

# The Chinese Communist Party's Central Committee forwarded the Religious Work Committee's Report Concerning the Issue of Cracking Down on Counterrevolutionaries Hidden in the "Christian Assembly"

1955. 12. 25

Shanghai Bureau, provincial and municipal party committees, autonomous regional party committees, party groups of state organs, central ministries and commissions, people's organizations, party committees of state organs, and party committees of the CCP Central Committee:

I hereby transmit to you the report of the Central Committee on Religious Work on cracking down on counterrevolutionaries hidden in the "Christian Assembly," which the Central Committee agrees to and hopes to comply with immediately.

Central Committee

Attach:

Report of the Central Committee for Religious Work to the Central Committee on the Issue of Cracking down on Counterrevolutionaries Hidden in the "Christian Assembly "

Central Committee:

The following report is made on the fight against counterrevolutionaries hidden in the "Christian Assembly":

1. "Christian Assembly," also known as "Little Flock" (hereinafter referred to as "Little Flock," has a history of activities in our country for more than 30 years. This is a sect established under the direct influence and support of imperialism for counterrevolutionaries. It has always flaunted itself as an "independent church" and a "local church," and in fact has close political, economic, and organizational ties with the imperialist elements; with Shanghai as the seat of its headquarters, it has more than 10 central churches throughout the country, directing church activities in various places, and has also scattered and established many religious enterprises as an economic basis for supporting its activities. Its internal organization is extremely tight. At present, there are more than 870 "Little Flock" meeting places throughout the country, with more than 80,000 believers spreading across 23 provinces among cities and counties, and some places are developing quite rapidly. Much of the leadership of the churches everywhere is in the hands of counter-revolutionists, and there are also a considerable number of counterrevolutionaries hidden among the believers. The core of the leadership of the "Little Flock" has in fact become a counter-revolutionary clique cloaked in religion that opposes the people's government, undermines national construction, and cloaks itself.

Over the past few years, they have actively consolidated their internal power, developed their organization, strengthened the poisoning of young people and children, infiltrated our state sections, schools, hospitals, and industrial and mining enterprises by various methods, and

extended them to rural areas and border ethnic minority areas where our work foundation is weak. They often spread rumors and counter-revolutionary speeches, viciously attacked the Communist Party and the people's government, sowed discord, sabotaged successive social reform movements, obstructed believers from participating in socialist construction, and conspired to disintegrate our Party and the grassroots organizations. In Shanghai and other places, it was also found that they directly carried out espionage activities for imperialism and the gang of Chiang Kai-shek [translator's note: the leader of the Republic of China and the Nationalist Party, KMT]. The "Little Flock" of the Jinhua Special District of Zhejiang Province colluded with bandits to organize the so-called "Zhejiang Provincial People's Anti-Communist National Salvation Army" in an attempt to carry out armed rebellion. They were very ambitious and once put forward the arrogant slogan of "laying down all of China within 10 years" and plotted to expand counter-revolutionary forces throughout the country by means of so-called "migration." It can be seen from this that the activities of this sect have obvious counter-revolutionary conspiracies; they are imperialist and are the tools used by Chiang to wage struggle against us are the enemies of socialist construction.

In particular, during the "Five-Anti" Campaign period (translator's note: 1952), [Watchman Nee](#), the leader of the "Little Flock" nationwide, was arrested for the crime of "five poisons" and took over eight factories, including the Biochemical Pharmaceutical Factory, its largest religious enterprise. However, in the past, these struggles were limited to fragmentary parts, and the counterrevolutionaries in the "Little Flock" had not yet dealt a serious blow, and their counter-revolutionary activities were still rampant.

The present situation of nationwide suppression of counterrevolution is extremely conducive to our planned struggle to purge the "Little Flock" of counterrevolutionaries. Because the masses have been mobilized, the enemy has shown some vacillation. We have obtained much evidence of their crimes. We have formed a patriotic force in Christianity, and we have gained some experience in fighting against the enemy who has pulled out the cloak of religion. These are favorable circumstances for us to carry out and win the struggle. Of course, the enemy ["Little Flock"] must still be fully estimated. The situation over the past few years has shown that it [this enemy] knows a set of counter-revolutionary tactics of struggle, is good at using religion to deceive the masses, and is indeed a rather insidious and cunning enemy. Therefore, our struggle against this enemy remains long and complex, and it is wrong to despise and paralyze the idea that a single collective blow can solve the problem once and for all and to ignore the idea of a long struggle.

2. In order to organize this struggle, on August 27 of this year we summoned comrades in charge of religious work and reconnaissance work in several key provinces and municipalities to Beijing to report on the situation, study this issue, and determine to actively carry out preparatory work. From November 15 to 18, relevant comrades from 14 localities were called to a meeting to inspect the preparatory work in various localities, holding that all localities have made certain preparations (although they are not yet very sufficient) and intending to launch a nationwide planned and focused attack on counter-revolutionary elements in the "Little Flock" in late December this year, with a view to ending it by the end of January next year.

The general task of our struggle is to completely destroy the "Little Flock," a counter-revolutionary leading group, and eliminate all counter-revolutionary elements hidden in the "Little Flock." It is necessary to expose the crimes of counterrevolutionaries in the "Little Flock" with great fanfare, extensively and deeply carry out patriotic education among believers, vigorously win over the upper strata and unite the broad masses of believers, and gradually turn churches controlled by counterrevolutionaries into patriotic churches engaged in legitimate

religious activities. Of course, these tasks cannot be accomplished in a single struggle but require a long and complex process of struggle, which may require several steps or several blows to achieve. But the struggle before the people must still be seen as a crucial struggle. We should strive to: first, completely destroy the "Little Flock" of counterrevolutionary leading groups; second, check and deal with the "Little Flock" believers within us; and third, strengthen our understanding of the enterprises operated by the "Little Flock" and deal with the situation separately. All these must be vigorously won over with the support of the masses of believers and the patriotic upper echelons through propaganda and education work.

3. The main targets of arrest and crackdown are: (1) the spies of imperialism and the Jiang bandits; (2) counterrevolutionaries in five aspects hidden in the "Little Flock"; and (3) counterrevolutionaries who persist in their reactionary stance and carry out the current sabotage activities. In mastering policies, it is necessary to strictly distinguish between counter-revolutionary issues and religious issues, and when cracking down on counterrevolutionaries, we should not get involved in the issue of religious beliefs. It is necessary to distinguish between counterrevolutionaries and backward elements, as well as the elements that are used by counterrevolutionaries. It is also necessary to have a flexible strategy in cracking down on counterrevolutionaries, arresting and prosecuting fast counterrevolutionaries, and not arresting counter-revolutionaries who can be arrested or not. Arrest can be dealt with by means of summoning and waging mass struggles, and those who have committed little evil and have shown signs of wavering repentance should be divided and fought for as much as possible. It is not necessary to hunt down all the counterrevolutionaries who should be arrested in one operation; one group can be arrested, one group can be kept, one group can be kept, one group can be kept, the struggle should be seen, and the struggle should be carried out in batches. This will be more proactive and conducive to dividing the enemy and winning over the upper echelons and the masses of believers.

4. The focus of the struggle is as follows: (1) the cities where the "Little Flock" center churches are located, such as Shanghai, Fuzhou, Wenzhou, Changchun, Shantou, Beijing, Xi'an, Lanzhou, Wuhan, Chongqing, etc.; (2) the main areas in which the "Little Flock" operates, such as Zhejiang, Fujian, and other coastal provinces; (3) state organs, schools, hospitals, industrial and mining enterprises, and other departments. The struggles in these localities play a very important role in striving for national victory, and we must do a good job. In terms of timing, the struggle should take place concurrently in key areas such as Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Fujian in late December. The struggles in other regions follow.

5. The "little flock" of believers in state organs, schools, hospitals, and industrial and mining enterprises must be checked in this struggle and gradually dealt with according to the specific situation. First, we should mobilize the masses to extensively expose the reactionary activities within the "Little Flock," carry out full reasoning struggle and ideological disintegration, and strive for their internal uprising. We will concentrate on cracking down on a small number of resolute counterrevolutionaries and vigorously do a good job of winning over the majority of backward believers.

With regard to the "Little Flock" of ordinary believers, except for a few who adhere to the reactionary stance and those who are in key departments and who should be transferred immediately, the rest remain in the raw water post to continue to investigate and use. "Little Flock" of backbone elements that have indeed changed can remain in the general sector and continue to be used. We should resolutely eliminate the backbone elements of the "Little Flock" who still adhere to the reactionary stand; some of them can be re-educated through labor, but the high-ranking technical personnel who are really needed among them can be supervised and

used. The counterrevolutionaries in the "Little Flock" who are cleared out should be dealt with according to the internal method of eliminating counter-revolutionaries. After these checks, we should strictly prevent "Little Flock" from carrying out organized and improper religious activities within our country.

6. The "Little Flock" elements who infiltrate into Yunnan, Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, and other ethnic minority areas to carry out activities should be severely cracked down on and squeezed back into the hinterland. The "Little Flock" churches in Fujian, Zhejiang, Guangdong, and other areas of national defense fortresses should be eliminated. The "Little Flock" churches in complex coastal areas should be under control, and the bad elements within them should be eliminated if they cannot be controlled so as to gradually control the churches. When eliminating them, pay attention to ways and methods to keep them from scattering on the spot and carrying out hidden activities.

7. The struggle against religious counterrevolutionaries is a complex political and ideological struggle. To win victory in this struggle, we must vigorously win over and unite the broad masses of believers and strive to divide the elements at the top. The key to winning over the vast number of believers is to earnestly guarantee freedom of religious belief and to distinguish, in fact, the issue of cracking down on counter-revolution from the issue of freedom of religious belief. Therefore, the struggle must be waged without interruption to normal religious life. It is necessary to systematically win over some elements at the top of the leadership, either the aggressive ones or the weak ones. We should firmly support the patriotic upper-class elements in the "Little Flock" church and the upper-class elements who are willing to get close to us and come forward to preside over religious activities. If there are no such people, even the backward upper echelons in the middle should be allowed to come forward to carry out legitimate religious activities. The sooner this problem is solved and the better it is solved, the better it will be for us. At the same time, it can promote internal division. Under the momentum of the nationwide suppression of counter-revolutionary campaigns (translator's note: beginning in 1950), especially the counter-revolutionary clique of Wang Mingdao and Ignatius Kung Pin-Mei (translator's note: the contemporary Catholic Bishop of Shanghai), there has been vacillation within the "Little Flock," and certain elements at the top have expressed their desire to stand on the side of patriotism and draw closer to the government.

8. In the course of struggle, good propaganda work for the broad masses inside and outside the church must be well done. It is necessary to extensively mobilize society and theories, fully expose the evils of the enemy, refute all rumors and theories that may arise, and vigorously publicize the religious policy and the anti-corruption policy, so as to gradually clarify the confused thinking of the masses of believers, enhance their patriotic consciousness, and draw a clear line between the enemy and us. It is necessary to mobilize the pastors and believers of the Christian churches to participate in this struggle and play their respective roles as patriotic forces among them, while they should be prevented from becoming involved in sectarian disputes.

9. In order to systematically and secretly control the leadership of the "Little Flock" churches and meet the needs of protracted struggles in the future, it is necessary to strengthen the building of secret reconnaissance work for the "Little Flock." This work will be drawn up separately by the public security departments.

10. To ensure the complete victory of the struggle, we propose that all major regions should form temporary command bodies under the unified leadership of party committees, strengthen close cooperation between the public security departments and religious affairs

departments, and mobilize all relevant organs to participate in this struggle. All localities must keep this operation absolutely secret. The plans and preparations for this struggle must only be communicated to the personnel directly involved and not be made known to unrelated personnel. All personnel participating in the work must strictly observe the secret; they must not disclose it, and if they violate it, they should be subject to strict discipline.

The above comments, whether they are appropriate or not, please comment.

November 24, 1955