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Missionary Research Library Archives: Section 6

Finding Aid for

National Christian Council of China Records, 1919 - 1950



The Ninth Biennial Meeting of the N.C.C. of China, May 1933
Image Credit: MRL6: Lobenstine Album, MRL, Burke Library Archives
(Columbia University Libraries) at Union Theological Seminary, New York

Finding Aid prepared by: Gregory Adam Scott, December 2009

Summary Information

Creator: Foreign Missions Conference of North America and MRL Staff
Title: National Christian Council of China Records
Inclusive dates: 1919 - 1950
Bulk dates: 1929 - 1946
Abstract: The Council was an interdenominational consultative and advisory organization for Protestant Christian groups in China, founded in 1922 as a successor to the China Continuation Committee: Correspondence, publications, and meeting reports.
Size: 5 boxes, 2.25 linear feet
Storage: Onsite storage
Repository: The Burke Library
Union Theological Seminary
3041 Broadway
New York, NY 10027
Phone: 212-851-5612
Fax: 212-851-5613
Email: archives@uts.columbia.edu

Administrative Information

- Provenance:** Many of these records were originally copies produced by the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, which had had a close relationship with the independent Missionary Research Library. These records were accessioned to the Burke Library upon the closure of the MRL in 1976.
- Access:** Archival papers are available to registered readers for consultation by appointment only. Please contact archives staff by phone, fax or email archives@uts.columbia.edu, as far in advance as possible.
- Access Restrictions:** The collection is unrestricted to readers. Certain materials, however, are in a fragile condition, and this may necessitate restriction in handling and copying.
- Preferred Citation:** Item description, MRL 6: National Christian Council of China Records, series #, box #, and folder #, The Burke Library Archives (Columbia University Libraries) at Union Theological Seminary, New York.

History

The National Christian Council of China (Chinese: *Zhonghua quanguo Jidujiao xiejin hui* 中華全國基督教協進會) was formed in 1922 following a National Christian Conference held in Shanghai. The council was seen as fulfilling the mission of the China Continuation Committee, which had been set up in 1913 to continue the work of the Edinburgh World Missions Conference. In 1922 the committee was disbanded and the N.C.C. of China took its place, also absorbing other institutions such as the China for Christ movement, which had been founded in 1919. The N.C.C. of China was designed as a representative body made up of delegates from missions and churches, one which would play an advisory role to the many Protestant groups operating in China. It was hoped that it would facilitate greater cooperation among churches and interdenominational work among missions. Among those excluded from the council were the Roman Catholics, who had created an Apostolic Delegation of China in the same year that the council was established.

In 1923 the council set up the Society for the Advancement of Christian Literature. Based in Shanghai, it published Christian literature in Chinese and was run by Chinese Christians with missionaries acting as advisors. The council and its sub-committees published a number of books and pamphlets, as well as the *China for Christ Bulletin* in Chinese, and the *N.C.C. Bulletin* in English. In 1926 the China Inland Mission and the Christian and Missionary Alliance withdrew from the council, citing the liberal direction of the organization as their reason. By 1932, however, the council represented about 70% of the Protestant presence in China. Similar councils also appeared in other countries, such as the N.C.C. of India which was founded in the early 1920s, and the N.C.C. of the Philippines, established in 1929.

C.Y. Cheng (Cheng Jingyi 誠靜怡) served as the chairperson of the 1922 National Christian Conference and general secretary of the N.C.C. of China from 1922 to 1933. In the late 1930s Wu Yi-fang (Wu Yifang 吳貽芳) was chairperson, Ronald Rees was a

secretary, Earl H. Cressy was secretary of the commission on Christian education, and Edward Hicks Hume was secretary of the commission on Christian medical work. Edwin Carlyle Lobenstine had a position as honorary secretary, and T.T. Lew (Liu Tingfang 劉廷芳) headed the National Committee for Christian Religious Education in China.

The council ceased functioning in the early 1950s as leadership of the Chinese Christians in the PRC was taken over by the proponents of the Three-Self movement.

Collection Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of material related to the council's meetings, publications and reports. It includes some documents that predate the council's official founding in 1922 and which are related to the China Continuation Committee's plans for the council. The collection is divided into 4 series:

- **Series 1: Records, 1919 - 1950 (2 boxes, 1 lin. ft.)**
This series contains reports, meeting minutes, and other official materials produced by the council or its sub-committees and related organizations.
- **Series 2: Administrative Correspondence, 1928 - 1945 (1 box, 0.5 lin. ft.)**
Correspondence of an administrative nature and related to the council's work is collected in this series.
- **Series 3: N.C.C. China Bulletin, 1938 - 1941 (1 box, 0.25 lin. ft.)**
The council published a news bulletin during the early years of the war with Japan in China. This series contains copies and originals of the bulletin, covering nearly the entire run of the publication.
- **Series 4: Publications, 1922 - 1950 (1 box, 0.5 lin. ft.)**
Pamphlets, published reports, and other publications appear in this series.

Several other archival holdings in series 6 of the MRL collection have connections to the N.C.C. of China, including:

Earl Herbert Cressy Papers

Cressy worked with the council on projects related to Christian education

Edward Hicks Hume Papers

Hume was involved with the council on issues related to medical work

Higher Educational Institutions in China

The National Christian Conference was involved in issues of higher education

Timothy Tingfang Lew Papers

T.T. Lew was one of the organizers of the National Christian Conference in 1922, and headed the committee on Christian Higher Education from 1930 to 1935.

Student Evangelism in Government Universities

The council was one of the main organizations involved in this effort

The MRL Pamphlets collection, folders 473 - 475, contains several publications produced by the N.C.C. of China. In addition, Yale Divinity School library has 12 folders of reports from the council, and the *Bulletin* exists in microfilm form in several libraries.

Processing

Metal clips and staples were removed from materials and folded items were flattened. Materials were placed in new acid-free folders and boxes. Items were separated from one another by interleaving with acid-free paper, and items in an advanced state of deterioration were photocopied on to acid-free paper.

Contents list

Series 1: Records, 1919 - 1950

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
1	1	1	National Christian Conference of China: Meeting Record, 1919; Annual Reports: 1922 - 1923,; 1923 - 1924
1	1	2	Committee on Religious Education: Minutes, Reports, 1923 - 1927
1	1	3	Committee on Church in Worship and Religious Education, 1927 - 1928
1	1	4	Seventh Annual Meeting: Reports, 1929
1	1	5	Administration Committee Meeting: Minutes, 1929
1	1	6	China Christian Educational Association: Reports, 1929
1	1	7	Meeting on Religious Education Work and the Five Year Plan: Report, 1929
1	1	8	Canton Conference: Reports, Findings, 1929
1	1	9	Christian Literature Conference: Correspondence, Reports, 1929
1	1	10	Regional Retreat Conferences: Correspondence, Reports, 1929
1	1	11	Committee on Religious Education: Minutes, Reports, 1930
1	1	12	Eighth Biennial Meeting: Minutes, Reports, 1931
1	1	13	National Committee for Christian Religious Education in China: Minutes, 1932 - 1933
1	1	14	Committee on the Training of Missionaries: Reports, 1934
1	1	15	Cooperation in Mission Work: Correspondence, Reports, 1934
1	1	16	Reports; Committee Meeting Minutes, 1934
1	1	17	Ad Interim Committee Meeting: Minutes, September 1934
1	1	18	Executive Committee Meeting: Minutes, November 1934
1	1	19	Tenth Biennial Meeting: Reports, 1935
1	1	20	Report and Minutes Extract, 1936 - 1937
1	1	21	Eleventh Biennial Meeting: Impressions, 1937
1	1	22	Sub-Committee on Studies: Meeting Minutes, 1937
1	1	23	Ad Interim Committee: Meeting Minutes, 1937
1	1	24	Visit Reports, 1937 - 1941
1	1	25	War Relief: Minutes, Reports, 1937 - 1941
1	1	26	Ad Interim Committee: Meeting Minutes, 1939
1	1	27	East China Regional Conference: Meeting Minutes, March 1939
1	1	28	Cooperation in West China: Reports, 1939 - 1940
1	2	1	Related Boards and Organizations: Correspondence, Reports, Minutes, 1939 - 1944
1	2	2	Rees Report, 1940
1	2	3	Rees Report, 1940 [Copy #2]
1	2	4	Ad Interim Committee: Minutes Extracts, 1940
1	2	5	Evacuation to the West: Reports, Correspondence, 1940 - 1941
1	2	6	Essay, Reports, Minutes Extracts, 1939 - 1941
1	2	7	Ad Interim Committee: Meeting Minutes, 1941

Series 1: Records, 1919 - 1950 (Cont'd)

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
1	2	8	Child Welfare Project Committee Meeting Minutes, 1941
1	2	9	Enlarged Executive Committee Meeting: Resolution Adopted, May 1943
1	2	10	Budget, 1944 - 1945
1	2	11	Enlarged Executive Committee Meeting: Minutes, Reports, Appendices, January 1946
1	2	12	Enlarged Executive Committee Meeting: Minutes, Reports, Appendices, January 1946 [Cont'd]
1	2	13	Executive Committee Meeting: Minutes, October 1946
1	2	14	Twelfth Biennial Meeting: Memoranda for Discussion, December 1946
1	2	15	Twelfth Biennial Meeting: Recommendations, December 1946
1	2	16	Twelfth Biennial Meeting: Special Papers, 1946
1	2	17	Twelfth Biennial Meeting: Special Papers, 1946 [Cont'd]
1	2	18	Twelfth Biennial Meeting: Reports, 1946
1	2	19	Twelfth Biennial Meeting: Papers on Legal Matters, 1946
1	3	1	Report on State of Churches in China Today, December 1946
1	3	2	Memorandum, Notes, Report, [19??]
1	3	3	Committee on Christian Literature, [19??] - 1925
1	3	4	Christian Literature: Correspondence, Meeting Minutes, [19??] - 1933
1	3	5	Conference on the Peoples' Livelihood: Conference Papers, February 1931

Series 2: Administrative Correspondence, 1928 - 1945

2	1	1	Administrative Correspondence, 1928 - 1929
2	1	2	Administrative Correspondence, August - October 1937
2	1	3	Administrative Correspondence, November - December 1937
2	1	4	Administrative Correspondence, 1938
2	1	5	Administrative Correspondence, 1939
2	1	6	Administrative Correspondence, 1940
2	1	7	Administrative Correspondence, 1941
2	1	8	Administrative Correspondence, 1942
2	1	9	Administrative Correspondence, 1943
2	1	10	Administrative Correspondence, January - March 1944
2	1	11	Administrative Correspondence, April - June, 1944
2	1	12	Administrative Correspondence, July - December, 1944
2	1	13	Administrative Correspondence, January - June, 1945
2	1	14	Administrative Correspondence, July - December, 1945

Series 3: N.C.C. China Bulletin, 1938 - 1941

Series	Box	Folder	Contents
3	1	1	Bulletin, June - August 1938
3	1	2	Bulletin, September - December 1938
3	1	3	Bulletin, January - April 1939
3	1	4	Bulletin, May - September 1939
3	1	5	Bulletin, October - November 1939
3	1	6	Bulletin, December 1939 - January 1940
3	1	7	Bulletin, February - May 1940
3	1	8	Bulletin, June 1940 - February 1941
3	1	9	Bulletin, March - November 1941

Series 4: Publications, 1922 - 1950

4	1	1	Publications, [192? - 194?]
4	1	2	Publications, 1922 - 1929
4	1	3	Publications, 1931 - 1933
4	1	4	Publications, 1941 - 1948
4	1	5	<i>Revised Directory of the Protestant Christian Movement in China,</i> 1950
4	1	6	<i>Revised Directory, Copy #2, 1950</i>
4	1	7	<i>Directory of Protestant Missionaries in China, June 1950</i>