

five other children in the family. This child is very undernourished and neglected. The one hot meal he gets at school is probably the only decent food he gets all day.

The sewing machine was bought for a woman with six children whose husband is an alcoholic also and only works intermittently. The machine is not only for her use to make clothes for her children so that she can keep them in school but she plans to take in sewing to supplement the family income.

I have for a long time been looking around for a worthwhile project that would help the needy children in this community. With the help of Mrs. Gladys Smith, the school nurse, I think I have found it. We do not have a dental clinic for children in Martinsville. The condition of

some of the children's teeth is unbelievable. Mrs. Smith found three cases for a starter. One child has 36 cavities in his permanent teeth. One child has a speech difficulty which is partially due to malformation and decay which can only be helped by a complete upper plate. Another child needs to have his missing front teeth replaced and other work done. Mrs. Smith is sending you a detailed report of this work when she gets it from the dentist. She has personally guaranteed me that as long as these children are in school she will see to it that care is taken of their teeth when they are fixed.

I also plan this year to find another child who needs help in going to college. Mr. Carper, superintendent of Public Schools, is helping me with this. . . .

A. M. HASKELL, Martinsville, Va.



The guest dining room at Friedberg Castle, Public Welfare's vacation home in the Austrian Tyrol



Young girls are trained in weaving sandals and sewing at Highgate, Jamaica, B.W.I.



The Designs for Living shop at Port Maria, where fine Jamaican handicrafts are sold

THE MARCHBANKS PRESS, NEW YORK

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REPORT OF  
THE ASIAN WOMEN'S STUDY CONFERENCE  
October 15 - 30, 1956

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The Japan YWCA  
15-4, Kudan, Chiyodaku,  
Tokyo, Japan

## INTRODUCTION

The Japan YWCA held the Asian Women's Study Conference in October, 1956, with the belief that the international meeting is an opportunity to exchange informations and experiences; to know other countries better through person to person contacts; and to build creative relationships. It could never have been held without the encouragement and cooperation of the YWCAs abroad and the friends of our movement in and out of the country. Neither could it be held without the precious heritage from our predecessors who laid the way for us in these last 50 years as fore-runners of the Japanese YWCA movement.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the enthusiastic response of the YWCAs in Asia to our invitation and the zealous participation of the delegates. It was our great pleasure to have the Hon. Isabel Catto, the President of the World YWCA, at the Conference. Her presence at the Conference was a great help to make the world movement real to us. Our sincere thanks goes to the World YWCA for giving us this unusual opportunity.

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### OFFICERS OF THE JAPAN YWCA

Mrs. Tamaki Uemura	President
Mrs. Hachiro Yuasa	Vice-President
Miss Teruko Komyo	Vice-President
Mrs. Takenori Kitamura	Secretary
Mrs. Katsujiro Katsuyama	Treasurer

### PLANNING COMMITTEE

Mrs. Takenori Kitamura	Chairman
Miss Teruko Komyo	(Chairman of Discussion Comm.)
Mrs. Katsujiro Katsuyama	(Chairman of Hospitality Comm.)
Mrs. Yukio Cho	
Miss Wilna Thomas	
Miss Michiko Watanabe	
Miss Matsuko Watanabe	
Mrs. Hachiro Yuasa	

### SECRETARIES FOR CONFERENCE

Mrs. Miyako Ishibashi  
Miss Michiko Hasegawa

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by Mr. Misao Obata

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## BACKGROUND OF THE CONFERENCE

The idea was first conceived of at the 1953 National Committee meeting inviting one or two Asian women leaders to our 50th anniversary celebration in 1955. The idea was warmed up for months and months till finally it took the form of holding a leaders' conference to share our common problems, and study and discuss the "role of women in Asia today" in response to the challenges of this rapidly changing society. It was submitted to the National Committee meeting held in January 1955 and was finally decided with unanimous vote to hold the AWS Conference in 1956 as one of the projects to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Japan YWCA.

### Planning and Preparation

The first thing we did in the way of preparation was to arouse interest and study Asia. All the local associations had "Asia" for the study theme. Some business girls' club organized groups to study the working women of Asian countries. Teenagers' groups exchanged letters and dolls with some school girls' groups of other countries. Bibliography and book reviews on Asia were exchanged between associations and groups. Series of lectures were given on such topics as "Economic Questions in Asia", "Nationalism and Religion in Asia", "Asia in Today's World", "Religion and Superstition", etc. and resume of those lectures was published in the Monthly or in the Program Kit to share with all the members. We had help from Embassys and Legations in getting informations about the countries to which we extended our invitations. Thus, as the time drew near, the members became more enthusiastic toward the conference.

The question of financing the conference was important, indeed. All the members, of the Y. throughout the country both old and young, whether they were directly participating in the conference or not, had their share in raising the fund for our first international conference. The effort continued for nearly two years. The members worked hard to interpret the project to banks, business firms, and individuals and asked them for financial assistance. Members sold thousands of towels specially made for the occasion with a design of peasant women working in the rice field at the foot of Mt. Fuji. The proceeds of which were added to the Conference fund. Thanks to the Asia Foundation, the travelling expenses of 14 delegates from abroad were guaranteed. The campaign was a good opportunity to let many people, not only women but people of all walks of life, know what we were aiming at. Total amount of the money raised was ¥3,600,000.00.

The Planning Committee worked hard to organize the conference --- its leadership, its program, the materials for the discussion and so forth. The Hospitality Committee busied themselves in making the arrangements not only for the delegates' comfort but also for the social functions. The Committee on Exhibition worked hard to gather materials to help the conference members understand to-day's Japan. Not only at the National Headquarters but also at local associations, which the overseas guests were to visit ever so many people shared the responsibility in organizing our first international conference.

## The Setting

On the 15th of October, the 22 delegates from Burma, Ceylon, Hongkong, India, Korea, Malaya, Pakistan, Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, and 21 Japanese representing the Japanese movement, gathered at the National Headquarters in Tokyo for the Opening of the Conference. The aim of the conference was expressed for the whole group by Mrs. Tamaki Uemura, President of the Japan YWCA, in her opening address as, "the mutual understanding and the building of a better world."

Beginning on the 16th, the conference had its sessions at Amagi Sanso. Amagi is a part of Hakone National Park, and is famous for coloured leaves in autumn. Though it is only several hours' ride from Tokyo, it is surrounded with utmost tranquility which is peculiar to deep mountains. The Sanso, a hill-top conference ground belongs to the Federation of Baptist churches of Japan. The simple architecture of its new buildings provided us a comfortable and clean place to enjoy the clear mountain air and the blessed fine weather added real Japanese autumn serenity. The manager and others there helped us with true Christian spirit keeping the place clean, and served good food. Who can tell that all these did not help our Conference? The living at Amagi was in Japanese style. All slept on quilted mattresses spread over "tatamis". All enjoyed Japanese style baths, free from any conventionalities, to learn to know and understand each other. Delegates loved to talk about this unique experience.

Living together at Amagi contributed a great deal to the deepening of mutual understanding. Those in charge of the Amagi Sanso told us they had never met such a friendly and happy group.

## Programme

There were three major parts in the conference program: Bible reading session, discussions in groups and in plenaries, and the area presentations. There were four discussion groups each taking a different topic. At the plenary session each group made the report of their discussion and their findings and then the whole body participated in discussing them. The area presentations supplemented and helped understand what we discussed by giving the background of each country. Spontaneous stunts were given by the members. The Japanese group presented three scenes showing the changes in the relation of husband and wife. How we laughed to tears with the presentation of the old fashioned husband and wife or a ultra modern type of couple and the ideal husband and wife! The group from abroad could hardly wait to have their turn to show their impressions of Japan in stunts. A Burmese, Philippino and Korean playing the part of Japanese all appeared in Japanese dress! Laughing with merriment we whole-heartedly appreciated the good will and fellowship.

All the participants shared the responsibility. Some were responsible for morning and evening Prayers, some worked on Recording Committee, some on recreation, or on Area Presentation, and some as chairmen of the discussion groups. A choir was organized for the Sunday service.



### Visiting Local Associations

After the conference at Amagi Sanso the delegates from abroad went on their trip to local YWCAs.

In Tokyo, besides going around to see various educational and social institutions, they studied the varied activities of the Tokyo Y, the oldest and the largest one in Japan. They had face to face discussion with the different groups of members. They were surprised at the prosperity and density of population of this great city. Later, they expressed their impressions in this way: "Experience in Tokyo were just wonderful except the crowds in railway lines, which nearly killed us."

The party visited Kanegafuchi Textile Plant, in Osaka, the biggest textile enterprise in Japan. They also made visits to the Matsushita Electric Company where the domestic utensils, radios etc. are manufactured. It seemed most of them were more interested in the conditions of the young workers than in the modernized facilities of the factories.

At the Kansai District a Mass Meeting sponsored by Kyoto, Osaka and Kobe YWCAs was held. To 600 women representing various women organizations our guests talked about the problems facing the women in their respective countries. They gave such a deep impression to the audience that some spoke out their sincere wish that we hold a conference of this kind, sponsored by a different country every year.

A day at Kyoto, our oldest city, was a wonderful chance for them to appreciate the beauty of nature and her tranquility. A garden party was given at a beautiful Japanese garden where they appreciated the tea ceremony on the red carpet at the tea-house by the pond where swans were floating. They also enjoyed playing with pigeons, and opportunities of talking with children and students.

Okayama Y is the youngest Y. It was born just in time for welcoming the guests. It was only two weeks old when the Conference met at Amagi Sanso. However, it did its best in welcoming the guests and gave a program called the "Asian Women's Day" which was attended by 900 women of the community.

Through their visits to seven local Ys., where hearty welcomes and busy programs waited the delegates impressed the Japanese women with their liveliness which reflected the vitality of women in ever-changing Asia. It was a pleasure to have the opportunity of having them as guests in our homes throughout their tour. It also gave them a chance to be with Japanese people and gain a better understanding of family life in Japan.

### Special Events

We had an Open Forum in joint auspices with the NHK, the radio co-operation at the NHK Studio in Tokyo on October 29th. Over 800 people attended it and participated in lively discussion. The program was broadcasted all over Japan and aroused a great interest in what was said and in the YWCA movement. One of the Radio Editors who attended the conference at Amagi as a member of the YWCA gave a delightful introductory talk about her experience at the conference. It was an additional colourful touch to the program.

On October 24th, the very next day when the delegates came back to Tokyo from Amagi, a President's reception was given at the National Headquarters in honour of Miss Catto, the World YWCA President and our visiting delegates. In spite of the bad weather, we had many guests. We were especially honoured to have Princess Chichibu and Princess Mikasa. Both of them stayed longer than they planned and chattered with the delegates and other guests. Mrs. Fushimi, and Mrs. Lee who are Ex-Princesses were among the guests too.

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OPENING

OPENING OF CONFERENCE ..... Mrs. T. Kitamura  
Chairman of Planning Committee

INTRODUCTION OF CONFERENCE MEMBERS

OPENING ADDRESS ..... Mrs. T. Uemura, National President

WORSHIP ..... Mrs. T. Uemura

Prelude Violin Solo Miss Yumiko Ninomiya

Hymn 4 "We raise Thee, O God"

Scripture Reading John 15, 1-17

Prayer Our Father in Heaven, Thy children from different part of Asia have thus come together to Thee this afternoon. We are vividly conscious that we are forever removed from the state of death into life eternal by Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

Thou calledst us of the YWCAs of Asia together, so that we might bring ourselves and our tasks into Thy presence. We earnestly desire to be enabled to see clearly the needs of Asia and to be guided by Thy spirit in fitting ways of serving our brothers and sisters in these times of turmoil and changes. We pray they all may see Thy light, partake of Thy grace, and be given power to make some contributions to the whole family of the human race. May Thy Kingdom Come! Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven! In Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Hymn 243 "In Christ There Is No East or West"

The Lord's Prayer

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OPENING ADDRESS

Fellowmembers of the Asian Conference of the YWCA.

We are Christians, and we are women. As Christian women of Asia, we surely have a common vision and common urge. Our vision and our urge should be lined with an appropriate understanding of the true conditions of each country. We should be aware of the needs of each country and possibilities of each race, in all phases of life. We must look squarely in the face of all the facts. We should honestly examine our own possibilities. Have we power?

Ps. 127 verse 5 says "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of arrows." Have we arrows of reconstruction, of recreation? Yes we do. In faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, we do have our quivers full of arrows which we all will use in concert with one mind, one heart, and one spirit.

For the coming nine days, we are to work together in order to see, to respond, and to plan together. Should the YWCAs of Asia come together in prayer, might we not be enabled to see, plan and act for the coming of a better work in Asia? At the same time, would not this concerted action on the part of the YWCAs of Asia contribute to a fulfillment of the great purpose of the World YWCA which we all cherish? Apart from the World YWCA, we do not and could not exist in a true sense.

So we, the Japan YWCA welcome you friends from Burma, Ceylon, Hongkong, India, Korea, Malaya, Pakistan, Philippines, Taiwan and Thailand. We are to be most closely knit together in this Conference for a fuller fellowship and surer colabour for the coming just society.

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PRESENTATION OF THE CONFERENCE THEME

By Miss Teruko Komyo

October 17, 1956

I cannot get over the thrill over the fact that you and I are now really here together, anticipating a week of work and fellowship together. What seemed like a dream when the idea was first conceived is a reality before us today. Our coming together like this gives us a feeling that we are standing at the threshold of a new day in Asia, and encourages us to dream more dreams about our tasks ahead, our coming together at this particular time seems very timely indeed; not because it takes place in connection with the 50th anniversary of the YWCA of Japan, though, of course, the Japan YWCA is richly blessed and honored by being instrumental in calling this conference, but because there are real needs and reasons for us to come together in this way at this time.

As the theme of the conference has it, Asian society has changed and is changing. And the changes have been drastic and far reaching enough in every part of Asia to be called revolutionary. In the face of these changes taking place before our own eyes, we are challenged to do our part in the shaping of our society by making our positive contributions as Asian women, as world citizens and as Christians.

Now let us look at some of the major changes that challenge us.

The first is the fact that the yoke of colonialism has been cast off by most countries in Asia in the last decade, and they have emerged as free and independent nations. Those countries which are yet to gain national independence are working towards it.

Under colonialism, people were used to being led, became accustomed to blaming the foreign power that ruled them when things went wrong, and tended to succumb to fatalistic view. With national independence, responsibilities previously unknown to them were suddenly placed on their own shoulders. The destiny of their country was now not in somebody else's hands but in their own. Japan, too, underwent a similar experience for a period of several years after the defeat. She had her sovereign power taken away from her and she learned what it means to be under foreign rule.

The second is the fact that women in most parts of Asia now possess new and greater freedom, or at least, the new situation demands and needs free women. The old traditions which have held women in bondage must be broken down and women must prepare themselves to be free individuals.

The third is the new awareness in us all that we belong to one another. In the days of colonialism there was little or no consciousness of integrated Asia. Each country was more directly and intimately related to its ruling power than their neighbor countries. Japan, though an independent country, was interested in Europe first and had little relation with other countries in Asia directly, and so each country remained more or less isolated. I remember the sudden shock I experienced personally after the last war in realizing how little I knew about the life and the people of the neighboring countries. Ever since then I have shared the conviction that Asia must become one community, and that Japan must realize that she does belong to Asia, and that it was imperative that the people in different parts of

Asia got to know one another intimately by personal contacts and cultural exchanges, and that we have our share of responsibility towards the wellbeing of Asia as a whole.

Strangely and also ironically, since the end of the last war, the deep and urgent sense of the need of reconciliation with the neighboring countries has helped to bring Japan closer to them and to the awareness that we together belong to Asia and that we are truly neighbors.

The fourth fact is another awareness that we cannot be an isolated entity by ourselves in Asia, but we are part of the whole world community in a real sense, a consciousness of our interdependence. The independence of any people today must be viewed with this fact in the background. For in a real sense, whether we like it or not, the world is becoming one. We must therefore honestly face this fact with all its implications, and live accordingly.

Our coming together here, too, has been planned in line with this conviction. It has nothing to do with any spirit of sectionalism or with any idea of forming a block over against the rest of the world. It is our honest and sincere desire that we meet and work here as citizens of the world as well as of Asia.

This is indeed an age for building in Asia; building a new nation state; a new pattern of society, a new kind of family, and so on. We are all engaged in building in one way or another, since the old patterns of things are going and new patterns are about to be born everywhere. The spirit of freedom and general longing for a better life and human dignity are astir today in the hearts of ordinary people in Asia. The common people in most countries in Asia have had to live a lot that is definitely below human dignity too long, but now there is a healthy sign of discontent among them.

At this time for building, God calls us individuals and the YWCAs of Asia to be His true servants and to do His will for his children in need, our brothers and sisters in Asia. In these days of building, the YWCAs in Asia, out of deep concern for their fellowmen should avail themselves of this God-given opportunities for building a new and better world in Asia.

Every person is entitled to a decent living, at least with the minimum of necessary provisions made for his education, health, work to-do, family life, participation in the government of his own community and country, and such other physical and spiritual needs as befit a human being. When we say, every person, we believe it should be literally and truly every person, regardless of position or possession or sex or religion or class or race.

The present condition in Asia is far from this state we have just considered we know, but we do know at the same time this is what God has called us to work for. It is our responsibility to see to it that the changes that are taking place in our countries today should be directed to this goal and it is urgent we should help one another in fulfilling the task.

So should we not examine where we stand? We must first understand Asia as it really is with its needs and problems. We must know the nature of the changes, particularly of these changes taking place in the life of girls and women in the different parts of Asia. We must know their

needs and difficulties, and also their aspirations in the face of those changes, their strengths and weaknesses. And finally we would seek ways to help them in all walks of life to become responsible members of society in which they live. Whatever the evolving patterns of society in Asia may be, we are certain of one thing; that is that well being of all people must be sought, regardless of sex, religion, class or race. And this is saying a tremendous lot as you are all aware. Women, too must become a free and responsible personalities in the new society.

The age-old traditions and cultures we represent here need to be examined and checked in the light of much goal. Therefore we are proposing that we examine them by carefully looking at some of the phases or areas of our life, such as

- a) our family life - the foundation of society.
- b) our religious traditions and Christian faith, and what they say respectively as to how we should live.
- c) our attitude of mind in regard to community responsibility.
- d) our personality development.

Thus we would know the nature of the traditions and cultures which have nurtured men and women of Asia through the centuries. Then we would be in a better position to know what our needs and difficulties are, how we might prepare ourselves to meet the challenges of the changing society. Doing it together, we shall be able to look at Asia as a whole and in a proper perspective. Knowing what has gone into the making of us all as individuals and as cultural groups we would know how we need to change ourselves to meet the challenges.

We have also planned to have three sessions of Bible reading led by Miss Thomas. She will help us to see clearly at what points the Biblical messages challenge our traditions and cultures and our scales of values. And true liberation of any one, be it man or woman, comes only when he or she learns to love and serve God of all mankind, who came and lived among us men in need and suffering like many of our fellowmen today. We are conscious that we do need the Light of the Truth to guide us and the Grace of forgiving Love to sustain and encourage us in our endeavour here together.

Let us try and do our best, each and all of us to make this study conference a real opportunity for learning from each other and getting to know each other on a deeper level. For it is very true here that alone we fall but together we stand. As a group here we are not alone, for our friends all over the world are with us, we know, with their thoughts and prayers and the Father of us all will bless us with His mercies and Wisdom if we are only willing and ready.

BIBLE READING AND DISCUSSION

Theme : PRAYING THE LORD'S PRAYER

I. The One prayed to and the one praying

A. Creator and Creature

Genesis 1: 27  
Isaiah 40: 21 - 26

What does the realization of ourselves as creatures mean for our attitude to the one to whom we pray, the Creator?

B. Saviour and Sinner

C. Father and Child

1. Genesis 2: 4-25 (omitting verses 5, 9, 10-15, 19 and 20)  
Genesis 3

What is the nature of human sin?

What does this passage say concerning of woman by man, which has been woman's burden for so many centuries?

2. Romans 8: 1-17

What is the meaning for us of the experience described by Paul in the phrase "Life in the Spirit"?

How does this experience affect our realization of ourselves as persons?

II. Thy Kingdom come

A. Through fellowship

1. Luke 15: 25-32

What was it that spoiled the fellowship between the elder brother and his father and the elder brother and his younger brother?

2. I John 4: 7-21

How can we emerge from our isolation and enter into person-to-person relationships characterized by "love"?

B. Through struggle in the field of community responsibility

1. Luke 10: 25-37

What are the implications of this story for us in our community life?



What is the source of the Christian concern for social justice?

2. Hebrews 11: 8-19

In what ways are we "strangers and pilgrims on the earth"?

What are the distinctive contributions which Christian must make in social action?

III. Give us this day our daily bread

A. God gives bread through His gifts in nature

1. Deuteronomy 26: 1-11

What are the implications of a realization of natural resources as a gift from the Creator, God?

2. Matthew 6: 25-34  
Matthew 25: 1-13

How can we reconcile these two statements of Jesus?

B. God gives bread through human labour

Psalm 127: 1  
Colossians 3: 23

What is the relation of our daily work to our religious life?

C. God gives bread through human cooperation

Matthew 25: 31-46

What is our responsibility toward the world's hungry?

SUMMARY OF GROUP DISCUSSION

Group A

Family Life

The group discussing Family life tried to know the changes that took place in the women's life common to the countries represented in the group. The group, then, discussed the nature of the problems related to

(1) the conflict between the old traditions and new order and (2) the needs of adjustment to new order.

I. ---- The Conflict between the old traditions and new order,-

A. Family System:

The large family system has been breaking down and the status of women in the family has been definitely raised and women can get about more freely than before. And yet, there are still many barriers to be broken down. The system itself was broken down but the old thought-patterns still remain in each individual influencing such relationships as:

1. Between old parents and young couple
2. Between parents and children
3. Between men and women

An effort must be made in building democratic relationships in the family life with the new realization of the value of each individual member of the family.

B. Problems due to the political, social and economic changes:

In most Asian countries, the political changes were so sudden and drastic that people got confused and were left with some conflicts in the way of thinking as well as living.

C. Marriage:

In most countries in Asia except the Philippines, parents still arrange marriages for their children. Young people are rebelling against that custom and try to arrange their marriage by their own free choice. Yet, there is the problem that (1) the youth at large have not yet learned to take responsibility and (2) have not learned the meaning of "freedom" and "how to use it." Here the group discussed what is meant by a truly happy marriage. Opinions were diverse showing the definite differences of background and traditions of each participant. Final agreement, however, was that the marriage should be on the basis of mutual love, trust, and understanding.

D. Divorce

Divorce cases are increasing, it was felt, because of economic reasons and because one of the parties involved wishes more freedom and pleasure for themselves.

II. ---- Problems relating to adjustment for the new order.

A. New rights for women

Women in Asia have acquired rights but the greater number of women do not know how to use those rights intelligently. Being ignorant of their voting rights and responsibilities, for instance, women are easily influenced by the opinions of their husbands, brothers, and parents and act accordingly.

B. Juvenile delinquency:

Young people have been so confused by the very complicated condition of present society that they have lost their sense of direction. Causes of Juvenile delinquency were cited as ---

1. housing shortage
2. over-population
3. too much freedom --- especially concerning money matters
4. mothers working outside of home
5. foreign troops stationed

C. Women and work:

Many women, especially mothers, go out to work leaving their children home. The shortage or lack of social facilities such as good day nurseries or good domestic helpers bring many problems.

III. Marriage and Family:

- A. It was agreed that arranged marriages had their advantages in so far as the tradition of class distinctions were retained in the community. After much discussion and the expression of contradictory views, the group felt that in the social set-up of Asian countries, the system of arranged marriage had to continue, but that the personality of the individuals should be considered and as far as possible marriages should be arranged in fairness to all concerned.
- B. The group then went on to suggest that relationship between parents and children should be free of inhibitions and a frank, and candid attitude should be maintained so that problems could be openly discussed. The group recommended that schools and other organizations should help in teaching young people to develop the right attitude toward family life and make choices wisely.

IV. Family and Community:

- A. "Good family relations make for a good community." Therefore, a woman should not be confined to her home but go out into the community in order that her horizon may be widened and that she

may make a contribution to the society.

- B. There was the general feeling that woman should continue her work after marriage both for economic reasons and for her status.
- C. To achieve this end it is important to help women secure jobs or volunteer work.

#### V. Religion and Family

- A. Religion is one of the important factors of a good harmonious family. This was a much discussed topic-and it was agreed that religion strengthens family ties. A point was raised, however, that in Asian countries due to the higher standard of education for Christian women, it was difficult to find Christian men for their husbands. Therefore there are many Christian women who do not have a chance of Christian marriage.

Percentage of Christian population to the total population:

Burma	6%
Ceylon	9%
Taiwan	2%
Hongkong	10%
Japan	less than 1%
Philippines	96%

- B. Inter-marriage between the people of different faiths was raised and discussed.
- C. It was recommended that clubs organized by YM and YW and church groups should instruct young people in the importance of marriage within the faith - because difference in religion create difficulties in all aspects of life.

VI. In conclusion, the group emphasized the importance of the sound family life and that women should have a definite place in society.

Group B

Religious Tradition and Personal Faith

The group spent the first two sessions in finding out about the religious background of each country so that all of us became well-acquainted with the religious background of each.

On the basis of this information we began to sift out the common problems with regard to religion, therefore we proceeded to take up main religions of the Asian countries.

The religions we have listed are: --

- |                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| a) Buddhism       | f) Anamism    |
| b) Islam          | g) Secularism |
| c) Hinduism       | h) Communism  |
| d) Zoroastrianism | i) New Sects  |
| e) Shintoism      |               |

The group took up the first four and tried to see how these religions have influenced thought pattern, family life, particularly status of women, community life etc.

I. ---- Buddhism

A. Precepts:

1. It's doctrine is: - belief in attaining Nirvana Perfection -- The way to do that is to kill the ego.
2. There are certain precepts they have to observe -- The first stage has five precepts i.e. not to kill, steal etc. -- the next stage is eight precepts and the last is ten precepts.
3. The idea of the wheel of life. The Buddhist wants to break away from the wheel of life. This can be done by killing desire.
4. Salvation through merits as works i.e. charities and alms and building Pagodas etc.
5. Buddha is worshipped because he attained perfection.

B. Influence of Buddhism on the life of the people:

1. In Burma: a. Buddhism looks down on women -- The women is a greater sinner.  
b. Great family unity among Buddhism.
2. In Japan: a. Buddhism produces nominal believers and paralyses the keen sense of belief.  
b. Buddhism is considered a religion of death because it specialises in performing funerals.

- c. Produces negative attitude of life i.e. Fatalism.
- d. Despises women.
- e. Disregards the value of personality which is a hindrance to democracy.
- f. Degeneration and vagueness of Buddhism has produced disrespect for religion in general

## II. --- Islam

### A. Precepts:

1. Belief in one God.
2. Mohammed is a Prophet of God and salvation is through Mohammed.
3. Belief in old Testament and old Testament prophets. They have great respect for Christ.
4. Aggressive, believes in "Conquest by the Sword."
5. Belief in polygamy, i.e. one Moslem is allowed to have four wives, provided he treats them with fairness and equality, and only if he has a reason such as childlessness, no heir.
6. Pork and Ham, Bacon etc. are forbidden to Moslems.

### B. Influence of Islam on the life of the people:

1. In Pakistan:
  - a. Low status of women
  - b. Purdah causing disease and debility.
  - c. Grave visiting and unnecessary expense on graves and Pirs.
  - d. Produces aggressive and belligerent attitude.
  - e. Produces superstitions. They believe more in witchcraft than medicine.
  - f. Produces backward people -- not progressive.
2. In Malaya:
  - a. Produces superstitions.
  - b. They can eat ham, but are forbidden to take pork.
  - c. On the whole Moslems are less superstitions.

## III. ---- Hinduism

### A. Precepts:

1. God is the supreme spirit.

2. Human beings are a part of the same spirit.
3. Belief in transmigration of souls. We have to live 8400000 times before we attain perfection, i.e. to have one's spirit merge in the spirit of God.
4. Belief in many Gods.

B. Influence of Hinduism on the life of the people:

1. Monogamy (in contrast to Polygamy of Mohammedans)
2. Child marriage. Children are married when very young. In case the boy dies the girl is considered a widow for the rest of her life and has to live a miserable life.
3. Encourages people to marry outside their own cast -- consequently a healthier offspring is produced.

C. Produces:

1. Fatalism.
2. Non violence or passive attitude.

IV. --- Zoroastrianism

A. Precepts:

1. Worship of Fire and Sun (Because they believe God revealed himself as a great fire.)
2. Belief in the Prophet Zoroaster.
3. Certain Feast - last days etc.
4. Peculiar funerals, i.e. they build a tower and the dead body is placed on the tower for the birds to eat and the bones are buried afterwards.
5. Strict intermarriage demanded.

B. Influence of Zoroastrianism on the life of the people:

1. Monogamous marriage.
2. Close family ties.
3. Vague conception of religion.
4. General dissatisfaction in Zoroastrianism on the part of Parasees.
5. The community dying out.

After having studied the main religions of Asia and their influences on general thought pattern, family, social and political life, the groups came to see that there are certain tensions between Christian principles and ideas and non-Christian way of life. The first of these tensions is:

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