear Mr. King:

Mrs. Van Hine and I were listed as missionaries of the C. and M. A. in the Directory and Prayer Manual for 1955 but are omitted in the 1956 editions. We assume that this omission was the result of some action by the Foreign Department concerning us. But we have not been informed of any action dismissing or dropping us as missionaries of the CMA. The only recent action about us by the Foreign Department of which we have been informed are as follows:-

Under date of April 2, 1954, Mr. Wagoner wrote us reporting an action of the Foreign Department of March 24-26, 1954 as follows:-

"Consideration was given to the case of Rev. and Mrs. J. J. Van Hine who left the field November 14, 1952 and their sailing was deferred to 1954. He is to take part in summer conventions, July 2-11 and July 31-August 6. Her physical condition is not yet satisfactory. It was voted that they go off allowance as of September 30, subject to an adjustment to delay going off allowance until December 31, if he has not been able to make satisfactory arrangements by that time."

Under date of September 2, 1954 Mr. Wagoner wrote us reporting an action of the Foreign Department of August 24-26 as follows:-

"That we appreciate the offer of Rev. J. J. Van Hine to go to the field for special ministries in the north, but that since we are bringing missionaries home due to the financial situation, we do not accept this offer. We would be very glad for the ministry of Mr. and Mrs. Van Hine in Viet Nam if Mrs. Van Hine were physically able to return to the field, but we are not free to send Mr. Van Hine alone due to her physical condition."

We note that the actions quoted above deal only with cessation of our allowance and my offer to return to the field. Nothing is said about our classification as missionaries much less about ceasing to be such. It may be possible that the cessation of allowance infers some related or consequent action concerning our missionary status which would be understood or inferred by a member of the Foreign Department but we do not infer or understand more than the minutes actually state.

Personally my status individually is as a member of Headquarters Staff being so listed in the Directory and having become such by action of the Finance Department. But Mrs. Van Hine's status has never been defined by the Foreign Department unless by some action of which we have not been informed. The actions quoted above state that the Department was "not free to send Mr. Van Hine alone due to her physical condition" and "Her physical condition is not yet satisfactory."

Many other missionaries have been classified as "disabled" in the Directory and Prayer Manual, or as "detained at home" in the Finance Department's monthly directory. They are permitted to retain their missionary status and we cannot understand why Mrs. Van Hine was not given similar consideration. It seems to us that Mrs. Van Hine's years of service on the foreign field and her present physical condition warrant her classification as "disabled". Our reason

for bringing this matter to your attention is not financial, although it might well be such because my salary in the Finance Department is not as a married man but as a single individual and without provision for rent. We could well use the added help of a disability allowance for Mrs. Van Hine but we do not ask that.

Our reason and purpose for bringing this to the attention of the Foreign Department is far more than a matter of dollars and cents. It is a question of our standing with the Alliance constituency at home. Are they to understand that we remain at home because of unwillingness to return to the field out of indifference and lack of genuine missionary spirit and consecration? Are they to suppose that we remain at home because of my being employed on the Headquarters Staff? There is nothing in the records or our classification to indicate otherwise. We have nothing to show them. How can we prove or how can they know that our failure to return to the field has been entirely due to Mrs. Van Hine's illness. It seems to us that the Foreign Department records should contain some clear statement as to our past work, present standing, and that the real reason for our remaining in the homeland is because Mrs. Van Hine is disabled.

Trusting you shall give this important matter your kind attention, I am,

Cordially yours,

J. J. Van Hine



MEMENTOS from Vietnam are shown here by Mrs. J.J. Van Hine of Pelham who spent more than 30 years in that country as a missionary. Mrs. Van Hine, who will give the keynote address at the missionary convention here tomorrow at the

Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, Post Rd. and Sterling Ave., holds handwrought silver communion dishes presented to her by the Vietnamese. The dolls, right, are dressed in traditional Vietnamese costume, while the carved wood fisher-

man, presented to the Van Hines by the governor of Vietnam, and the carved wooden box, are samples of the handiwork of the people of that country. The dagger, center, is from Cambodia—
Staff Photo by James Nevins

She'll Launch Convention Here

Mission Life in Vietnam Rugged

By SHIRLEY L. BENZER

A vivacious Swiss woman who spent more than half her life as a missionary in French Indo-China will launch the missionary convention of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church here tomorrow. Mrs. Nelly Van Hine, now living at 17 5th Ave., Pelham, will deliver the keynote address to the convention and tell of her experiences as a missionary in Vietnam.

"The job has no glamor," Mrs. Van Hine says. "We saw men sliced in half by machine gun bullets. We saw others ravaged by war and hunger, and we worked in 100 degree heat to help the wounded. But I knew I wanted to be—and had to be—a missionary."

Married to an American, Jacob John "Jake" Van Hine, an ordained minister, Mrs. Van Hine first went to Vietnam in 1927, at the age of twenty-one. Pioneer missionaries in the northern part of what is now called Vietnam, but was then part of Indo-China, the couple studied the language and customs of the country at the university in Hanoi. For 13 years they worked spreading the gospel to the tribes in the northern areas.

Cleaned Out

"Then, in 1940, we were cleaned out by the Japs," Mrs. Van Hine relates. "It was an unofficial war, we were living by the Great Wall of China, on the southern border of that country. The Japs came down and plundered and slaughtered. We were the last ones to leave the town of Langson," she explains.

During the years of World War II the couple, and their daughter, also a missionary now, returned to live in the States. The Rev. Van Hine for a while was associated with the Asian division of the State Department. However, they wanted to get back to Vietnam, and in 1947 were able to obtain visas to continue their work.

Returning, they found the country desolate. It had been occupied by French Vichy forces and bombed by U.S. planes to remove the Japanese troops. Industry was non-existent.

"The beautiful shops with European imports were all closed up. You couldn't even buy a button," Mrs. Van Hine reports. **Start Rebuilding**

Doggedly they started on their job of rebuilding churches and setting up new ones. The couple had settled in Haiphong, the port city of the North. But by this time civil war had gripped the country and the Vietnamese were involved in guerilla warfare.

"We never got one night of good sleep. The tanks going by would shake our beds," and then Mrs. Van Hine related a story about a truck immediately in front of her exploding when it hit a mine on the road. She told about the water lines being cut by the communists, the electricity being turned off by the guerillas, and the French evacuating the country by the thousands.

"By 1950 the Viet Minh — the Moscow — trained rebels — had control of the North," the miss-

ionary said. She described how the people of the country would be shot at one day by the French and the next day by the Viet Minh. She related how she and her husband had pleaded with officials for the lives of some of their friends. How they had acted as lawyers, for those who had innocently been taken in raids and others in cases of mistaken identity. And they had been comforters to the wounded.

Fled to South

"Many Vietnamese fled to the South, but others who didn't want to leave their rice fields, their buffalo and their families remained and were subjected to Communist domination," she said. She told of a former judge's wife who was put to work as a cook for the Communist armies. And of threats from Communist guards to children attending Sunday school.

"When we left in 1952 we fully expected to return the next year to pick up where we had left off—to finish our work and reclaim our possessions," Mrs. Van Hine said. However, with the country in the hands of the Communists, they are unable to do so.

Despite the physical hardships and mental anguish Mrs. Van Hine tells of three new tribes she and her husband had reached in the northern part of Vietnam. "They had never heard the Gospel in their own tongue," she explained, "and we brought it to them."

"There is need to pray, to give, and to go," Mrs. Van Hine ended.