

1965  
A church-sponsored secondary French school program at our Bongolo station with 63 students enrolled gives opportunity to train our choice youth in a Christian atmosphere with the hope of satisfying the need of better-educated church leaders. To weigh the spiritual results from a church's secular school program is difficult. Many students and staff alike appear to give mental assent to the gospel without any signs of true conversion. On the other hand, reports do come in of spiritual victories, of young men and women who have expressed a conviction of God's call on their lives for the ministry.

### Conclusion

The solution to all our problems, in the church and in the schools, is Holy Ghost revival with the accompanying conviction of sin, repentance, and acceptance of the indwelling Christ. To this end we pray and encourage others to pray. As we strive for victory in Gabon, may the Holy Spirit's fullness be manifested, perfecting this portion of the Church of Christ until the Bridegroom comes.

## VIET NAM

REV. T. G. MANGHAM, JR., *Chairman*

*Saigon, Viet Nam, Headquarters*

**Total area:**

(No.) 62,000 sq. miles.

(So.) 65,000 sq. miles.

**Total population:**

(No.) 16,200,000.

(So.) 15,715,000.

*Languages used by our missionaries and national pastors:* Vietnamese, Jerai, Bahnar, Raday, Sre, Bru, Katu, Puan, Hdrung, Krung, Mdhur, Adham, Bih, Mnong Rolum, Luan, Stieng, Chrao, Roglai, Cil, Biat, Thai, Cantonese, Mandarin, Swatowese, French, Mnong-Gar, Korean.

God has worked in the midst of tragedy.

Hope has been kindled in the midst of despair, confidence has been sustained despite threats and fears, joy has overcome

the clouds of uncertainty and gloom, peace has been given in the midst of war.

This is the witness of God's people in Viet Nam as we look back on the year 1965. This land in torment has experienced frightening days. The loyalties of its people have been courted by the Saigon government as well as by the elusive Viet Cong. Terror, suffering, destruction, and death have continued as a way of life for the weary and confused population.

The tragic results of war can be seen both in the maimed bodies of brave but discarded veterans and in the scarred and abandoned countryside. Perhaps as many as one million people have become refugees. There seems to be no really safe haven from the agents of the Liberation Front movement. No city is immune to its acts of sabotage, no distant hamlet is beyond the reach of its propaganda, no highway escapes an occasional ambush, no trail is free from the danger of its boobytraps.

Wonderful opportunities for evangelism and Christian witness have confronted the church and mission. Priority has been given to efforts among the Vietnamese military personnel in training centers, camps, and hospitals. Refugee centers have also brought thousands from country areas to the doorstep of the missionary and the city churches. A rich ingathering of souls has resulted. Our prayer again and again has been, "Lord, make us adequate for this tremendous hour!" This, we feel, is the day of His visitation to Viet Nam. We who are His servants must not fail in the responsibility committed to us.

Food and funds for relief purposes are being supplied in generous amounts by many organizations and agencies. There is a serious temptation for the Christians, and even pastors, to misuse that portion entrusted to them for impartial distribution. Thus, that which is given out with the best of intentions becomes a stumbling block and cause of distrust. Money is flowing freely. Financial assistance is readily available. It is easy to get sidetracked from our primary mission of preaching the gospel of eternal redemption. Social consciousness must be cultivated as a Christian duty, but not at the expense of evangelistic zeal. Materialism increasingly looms as the enemy of spiritual power in the church. There are two great extremes

in Viet Nam today: those who are suffering because of the war, and those who are profiting because of the war.

While recognizing these dangers, we also see some basic strengths of the church, and we rejoice in the spiritual leadership which continues to give guidance on both the national and district level.

### The Church

The church in Viet Nam has suffered during the year because of the war. One young pastor, Tan of the Le Thanh church, was killed by the Viet Cong because he would not abandon his flock in the face of imminent danger. Many other pastors and church leaders have been threatened and held for "instruction." Christians in a number of places, caught in the cross fire of the opposing forces, have lost their lives. Others have fled, unable to save any of their material possessions. Three church buildings have been destroyed by bombs or exploding shells, and a number of others have been damaged. Wherever the Christians have been able to remain, even in some cases in areas completely controlled by the Viet Cong, the pastors have chosen to stay with them in order to provide spiritual leadership.

During the year, two new churches were organized in Saigon. Two other congregations dedicated new buildings. A preaching center was opened in an unchurched section of the city, and this has promise of developing very quickly into an independent church.

At every center for the war refugees, scores of people are found who have previously heard the gospel and who are now ready to accept Christ. All three churches in Danang have shown continued growth. Not one church has been closed, though many of those in the country have lost members because many people have moved into the cities. These displaced Christians have been encouraged to send support to their former churches in order that pastors who have remained behind will have a means of livelihood. The church in Hue has had its best year with a measure of revival experienced by its members.

There are five Protestant chaplains serving in the Vietnamese armed forces, all of whom are ordained ministers of The Evangelical Church of Viet Nam (C&MA).

### The Tribes

Added to the strong bid by the Viet Cong in the central highlands is the increasing strength of the Fulro movement. This takes its name from a French title meaning United Front for the Liberation of the Oppressed Races. There have been small-scale armed uprisings by tribesmen against the government. Among the younger generation the movement has a very wide base of popular support. Doubtlessly the leaders are sincere in seeking to improve the lot of their people, but it is obvious that they have pushed back by years any opportunities that the tribes people might have realized. This group poses a real threat to the unity and advancement of the church.

According to government figures, one-third of all Koho-speaking people in the Dalat province are Christians. The ratio of Protestant Christians is about 1 in 7. This is by far the highest degree of response seen among any of the peoples of this land. Many villages have been resettled in more secure areas again this year. Included were the people of the *Bamboo Cross*, who have been relocated at a place called Sut Thong. In the resettlement of these many groups, all have remained united and kept the faith, and no pastor has left his people. One hundred and fifty Seventh-day Adventists have found the message of the *tin lanh* (gospel) to be sufficient for salvation. Approximately one thousand people have prayed the penitent's prayer.

There is now a very solid, ever-growing nucleus of pastors and churches among the Raday, who believe in full self-support. Nearly every church has been able to increase the amount given to its pastor. Through the ministry of some pastors, the Lord has been performing miracles of healing. As a result, many have believed. Some of the churches and individuals have contributed to a fund for the support of a worker in a pioneer area. It has reached nearly 3,000 piasters a month, and the only tribal graduate from the Bible school at Nhatrang has been appointed to go to a populous resettlement area, Mdrak. The churches of this area have been seriously affected by the Fulro movement.

From mid-1962 to December, 1965, the number of Mnongs who had burned their fetishes more than quadrupled, rising from 450 to 1,900. In October, in the Mnong villages far to the south, the Communists sent threats to the deacons in a number of churches and ordered the Christians to leave "the religion of the Americans and the Vietnamese" and to return to their old ways. At Pal Pe they killed three believers, but the deacon escaped. A month later 222 Christians from Pal Pe abandoned their personal possessions and fled for safety to Kien Duc, another district town. At about the same time the village of Bu Dang suffered destruction during a battle, at which time nine Christians were killed. Many of the Christians from this village also fled to Kien Duc. Now there are 930 believers meeting in the Buk So church. Ten families in that cluster of villages have not yet believed, but the Christians say they are working on them! Of the 1,900 Mnong believers, only 87 have been baptized. We trust that, in 1966, adequate instruction can be given and a great company can take this further step of obedience.

### Evangelism

Work in the military hospitals has been most rewarding. Many wonderful stories of conversions can be told. Nationals who assist the missionaries in this ministry are expressing the wonder-working power of God. A young man who regularly helps in this work, recently came to the realization that God can use only a vessel that is cleansed from self and sin. With much weeping he met the Lord in the home of a missionary couple. Since that time, souls are turning to Christ in increasing numbers. A short while after his fresh encounter with God, he had a special urge in his spirit to go to the hospital at the noon hour when almost everyone is resting, for he was impressed that two men needed him. He found them waiting, talking quietly together about the things of God. They told him they could no longer resist the claims of Christ and wanted to receive Him as Saviour.

An interesting development at the International Protestant Church has been the organization of a Sunday school class in

the Korean language. This came about through the concern of a Korean businessman who arrived in the city late in the fall. He discovered a number of Korean families living here, and requested the privilege of beginning a special class to be taught in Korean during the Sunday school hours. Interest has been good. Some individuals who understand English have begun to remain for the morning worship service.

Tent evangelism has been effective in central Viet Nam. More than seventy prayed at Hue.

At the Saigon Youth Center, 11 conversions were recorded during the year.

For the foreigner, rural evangelism is possible in only a very few places. Opportunities in the cities and centers of population have never been more plentiful.

### Literature

In 1965, 42,244,400 pages of literature were produced. Included in this total were eleven new study books for pastors and six books which appeal primarily to Christians. The rest was literature for the general reading public. We published in three different languages: Vietnamese, Raday, and Koho. The Bible Meditation League has continued to be the largest single contributor to our literature program.

### Medical

It is now more than three years since Dr. Ardel Vietti, Rev. Archie Mitchell, and Mr. Dan Gerber were abducted by the Viet Cong, thus necessitating a reorientation of our leprosy program at Banmethuot.

In Nhatrang, the national church carried on a hospital with the assistance of the Mennonite Central Committee. The reputation of the hospital as a place where excellent medical care is administered in love by nurses and a doctor whose dedication is easily discernible, has spread far and wide. Many patients travel great distances to receive treatment there.