

3 P'ing Ts'ang Hsiang,  
Nanking,  
March 3, 1938.

National Christian Council,  
Shanghai.

Dear Friends:-

The problem of return of missionaries to Nanking has been much in our minds, and we know that many of <sup>our</sup> colleagues in Shanghai or elsewhere are much concerned to come back as soon as possible. The need for Christian effort of all types, save ordinary school work, is great; and the special call for relief services of different sorts, including emergency classes for refugees and their children whenever such may be possible, is most pressing. You are already familiar with our belief that further medical aid ranks before all other needs.

On the other hand, the attitude of the military authorities is hostile to the presence of foreigners, and still more hostile to the arrival of additional foreigners. Long and persistent efforts along various avenues have thus far secured permission for one foreigner to come to Nanking to work -- a doctor who had been absent for a short time only. It now seems possible, though by no means assured, and perhaps not even probable, that communications may be more free within a few weeks, and that permission to reside in Nanking might be less difficult to secure. However, we have no basis for expecting consistent or rational following out of such a tendency: there may be a complete break in the present exclusion policy, or irregular exceptions, or none.

We wish to be prepared to take advantage of any opportunities, and to follow up the requests for doctors and nurses now pending, by considering what other workers are most needed among those available under present circumstances. The present letter is wholly preliminary, and arises out of conferences of Mr. Mills, Mr. Smythe, and myself, following upon conversations with a number of other missionaries. We hope to follow this up shortly with radio messages or letters, after more complete conferences with the missionary group and with Chinese Christian workers, which may modify the tentative suggestions made here.

Among many other factors present to our minds are the following: urgent relief tasks; strengthening of Christian enterprises, with some reference to denominational acquaintance; ability to stand unusual strains to be expected in Nanking for a long time yet; supplementing interests already represented here; probable freedom of workers from urgent tasks elsewhere. Our collective judgment is inadequate on many points, but still we believe it is better to have some concerted effort for the opening of the doors than to leave all to individual considerations. We are thinking in some such terms as these for the first applications, in the hope they may be followed by others shortly: Mr. Roy or Mr. Thomson; Miss Joy Smith; Mr. Matti; Mr. Gale, whom we believe to be in Wuhu. We will want to know whether these persons could come on fairly short notice if permits should be granted.

You will appreciate that this sort of communication is an effort to help the common Christian interest, not to dictate or



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the effort  
to discriminate; and that/is thought of as an approach to the prob-  
lem, not a settlement of it.

be  
Mr. Morris and Father Kearney would/very useful also,  
though we hesitate to urge them because of what we have heard about  
their assignments in Shanghai. And there are many others whom  
we mention frequently.

Yours most cordially,

*M. S. Bates*

P. S. This letter was approved by Mr. Mills. Copies are being  
sent to Dr. Price and to Mr. Walline.

*m. s. B.*