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Broekema, Ruth Oral History Interview: Old China Hands Oral History Project I, II and III

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Greg Carlson

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OLD CHINA HANDS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Miss Ruth Broekema

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Hope College Archives Council
Holland, Michigan
1976
Introduction to the Series

These interviews are part of a series of interviews conducted by the Hope College Old China Hands Oral History Project during the summer of 1976 with former missionaries to China. With one exception, these missionaries were sent out by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church in America.

These interviews have been transcribed from taped conversations. While both the Old China Hands Staff and the interviewees edited the interviews, a strong attempt has been made to maintain the integrity of the transcript in relation to the taped interview. Editing has been primarily for clarification and to a certain extent for correction. A very serious effort has been made to leave the transcripts conversational and reflective of the tone of the interviews. The tapes themselves are held by the Hope College Archives.

The reader should thus keep in mind that these interviews are conversations and not polished essays. Neither the Old China Hands Staff, nor the Hope College Archives makes any claim that every aspect of an interviewee's recollections are correct. In fact, although the staff has attempted to point out obvious discrepancies and clarify murky areas, we know the opposite is true: there are areas where the interview will not be in accord with other evidence. It remains for the scholar and researcher to discover and sift through these areas.
Without the scholarly imagination and perseverance of Dr. G. Larry Penrose and Dr. Elton Bruins, this project would not have been possible. Even though very busy with their own pursuits, they always lent their valuable support and advice. Nor would it have been possible without the strong support of Dean Jacob Nyenhuis and Hope College. It was made enjoyable by the interviewees, each one very cooperative, genial and interesting.
Preface

Interviewee: Miss Ruth Broekema

Interview I: June 17, 1976
Miss Broekema's home in Holland, Michigan

Interviewer: Mr. David M. Vander Haar
B.A. Hope College

Interview II: June 23, 1976
Miss Broekema's home in Holland, Michigan

Interviewer: Mr. Greg Carlson
Senior, Hope College

Interview III: July 1, 1976
Miss Broekema's home in Holland, Michigan

Interviewers: Mr. David Vander Haar
Mr. Gregory Carlson
Miss Ruth Broekema was born March 6, 1899, in Chicago, Illinois, the daughter of Gerrit Broekema, born in the Netherlands, and Kate (Walters) Broekema, a native of Adell, Illinois. Her father was a small businessman. He was also a church elder. Her mother was active in women's societies, particularly mission aid. Miss Broekema attended high school at Hope Preparatory Academy in Holland, Michigan. She continued her education at Hope College, receiving her A.B. degree in 1923. She also attended the Kennedy School of Missions and the Moody Bible Institute.

Her many years as a missionary, sponsored by the Reformed Church in America, began in October, 1924, when she arrived at Kulangsu, Amoy, China. From 1924 to 1930, she was in charge of the Girls' Primary School at Tong-an, Fukien Province. After returning from furlough in 1931, she helped initiate short-term schools to teach women how to read the Bible and also semi-annual workers' retreats to strengthen the mission and fellowship of co-workers. She remained in Tong-an for the duration of World War II and continued to meet the needs of the peoples and churches, despite unsettled wartime conditions in the countryside.

Miss Broekema's mission career in China ended in 1951, when she was given permission to leave China by Communist authorities after having been detained for 19 months. In 1953,
she worked for a year in the Philippine Islands and was then invited by the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan to help in the development of the church's women's work. She retired in 1964.

During her first term in Tong-an, Miss Broekema was heavily involved in educational work. In later years, while she retained a seat on the school board, most of her time was spent in evangelistic -- organizing conferences, visiting upcountry churches and generally trying to strengthen the life of the church. While her interviews reveal the nature of these particular aspects of her work and to some extent mission activities as a whole in south Fukien, her natural narrative ability makes these remembrances particularly interesting.

Miss Broekema strongly emphasizes the unique nature of the Reformed Church mission to China with its rejection of denominationalism. Of particular interest is her remembrance of the South Fukien Chinese Church leaders' confusion over denominationalism at the organizational meetings of the Church of Christ in China. They had never heard of it. Miss Broekema also discusses conditions under bandit leader Iap in Tong-an, and the rise of the Nationalists. Her recollections of the zealous, Chinese evangelist, Dr. Sung, and his effect on the South Fukien Church are enlightening. She views Sung as the beginning of a revitalization in the Church in South Fukien -- a period of great growth stopped by the twin blows of Japan and Communism. She also feels that the Japanese war and the Communists were similarly, rapid fire blows to Chiang Kai Shek and the Nationalist movement, causing their ultimate
defeat and ending the progress they had made in the 1930's.
Her vivid account of her internment under the Communists at Tong-an, the processes involved in making her way out of China, and her treatment by young local militia in one of the cities along the way out, are interesting. They are supported by a list of brief jottings giving dates and events, which she made while in China and was able to take out with her. She is also very skeptical of any talk of a "new China."
Miss Ruth Broekema
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INTERVIEW I

VANDER HAAR: Perhaps we could start with just some reflections you might have on why you became involved in missions back in 1923 -- after you graduated from Hope College. What spurred your interest?

BROEKEMA: When I graduated from college? Why did I go on? Well, the only reason I went to Hope College was because I wanted to be a missionary.

VANDER HAAR: So you knew already ...

BROEKEMA: ... when I was a little girl. I always felt that that's what I wanted to do. Any time we had a missionary come to our church, I was right there in the front seat to hear her. I just ... it was in me ... I always just felt that. So that when I finished, I started high school, but I wasn't well. I was out two or three years. Then I came to Hope Prep. I had three years of Hope Prep here, and I was older, you see, and didn't go back to highschool. And that was the reason I came (to college), because I wanted to be a missionary. So I went to Hope College and then I applied to the Board.

VANDER HAAR: Did you know at that time what mission field you were interested in?
BROEKEMA: No, when the time came, and they went for an appointment, they asked me if I had any preferences. I had said India and they said, "Well, they need somebody badly in China." So, I said, "O.K.", and I was always so glad I went to China. I never would have stood those snakes in India! (laughter)

VANDER HAAR: Had any missionaries from China talked to you -- that you heard at churches or perhaps youth conferences?

BROEKEMA: I don't think it was any one special missionary. It was just missions, it was just missionaries. Well, I met Mrs. Walvoord, Jeanne was just a little girl then. They were home on furlough, she and her sister and Mrs. Walvoord and her husband. Rev. Klerk was our pastor in Chicago at the time when they were home on furlough. Mrs. Klerk was Mrs. Walvoord's sister. The Walvoords were studying at the University of Chicago, and I got acquainted with her and started to write letters to her. I corresponded with her during that term of service. It wasn't long after that, when I went to college and I just kept up that interest.

VANDER HAAR: Did you have any real impression of China before you went?

BROEKEMA: No.

VANDER HAAR: So it was a totally new experience?

BROEKEMA: It was all new! (laughter) It was all new, but it was just the call. I felt it was a call that I go to China and
I was thankful that I went. I knew the Koeppes who had gone out earlier. They went out in '19, I think, to China and they were good friends of mine at college. You see, I became acquainted with the college people because I was that age -- I had been out of school because of my illness. I was that age, so my very best friends were college students. I roomed with a college girl even though I was in Prep, and we were close friends. It was in her group that I made friendships. The Koeppes were in that group, too. So I knew them before I went over. So there were friends I was going to when I left for China. Miss Holkeboer was at college at the same time. I knew her -- I knew a few people.

VANDER HAAR: When you were accepted by the Board, did you go through a period of any type of training or language study?

BROEKEMA: No, we never did. You always did language study in China. I had a year at Kennedy School of Missions, after graduation from college. You see, I graduated in '23 and I went out in '24. In that year, '23-24, I was in the Kennedy School of Missions.

VANDER HAAR: Oh, that's good. I wasn't sure where that exactly fit in. What type of things did you study there?

BROEKEMA: Well, we had a course on China. Our teacher, Dr. Hodus, was a great authority on China. He came from Fukien province in the Foochow area. He was under the Congregational Board. We studied about China and, of course, a Bible course. I can't remember just what subjects we had, but it was a preparation for life in China.
VANDER HAAR: Was it very helpful?

BROEKEMA: Yes, I think it was. It's part of your training, you know.

VANDER HAAR: Then, you left here. Did you arrive in China in October 1924 or did you leave then?

BROEKEMA: We left in October 1924. It took us a month.

VANDER HAAR: You, of course, went by boat.

BROEKEMA: Oh, yes!

VANDER HAAR: Did you leave from San Francisco?

BROEKEMA: San Francisco, yes.

VANDER HAAR: Then from San Francisco to where?

BROEKEMA: To Japan. Japan to Shanghai and then Shanghai to Hong Kong, then Hong Kong back up to Amoy.

VANDER HAAR: Quite a trip, indeed. It only took four weeks then?

BROEKEMA: Well, you could generally figure around that. From the time you left here to the time you got to your station it took about a month.

VANDER HAAR: Now, were you immediately assigned to Tong-an when you arrived in Amoy?

BROEKEMA: Yes, the mission appoints you to live in a certain district, so I was assigned to live in Tong-an with Miss Zwemer.
VANDER HAAR: I have my map here, so...

BROEKEMA: Oh, yes. Miss Zwemer -- my first five years were her last five years. She retired after that. And Miss Holkeboer, we three lived together one year and then Miss Holkeboer went home. When she came back she was appointed to Amoy, to the Amoy Girl's High School, and so I took over the Primary School in Tong-an.

VANDER HAAR: Now did the mission itself decide where you were stationed?

BROEKEMA: Oh, the mission itself. The mission always decided that. The Board had nothing to do with placing missionaries. The mission as a group decided where the missionaries were to be.

VANDER HAAR: Did you speak the Amoy dialect in Tong-an?

BROEKEMA: We all spoke the same language in the mission.

VANDER HAAR: Now, it seems that you spent most of your years right in Tong-an?

BROEKEMA: Oh, yes, all the time.

VANDER HAAR: Was that a fairly ...

BROEKEMA: That's very unusual.

VANDER HAAR: I was just going to ask, (laughter) whether that was an unusual experience?
BROEKEMA: Well, it was because it all depended on the work, and there wasn't any reason to move me out of Tong-an. There was work needed there, so that's why I was just kept there. And of course, there was so much movement running back and forth down from the ports; you know down from the upcountry to the port city for this upheaval and that upheaval. Then with the war (World War II), the mission wouldn't move anybody around to another station. There were too few of us left. So when I came back, the last time I came back (after her furlough in 1948), then they thought, "Now, now she should be moved." If I was going to move this was the time to move me.

Well, then the other missionaries came back after the war was over. Most of them had been away all those years. When they came back, then I went home and when I got back they had put somebody else in Tong-an. There were different people there, somebody in the hospital.... The Hills were there, the Esthers were there, Miss Nienhuis was there. Then I was to go up to North River. That was the plan, but I never got there because of the Communists. It was a blessing that in the end I was in Tong-an where the people knew me, than to be to a new station that didn't know me. So it turned out the best, because Miss Nienhuis was a new person upcountry and we were togethor. That was a blessing in the end because the Chinese, we had to rely on them.

VANDER HAAR: Do you remember at all any first impressions of China?

BROEKEMA: (laughter) OH!
VANDER HAAR: I know that's a long time ago...

BROEKEMA: Yes, and of course your impressions change as you become accustomed to the surroundings. I remember the smells, the dirt, but I was impressed by the friendliness of the people and the beautiful scenery. How I miss the foothills now and the fertile Tong-an valley! I think poverty - there's one that never leaves you. I mean the first time you see it. Oh, when you land in Shanghai, and see these people come out, surround the boats in those little sampans, they're just scavengers. Whatever the boat throws out, they pick up. Garbage, you see, and they go through all of that and eat it. It just turns you, I tell you, when you see that. And that hits you. That's the first port you really see things like that, in Shanghai. Oh! they're just like little rats, you know, scratch, scratching around for food. And that you see every time you went, come home, or go back again. You see the same sampans all the time. I don't think you ever forget that picture, and as well, all that goes with poverty.

Well, a country when you get to be living with the people your perception changes, but the dirt! (laughter) I know one missionary came out and she said, "You been here how many years and you still got all this dirt around?" Well, you don't change those things in a hurry. You think you are going to make a big change right away, but...

But then things did change when Chiang was planning his campaign and his New Life movement-- that was just before the Japanese took over. When he was planning this part, things really were happening in China and you were seeing improvements!
We were seeing new buildings, seeing roads being built. I remember just before the Japanese came in, the Nationalist Government said, "Now, by next year we're going to have compulsory education. When the mission first started there was no education for girls. Gradually that changed, but it was just for the privileged girls. Most little girls didn't go to school. That's why we had a girls' and a women's school — a school for women to come to because they never went to school when they were girls. And then they were married and had children and then some of them became interested in the Gospel. Then the families would say, "Yes, now, our girls don't know how to read." Well we had a women's school in order to teach the women to read the Bible. That was our main point. If they become Christians, they must learn to read the Bible because if they don't read the Bible, how are they ever going to grow in the spiritual life? And so thus we taught them to read.

You see, we had the Romanized Bible. Our language was very phonetic and easily written in Romanized, so that we could teach them within a short time. With a month, you could, if they really applied themselves, teach them to read the Bible in a short time. Well, then the girls would stay. Then they went on and in that way, some of the girls became brighter and some went on to higher education.

When I first came, I had charge of the girls' primary school. We had a lot of girls who came to us, older girls. They weren't just little six year olds, you see. We'd have little ones, too. So you see, we had girls education by the time I came, but then
to think that by 1935, or something like that, they said that the next year there was going to be compulsory education throughout China. This was tremendous! So we saw big strides, you see, big strides that way.

VANDER HAAR: Did you feel that there was much chance that compulsory education would have gone through if it hadn't been for the Japanese?

BROEKEMA: Oh, yes, it would have gone through. Perhaps in some rural areas it might have taken longer but it would pass. For centuries girls were unimportant because they were married off into another family and so the family didn't realize much income unless they could ask for a big dowery. It takes years to change customs, but with educated girls becoming leaders -- things were changing in China especially with Chiang's New Life Movement.

VANDER HAAR: Were teachers available?

BROEKEMA: Oh, yes, more and more were going into teaching.

VANDER HAAR: Perhaps going back to when you first arrived in Tong-an, what types of things was the mission doing there when you first arrived and did that change over the years?

BROEKEMA: Well, we had schools in all our districts. There was a boys' school and a girls' school. In some places we had a women's school, too. Then there's the hospital in Sio-khe, Chang chou and Tong-an. No, Chang chou didn't have a hospital. The LMS, London Missionaries, had a hospital. We didn't have
a hospital. But, we later built one with the LMS.

VANDER HAAR: The Union Hospital?

BROEKEMA: Yes, the Union Hospital. And Leng-na had a hospital. That's where the work was around, the hospitals and the schools ... and the churches. An ordained man worked with the pastor and he would have charge of a district. We were assigned to a district and the group planned the work -- not just one person. When I was in Tong-an for my first five years, Miss Zwemer was there and she had the women's school. I was just learning the language. We had two years to learn the language, and then after, I had to begin to take charge of the girl's school. We had Chinese teachers and a principal. Mr. Koeppe had charge of the district. Dr. Eckerson was there, too. He had charge of the evangelistic work. But we did it all together. It was never an individual. You were responsible for a piece of work, yes, I mean that, but the whole station did it together. Most of our stations did. We generally cooperated with everything.

VANDER HAAR: I noticed that in your vita you said that your main difficulties in that early period were the lack of preparation for the work and, of course, the language.

BROEKEMA: Yes, you see I really should have taught school before I went out. I just took a lot of language courses at college. Then at Hope we did not have practice teaching like there is now. The Board felt there was a need for a missionary in China, so hurry up and go. I really wasn't adequately pre-
pared. I felt that the first time I got in front of a class and there it is in another language not your own! That wasn't easy.

VANDER HAAR: Then during your first two years, did you do just language study or did you teach also?

BROEKEMA: Well, you are supposed to have two years of language study. That's all you do is just study the language, you see, but I only had one year. Miss Holkeboer went home so I had to take over the school. So then I had to teach part time in the school and part time study the language. So you don't always have a full two years. Now later on, in the late twenties, the mission insisted that you had to have two years. They weren't supposed to do any work no matter how much the work was needed. The missionary had to have two full years of language before they did anything.

VANDER HAAR: After two years, did you pretty well have a grasp of the language, then?

BROEKEMA: (laughter) No, no grasp of it, but you use the few words you do have and you add on and keep on and then in the summertime you study some more. During vacations then you have a teacher again as a refresher, you know, to keep on studying. Then we had a third year of language -- I didn't finish that, but some went through that and studied more. You are supposed to go on more, but then you get piled up with work. Of course, as you work there, you gain more language, too.
VANDER HAAR: What was the living situation like for the missionary. Did you have a mission compound, or...?

BROEKEMA: Yes.

VANDER HAAR: Could you explain a little? You had a house for the single women there?

BROEKEMA: Yes. We three ladies lived in one house. Then, there was a tennis court between us and the Koeppes lived -- the house where the Koeppes lived. Then just a little bit back there was another house. That was the doctor's house. Dr. Veldman lived there then. And then, there was the hospital and in back of us there was the women's school. That was all within a big wall and that was the mission compound. When the missionaries started working in Tong-an area the city was a walled city like all the cities in China were. Then they began to tear down some of the walls. But when we got there, they still had some of the walls up and some of the gates. But they tore down the west gate and made a road and they used these bricks -- these stones -- not bricks, stones -- to make the city road. But the little west gate was always there and the north gate was still there. They wouldn't sell any property to missions to build in the city. We had to build outside of the city.

VANDER HAAR: So you were outside the wall itself?

BROEKEMA: Yes, we were outside.

VANDER HAAR: Why did the missionaries live in a compound?
BROEKEMA: I'm not sure I have the right answer. In Tong-an when the mission was looking for property to build a school and houses, the Government would not sell land to them in the city. It probably worked out better in the end, than being in the city. The boys' school was built near the church on the main road into the mountains. It was only a footpath then. Missionary residences were built gradually in a compound area that included the hospital, the girls' school, and the women's school. It was perhaps more convenient for all to be in one place near the institutions and the church where all work was centered. Not only compounds had walls around the houses, Chinese houses did too for protection.

In later years when Talmage College was moved to Changchou, two residences were built on the College property for the missionaries connected with the school.

When the hospital work expanded in Kulongsu so that a new dormitory was needed, one section was made into an apartment for the missionary nurse in charge.

VANDER HAAR: Did you lease property then, or buy it outside of the city?

BROEKEMA: I don't know just how that went. That was all done before I got there. But they wouldn't sell property in the city. It was for mission work, but it was through the church. The church was already established there when I came. But missionaries didn't own any property. The mission owned the property and just before the Communist take-over the mission was in the process of handing it over to the Church.
VANDER HAAR: How big a city was Tong-an when you were there?

BROEKEMA: Oh, don't ask me numbers. Perhaps 70,000.

VANDER HAAR: A fairly large place.

BROEKEMA: Oh, yes, it was a big area --- Tong-an was a big area. The city, there wasn't too much in it, but there were thousands of people there.

VANDER HAAR: Now, I noticed looking at the General Synod Reports, they were talking about the Cheng Khe church in the Tong-an District being under five different governments in the first year you were there.

BROEKEMA: Oh? In Tong-an? (looking at report)

VANDER HAAR: Cheng Khe church in Tong-an? Yes, I recall it was in An-Khoe, in the mountain area. I don't recall the incidents. Perhaps local bandits.

VANDER HAAR: What was the political situation within Tong-an? I'm sure it changed so many times over the years that it is a little hard to recall.

BROEKEMA: Well, sure. It was sort of like bandit control. You know, a warlord. That's what it was, a warlord. He was in control of Tong-an. His surname was Lap. He was a Tong-an person, so whenever he was in Tong-an in charge, you had peace. It was just fine for us, you see, but it wasn't so nice for the people on the outside. He was a horrible man. But as long as he was there, we had no trouble with any banditry or thievery.
or anything like that. Nobody dared do anything when he was around. But when he wasn't, when he was out some other way trying to get some other area, gain more control of other districts in the hill country and all that, then it was bad.

Tong-an was a big area. We lived right outside the city there, but from there then into the hills there was a distance. Up in the hills, in the hill country, we had four or five preaching areas, churches. We established churches and the first one was about fifteen miles from our church, from our home. It was six pha they said, and there's three miles in a pha, so about sixteen or eighteen miles. That would be a days walk. And then the next one would be about the same distance, and we had them all around in the hills. Sometimes when it wasn't quiet in the country then the preacher would tell us, "Don't come up -- it's not quiet -- there might be trouble -- bandit trouble." So then we didn't go. There was one area almost that first term I hardly went up there -- never went up to see those churches -- that one church -- because there was too much trouble in that one corner. But I made a circle of the other ones, and I left that one out.

VANDER HAAR: Just about the time you arrived, I know the Synod reports were filled with, well, of course, filled with talk of the banditry and warlord conditions, but also what they called a "somewhat sudden appearance of a strong anti-Christian movement." Were you aware of that as you first arrived there?

BROEKEMA: No. I don't think that ... . That sometimes is more throughout the country in different sections. But, uh, not just the real anti-Christian -- I don't think I was ever

VANDER HAAR: I know later they said, in 1927, just as you and Miss Zwemer were leaving Tong-an, there were demonstrations and street parades. Do you recall that at all?

BROEKEMA: Is that in there?

VANDER HAAR: Yes, I was....

BROEKEMA: Who wrote those?

VANDER HAAR: I don't know, that's why we have to talk to you.

BROEKEMA: Oh, that's so long ago. (laughter)

Anti-Christian???

VANDER HAAR: Well then, perhaps anti-foreigner?

BROEKEMA: Yes, there was some anti-foreign feelings. You see, that would start in Shanghai. That's where all this unrest and uprising would always come. In the universities and the colleges, the schools -- they were the ones that started all this, because this was all really, way back, Communist led. And then they were opposed to Britain or opposed to America -- American business people -- and through them, well then we'd get it too.

It was my first year, my first summer and they wouldn't allow English at the resort off Kulangsu. We had two places that we could go for our summer vacation; one was "Big Hat Mountain." We called it Twable Swamp, and we went there that first summer. That was in the Amoy area just off Kulongsu.
The other was in Foochow. There was a big resort in Foochow, and if you could go up there to Foochow, then you would meet a lot of missionaries of other groups, you see. In Foochow there were a lot of missions. Amoy just had the English Mission, the London Mission, and the R.C.A. Well, then it was nice, in the summertime or at least once during a term -- some people went often, but at least once -- to go up to Foochow. Then you met the Methodists, people from the Church of England, the Congregationalists -- there were just hundreds of missionaries, just lots of them. It really was fun to go up there in the summertime and meet so many more, and it was beneficial, too, to talk over problems in the work. You were in the same province, but different missions, and you got different ideas, and it was really, really very good.

Well, our first summer, I went up to that little one -- the little Big Hat Mountain -- for the summer and the British were not allowed to go up. It was only R.C.A. missionaries who were allowed up the hill. It was just a big hill, and we had missionary houses built up there. The British weren't allowed because that was right after the Shanghai incident. Well, they had the trouble in the schools and they were opposed to ... they were mad ... they had something against Britain.

VANDER HAAR: So who wasn't allowing the British?

BROEKEMA: So, the boatmen then, you see. They said, "Oh, the British boat," and they wouldn't allow them up. So then, all the more R.C.A. people went up and lived in the British houses. You see, they had houses, and it was just R.C.A. that were up there that summer. It was my first summer, and we had a nice
summer up there with the families. That's how you noticed. This was that anti-foreign feeling.

VANDER HAAR: Speaking of dating by evacuations, do you remember your first evacuation?

BROEKEMA: Oh, I ... well, it was during then. No, it wasn't that first year.

VANDER HAAR: Perhaps in 1927?

BROEKEMA: It's around in there. In '27 we sure had a run then. Well, we'd just go down to Amoy. You'd just pack up your stuff when there were reports of the Communists coming or something, and the consuls would send word: "Come down to Kulongsu."

VANDER HAAR: Were you often in agreement with the consul's advice?

BROEKEMA: Well, after all, you are guests in the country and the consul advises you to come down, you have to listen. You don't want to have any .. you don't want to be the cause of any international incident. And so, if you're asked to come down, we would go down and talk to them and see what we could do. And I know sometimes the consuls were very considerate, and they understood and knew that we probably knew just as much of what's going on as they did. We probably knew more. We could find it out from the Chinese more upcountry and feel the pulse of the people and know more of it than what they felt down at Kulongsu. And they realized that, and we could talk it over with them -- the men would, the women wouldn't do it,
but the men would talk it over with them and see what they felt, and they would say, "Well, if you think it's safe up there go ahead and go -- stay up there. You keep your ears to the ground, and if you hear anything, well then, just run down." But sometimes you would get consuls who would just... they didn't have any sympathy for mission work. Then they just wouldn't even consider talking it over with you, you see. But we didn't have very many of those, most of them were pretty fine men. They were very considerate and one-hearted. They were open-hearted and they were interested in mission work. There's a big difference.

VANDER HAAR: Speaking of the first time you evacuated in 1927, that whole anti-Christian, anti-foreign, nationalist movement, how did that affect you there? Did you feel it from the people you worked with at all?

BROEKEMA: No, no, except there was a big boys' school -- not only boys-- it was a big school and a high school. This was very much infiltrated with Communists. It was on the way going out of Tong-an at Chip-Bee, right at the point where you'd take the boat to go down to Kulongsu. There was a lot of anti-foreign feeling there. We were always glad to get through that place, because they could excite those high school students to do anything, you know. It just wasn't safe. You would feel anti-foreign feeling from them, but then you got other kids that were very, very friendly. The Chinese are very friendly people, very hospitable people, but when they get excited with such sentiments as Communist leadings, then that
changes a person. But otherwise, no, the Chinese people were very friendly -- that is the ordinary people.

VANDER HAAR: Now, I know that there were three mission groups there. How much were they working together when you arrived?

BROEKEMA: Generally speaking, we had our areas. The English Presbyterian were north of Tong-an at Choan-chui and the London Missionary Society was just north of that at Hui-oa. The L.M.S. were also in Chang chou, where they had a large girls' high school. At first, the R.C.A. had Talmage College for boys on Kulangsu which was later given over to the Girls' School and Talmage went to Chang chou. The English Presbyterians were also in Chhiu-Pho south of Chang chou along the coast.

We were sort of mixed up, some of these churches were. But you see, when there were no roads or anything, no transportation, but just walking, there were some long days that you'd have to walk from one place to another. But as transportation came in, well then, distances were nearer, you know. Then you got nearer with the E.P.'s and the other group. But, it was all one church. It was all in the South Fukien Church. We never had the distinction of saying that the E.P.'s or the L.M.S. were set in one church and we were set in another church. No, it was all one. It was the Church of Christ in South Fukien.

VANDER HAAR: How long had that been?

BROEKEMA: From the very beginning.

VANDER HAAR: From the very beginning?
BROEKEMA: We never had a denomination down there, you see. We were unique throughout all China in that. It was the Church of Christ in South Fukien. When they had enough members to organize a church (the E.P.'s, L.M.S. and the R.C.A.), Dr. Talmage said, "This must be the Church of Christ in South Fukien. It must be their church and not a Reformed Church." And the Synod said, "No, it has to be a Reformed Church." The missionaries said, "No, if it's going to be a Reformed Church, then we quit." So they won out. So we... we were unique in that, you see? We were the only area like that throughout all China. In North China, in Foochow, oh, you had the Congregationalists, the English Mission, the London-- not the LMS -- it was the Church of England and they had another: Church of England Society. The Methodists had a big work and they were all separate churches. Now afterwards when they had the United Church of Christ in 1927, well then they became one church up there but they had a lot of problems. But we never had to settle that because it was always one church.

VANDER HAAR: How do you think that affected your mission work; the success, or failure, or the problems involved?

BROEKEMA: Oh! we had a better relationship, you see, because it was all one church. When the Chinese leaders went up with Dr. Koeppe and Dr. Poppen to Shanghai to this organization of the United Church of Christ in China, then our leaders went up with them. Our leaders didn't understand what was going on and they had to talk to the men and the men tried to explain because they'd never had denominations. They'd never heard of
a Congregationalist or heard of all these different sects. We just had, really, Presbyterianism. Our Reformed Church, Presbyterians, that was it. And they didn't understand all this, those Baptists and all that, coming in and everything. "Oh!," they said, "Ah!, Oh!, headaches, headaches, and we're relieved of all that! We never had all that." The men would have to explain all these things to them and they said, "We were just saved all that." We never had that between denominations.

VANDER HAAR: I know that this had been a major criticism by groups like the Laymen's Inquiry Commission of some missions in China; the denominationalism, the sects, as confusing and very harmful to missions.

BROEKEMA: Yes, but you see, we were saved that because our early missionaries decided we brought the Gospel to them, they build their Church.

VANDER HAAR: You were just going to look at the map again before I asked the last question?

BROEKEMA: Well, I was going to point here, Leng-na. That was developed later when the Hollemans and the De Prees came out, just before I came out around 1919. This was really started by the L.M.S. That station was opened up that way and they couldn't hold it all. It was after World War I and they didn't have enough missionaries. They didn't have finances, so they said, "Would you head a hospital there
and schools? Would the R.C.A. take it over?" That's when we sent Dr. Holleman. They went out in 1919. They took over the hospital and the Poppens were there and Dr. and Mrs. De Pree were up there, too.

So that became an R.C.A. station after that but before that it had been L.M.S. But we took over, so we enlarged that area. But it all became ... This is going further ahead, but here, Eng-chhun, I went up there just one year after I came back from my last furlough. You see, I stayed all through the war, and then went home and was home for two years. Then I came home (to China) and as we got to Hong Kong, in '48 we got back, then we met a missionary from Eng-chhun. She belonged to the E.P. mission. She was going to be all alone in this big area up in Eng-chhun. She was saying good-bye to a British missionary who'd been out for one year to study the language and she was going home because of sprue. But they hoped that after a year home in the States she'd come back and be able to take over.

They were going to send me to Leng-na. I was going to leave Tong-an then and be sent to Leng-na. She says, "You really shouldn't be sent to Leng-na. They have just had new recruits, and Chinese ones. A very capable Chinese family is going up there." So she said, "I need you in Eng-chhun more." I said, "Well, that's up to the Church." You see, then we were under the Church and not under the mission. The mission would consult but the Church would appoint you where to work.

VANDER HAAR: When did that change?
BROEKEMA: That had changed right after the war.

VANDER HAAR: Right after World War II?

BROEKEMA: Yes. And I said, "That's all right to me." I said, "I realize that you need somebody more than the other place does. I'd be glad to switch." So, when I got back to Amoy, before we left, she got back to Amoy and she inquired of the E.P. mission. She was asking me for a loan -- to loan me to them for a year while this other girl was out, was back in England for a year -- and I agreed to that. So, then I went up to Eng-chhun. I had to first go up to Tong-an to get my things, and then to Eng-chhun. I was only going to be there a year. I wasn't going to move everything, but just move some things necessary to stay with her for that year. Well, before I went, the pastor said, "Well, you first have to have a teacher's training course with the Sunday school teachers, at least, before you go." So, I did that, and then I went to Eng-chhun. I got up there in late fall. In the spring, we were traveling -- she had a big mountain country to travel-- and we went up just around Easter time into the hills. I was two days from our station -- two days trip by sedan chair. Just as we finished our trip and were coming home that Monday morning -- we'd had a service on Sunday -- my sedan chair broke, and I fell and I broke my arm, broke my wrist. Well, we had to go two days before we got back and I wasn't to a doctor then yet. There was a Chinese doctor, but because we'd waited so long, I wasn't going to have him manipulate it. I wanted to have it set by Dr. Holleman. And so we just put it in a sling,
a better sling than I had, I just had a rag, a cloth.

VANDER HAAR: And then you had to go to Leng-na for Dr. Holleman?

BROEKEMA: No, he was down in Kulongsu, he was in Amoy then. But then we had to come down to here from Tseng-su. Yes, from here then then you have to come down by boat and then went to the hospital there. Well, that was ten days.

VANDER HAAR: You were originally up here in Eng-chhun?

BROEKEMA: Yes.

VANDER HAAR: And you broke it somewhere in the field, and then you had to go back to Eng-chhun?

BROEKEMA: We were up here from Eng-chhun, We were up past Tek-hoa. That was it, Toa-chhan. We were up here in Toa-chhan -- that's where it happened, just outside of Toa-chhan. And then we traveled that night and up here we were in a big mountain place, Chiah-chui. Oh, I'll never forget that place. It's all hills. It's beautiful in this part. The hills and mountains are pretty, and it was just like this little church was stuck on the hill like that, with the mountains all the way down there, and mountains up there. We were just on a ledge, and we spent the night there in that little village chapel.

VANDER HAAR: So, it was a small out-station you were visiting?

BROEKEMA: Yes.

VANDER HAAR: Would you commonly make those kinds of visits?
BROEKEMA: Sure.

VANDER HAAR: What would you do while you ...

BROEKEMA: Well, generally, you would stay for a day or more, but because I had to go on, we didn't stay any longer. We'd visit the families, the church families, and have a special prayer meeting or service of some kind. But this time, because we wanted to get back... we would come back there another time. And then we got to Tek-hoa, and then there was a hospital there -- a Chinese doctor there -- but he had been partially trained by a mission doctor. He straightened it out better and put a splint on it, and then we went on and we got back to Eng-chhun. That was on Friday and the other missionary said she really couldn't go until she was there for a couple of days -- she had charge of the station in Eng-chhun and she had things she had to take care of. And then we went on. There were British people there then -- a foreign British doctor -- and he said that the hospital in Amoy, in Kulongsu, had X-rays and I'd better go right straight down to them. "You waited this long, you might as well wait a couple of days longer." So, I went down to them, and it was about ten days before Dr. Holleman could set it.

VANDER HAAR: It might be interesting to go over a little bit what the routine was like for you while you were there. What did you do during a normal day?

BROEKEMA: hum....
VANDER HAAR: Let's say while you were in Tong-an in the early years. You were teaching school, making visitations. To how many out-stations?

BROEKEMA: Well, a lot of these things changed, developed. I'll go back to my first term with Miss Zwemer. She had the Women's School and I had the Girls' School. And then she was going to introduce me to the district because your girls would come from the churches in the district-- that's where your girls came to school from. We had a boarding school. Our girls" school and all our schools were boarding schools. We had some girls who lived in the town and came in every day -- day pupils-- but the majority of our pupils were boarding pupils. They had to come from these little churches that didn't have schools. And you wanted to train your Christian girls.

Sometimes, we had to help them, because they had to pay fees and they couldn't pay for all the fees. Well, then, sometimes we'd help them. So we'd get a promising pupil and think maybe she'll develop into something worthwhile in the church, or at least be a Christian mother. Well, these are all the things that in starting a church you have to think about. So that we'd have to visit the churches of the district and the girls' homes. Sometimes you'd go out during the vacation time, or otherwise take out a few days, a weekend. Sometimes we'd go on the weekend to one of the churches. Then we could meet them. We'd spend Friday and Saturday visiting in their homes, and then on Sunday we would meet with the people in the church. If it was a very small little church, sometimes the pastor would invite us to take the service. Not always.
We were thankful, too, that they would do it themselves. But sometimes they felt inadequate. Some of them were just seminary students; they weren't educated as highly as at home. And this is what we did in order to keep in contact with the families or with the children who were coming to our school, and with the people of that church area -- meet with them. That's what we did those first few years. Of course, the men now, like Rev. Koeppe, he would go out with the pastors and they had an evangelistic program and so on that they carried out. Then, when we developed in Tong-an this -- I don't know when it started ....

VANDER HAAR: Was it a mobile unit or...?

BROEKEMA: We started an ambassadors meeting, Khim-chhe-toan. We felt we really ought to do something to strengthen the spiritual life of our workers.

VANDER HAAR: The Chinese workers?

BROEKEMA: Yes. The pastors and Bible women and leaders in the church. In Tong-an by then we had co-education; a primary school, a big school, as well as a junior high school. We had the hospital. We felt that the church, the hospital, and the schools were all one. Now in some areas they begin to develop the school and that's an entity in itself. Now like in Chang chou and Amoy, they're such big institutions! They are an entity in themselves in a way. But, in another way, they aren't. They're all dependent on each other. We tried to develop this spirit of unity more in Tong-an and we were fortunate to be able to do that. So we started having these Khim-chhe-toan, ambassadors meetings. It was in the 1930's, around in there, that
we started this. The name was given because we are ambassadors for Christ. The Khim-chhe-thoan were for people who could come in once a month, and they could either come by bus or walk. You see, we had buses then. They could thus come in to Tong-an for the day, those who had long distances. We had a meeting which began at nine o'clock in the morning and then we would finish it about three so they could go home again that night.

That took in quite a few people. Well, I should say we'd have around thirty or forty, maybe thirty. The hospital people, the school people from Tong-an district. The principal would always come and maybe another one of the teachers, but then the teachers had school going on so they couldn't come the whole time. But they'd come at noon. The principal always came for part of the meeting. The doctor, too, would always come over for part of the meeting and the nurse. We wanted them to feel that we were all working together for the same purpose. This was a great help spiritually for all of us.

VANDER HAAR: I know that in our earlier talks, you had said that in the 1930's things really began to roll...

BROEKEMA: Yes, yes, because that's the result of Dr. Sung's evangelistic meetings.

VANDER HAAR: Did he come to Tong-an itself?

BROEKEMA: No, no. He was in Amoy and everybody went down. You see, people went down to hear him. Oh, they went by the hundreds, by the thousands. Oh, I never saw anything like it, you'll never see it again. It was just marvelous. He was
a prophet, that's all. It's true.

VANDER HAAR: I don't know that much about Dr. Sung myself...

BROEKEMA: Oh, there are books written about him, if you can get hold of one. I don't have one anymore.

VANDER HAAR: Now, if Dr. Sung was the main influence, were there other things going on that you felt were positive influences on the Church in the thirties? Am I putting words into your mouth when I say that you felt like the mission was really taking off then, or not?

BROEKEMA: Well, there was, as I say, the country was being settled. Chiang was trying to improve the country and it was more settled politically throughout. Roads were being built, communications. We could get ... instead of walking all day, you could take a bus! That made communications easier for our people. The people could get into the city. We could have these meetings you see, like the Khim-chhe-thoan, the ambassadors meeting once a month. That was just marvelous to have that meeting. You could work together and plan together, instead of a man just being isolated out in a little village by himself always. This way he came in every month and we had a time where we had to report what you did that month and what problems you had, and ask prayer. Then we would pray for one another for these problems.

Then it developed, too, that we'd say, "Now this place would like to have help. Well, let us say what month. When can you go? When do you want to go? All the group from that
area then, we'd all go to that church. For that day, we'll help him. He's a lonely man in one little church. If he wants to reach more people, he doesn't have anybody else to go out with him and preach with him. Come on, we'll help him." Maybe they're going to have a big celebration. Let us go over there and really show them that Christians are together. You see, help each other. Or maybe, sometimes a Christian has a death in the family. And they'll say, "Now, now is the time," because that's when the devil works, I'll tell you. You just get a new Christian and then somebody dies in the family. Oh, then they all point the fingers to her. "See what good does it do you to become a Christian when somebody dies in your family? You are not supposed to. The gods are angry with you." Well, you see, we tried to bolster them up.

VANDER HAAR: What kind of problems did you have within the church? I noticed in the minutes they were talking about a split-off in one of the churches over baptism by immersion and that type of thing. Did you have theological problems?

BROEKEMA: Well, you see, we had the Little Flock. Have you heard about the Little Flock? Well, you have them here; Plymouth Brethren they call them. They believe in immersion and they have pretty much some ideas that they're the only ones. Well, they came in and they were very zealous and they started around Foochow and before long they were coming into our part of the area. Instead of trying to work on non-Christians, they'd work on the Christians. They were the easier ones to gain! (laughter) So we had some problems with that, but you can't win them all.
You just have to work along with them and we tried to.

VANDER HAAR: I read also about the "Three Dots Society". Do you remember that at all?

BROEKEMA: No...

VANDER HAAR: That was right after you got there. During that whole period, what about pressures to grow opium?

BROEKEMA: Oh, opium. Opium fields are beautiful. They were still there when I got there. We lived in a very fertile valley and that valley, looking out from our house across that valley, was just filled with white poppies. White, you know, is the purest opium. Oh! the were just gorgeous fields! Yes, we had a lot of opium but then that was soon banned. It wasn't long after that when they weren't allowed to grow opium anymore. They stopped it, but they had opium smokers. Those were the only ones that carried sedan chairs.

VANDER HAAR: I remember reading a story about your being held up for a few days by opium smokers who were your carriers. I'll ask you about that later.

You were talking about Chiang Kai-Shek and the Nationalists. What was your first impression or contact with them?

BROEKEMA: I never saw him. I saw him in Taiwan, but not in China. He never came near our place. But, I think, in all fairness to him, Chiang was the best China ever had, and I think he was doing it. He made mistakes, and he wasn't perfect, and he had a lot of people in the Nationalist party who were
not as dedicated as he was. But I think of him personally, he
was a dedicated man after he became a Christian. He really
was.

We all wondered you know, there's so much that we think
about leaders and that, and you think, well, is he perfect? He
isn't perfect, but he was doing his best and he was the best
that China ever had. But he never had a chance because the
Japanese came. On the way home in '46 after the war, I met
a missionary who was from West China and I said, "What do you
feel about Chiang?" She said, "I met a man who was his body-
guard, and he watched him. He was just fearless. He guarded
his quiet time every morning very carefully, and he would let
nothing interfere with his time that he spent with Christ. This
impressed this bodyguard, and because of that, he became a
Christian." Well, I thought that was a wonderful testimony
because people were asking me, "Is he really a Christian?" I
said, "As far as I can tell, I have never heard anything against
it."

VANDER HAAR: The Nationalists were affecting you as far as roads
and...?

BROEKEMA: Oh yes! We saw the results. After Chiang unified
the area, roads were being built and things were changing. They
were going to have compulsory education for girls. We just
wondered what would happen to our girl's school if everybody
was going to go to school. Would there be schools for them
all? But we didn't have to cross that bridge.
VANDER HAAR: Perhaps we can just close on this. At the same time the Nationalists were arising, you had the left wing of the Kuomintang Party and the Communist influenced groups. Now, I know that Dr. Holleman was captured in 1929.

BROEKEMA: Yes, Mao Tse Tung.

VANDER HAAR: Which was fairly early...

BROEKEMA: Yes, I'll never forget that. You see, Mao Tse Tung was just beginning his march from the south going up north. He was just a young fellow, not more than that really. (laughter) You see, Leng-na is on a hill and the hospital was built up at the hill. They had heard rumors. Of course, you hear rumors all the time, but you don't run the first time you hear a rumor. Mr. Poppen was not home. He was down at Synod meeting at the time. So Mrs. Poppen and Mrs. Holleman were in the station with Dr. Holleman. Holleman says, "You women go on out. I'll first go to the hospital and meet you." Well, he never got out. As he came into the hospital's one door, the bandits, the Communists came in at the other door. They grabbed him. The women and children fled south to Chang chou and then to Kulongsu. The soldiers took Dr. Holleman over the hills into the mountain area of Swatow. After his escape he came to Swatow and then by boat to Amoy.

The interview was interrupted at this point, so we concluded for the day.
INTERVIEW II

CARLSON: You had said that you especially liked working in the area where you knew the people already. That it was a blessing in the end because you relied so much on the Chinese. How did you rely on the Chinese?

BROEKEMA: They were very loyal to us. The Communists were trying to get something on us, Miss Nienhuis and I were together. Our people didn't criticize us or have anything to say against us. They just stood up for us. Because of that, they couldn't find anything. They were very loyal to us.

CARLSON: Did they help with household chores?

BROEKEMA: We had servants who stayed with us until the end.

CARLSON: Concerning the trips you made to promising young girls: you had boarders in your school and people who came from the town. Could you relate a typical experience of going to those out stations and visiting the families of one of those girls?

BROEKEMA: We did that all the time--visit the churches. It depended on the political situation: if it was quiet, then we could make the trips. We often would go on a weekend, but sometimes we went for a week and visited several villages. We would meet with the women in the church there, and go and visit each home.
CARLSON: What would you do while you were in their homes?

BROEKEMA: We would talk with them and get acquainted with them, their situation, and the home background of the girls. If the parents had any problem they wanted to ask about the children, or any about the child, then you would talk it over. If there weren't any problems, then it was just a friendly visit. Then we would meet with the women of the church—sort of a prayer service at the church.

CARLSON: Did you eat meals in their homes?

BROEKEMA: Yes. Generally, we would stay in the pastor's home for a couple of days. We stayed with them and ate with them.

CARLSON: Dave, when he interviewed you, left off with Dr. Holleman's capture in 1929 by the Communists. Was there any evidence of early Communist activity in your area?

BROEKEMA: No, none at all.

CARLSON: You were in a girls' primary school, and the government wanted you to register your school. I noted in the Synod Reports that there were problems doing this.

BROEKEMA: We were just a small school, so we didn't have so much trouble. It was all done through the mission—it was a mission decision. By the time the Communists really hit, I was out of educational work. I was strictly evangelistic. I served on the school board always, but after we had co-education, I had nothing to do with the running of the school.
The principal, Mr. Beh, took over the administration of the school, but I was on the school board.

CARLSON: So there was no conflict between the objectives you had, wanting to have chapel services, and the government not wanting to have them?

BROEKEMA: No. I didn't get in on any of that.

CARLSON: The Synod Reports also said that there was quite a bit of lawlessness and banditry. Missionaries in all the districts except Tong-an were compelled to leave their stations. Why was your area an exception?

BROEKEMA: We were a smaller place. They came into Chang chou. We were called to come down by the consul, so we left. But, the Communists really didn't come into our area right then. But, we had some thievery going on, so we took the opportunity to leave. We lost some things in our house.

CARLSON: Did that happen very often?

BROEKEMA: No, that happened once.

CARLSON: So those were just rare cases.

In 1930-1931 you were on furlough. Where did you go?

BROEKEMA: I was in the Chicago area, Illinois.

CARLSON: Was this a regular, scheduled furlough?

BROEKEMA: Yes.
CARLSON: Did you get any additional training while you were on furlough?

BROEKEMA: Twice I went to Moody Bible Institute for a term--three months. I took a Bible course, and music. I also took storytelling for children.

CARLSON: Are Chinese children much different from American children?

BROEKEMA: Children are the same everywhere. The Chinese are friendly people--very hospitable.

CARLSON: You returned in September of 1931, and helped to establish short-term schools to teach women to read the Bible. What was the short-term school, and how did it work?

BROEKEMA: Years ago they didn't educate girls, but we started girls' schools. Still, lots of them didn't attend. When people became interested in the Gospel, women especially, they couldn't read it. If they can't read, how can they grow in their Christian lives? Earlier, we had a women's school, but those who attended had to board there. They couldn't all leave their homes. In 1931, because of the Depression, we had to cut down on our program. The women's school was the first thing to be cut out because we didn't have too many women, and it was getting rather expensive. It was at that point that I suggested we go to the villages. We called it short-term. We would go to a church for two weeks, staying with the minister's family, and would teach the women who would come. It was all individual
teaching. Some were just learning the primer, and some could already read a little bit. Women who already could read would help teach others. So that way you could help quite a few people in the morning and you could get them on in a hurry.

In the afternoon, we would have a service and then split into crafts and games. In the evening, we would have evangelistic services in the church and everyone was invited for that. It was a special service for the area. We had good attendance—a church full at night. In the morning we might only have a few, but some of them were very promising ones.

Our Amoy language is very phonetic and we used the Romanized Bible to teach them. If they had any ability and applied themselves, we could get them through the primer within two weeks. Then they were over the hump—the hard drudgery was over. From then on, when they came to church every Sunday, the women would always teach some who didn't know how to read during the noon meal. They would stay in the church for their noon meal if they had come any distance. They'd put their rice in a pot and they would all eat together. Thus, we could reach more women. It took a long time, but I think it was the best way to really get them on.

CARLSON: So it was really well accepted...

BROEKEMA: We did that for years after that.

CARLSON: There was no resentment from the men?

BROEKEMA: No, we had men, too, if they wanted to learn, but
often they knew some of the Chinese characters, and they wanted to read characters. But if some wanted to read the Romanized, we'd teach them, too. The men always came to the evening service and they were always welcome in the morning. We mostly had women. We had programs we changed around--home training, child care--it was all based on the home. Whatever we did was to help their Christian family.

CARLSON: I wondered if there was any resentment from the traditionally minded men over women learning English.

BROEKEMA: We didn't teach them English.

CARLSON: I meant teaching them the Bible.

BROEKEMA: No, there was no opposition. Here and there you would have one, but these were minor cases.

CARLSON: You also initiated a semi-annual workers' retreat?

BROEKEMA: It wasn't just I, it was the people in the station. When you're in the station, you work together. It isn't that one accomplishes one thing and one another. We planned the work together.

We thought that the best thing that we as missionaries could do would be to strengthen the spiritual lives of our workers. It was with Dr. Eckerson and Dr. Koeppe that we planned this retreat. Other stations had them, too, but not quite the same. That was twice a year, in the spring and in the fall; from a Monday evening to a Friday morning so they could get home in the day. We used the building of the women's
school (which was no longer used as a women's school). We kept on as a worker the woman who had been in charge of the women's school, and we worked together. We used that building for all of our conferences—for instance the lay leadership training. The semi-annual workers' retreat took in all the pastors, the Bible women of our district, about 40 or 50. We always had outside speakers—we didn't take it all. Some of our people worked together on the program with us, preparing this program. It wasn't just we foreigners, we had our Chinese leaders. We invited people from Kulangsu and Amoy to partake in it. Outside speakers were sort of a drawing card. Those conferences were the highlights of the year—they did something for all of us.

CARLSON: Sort of a rejuvenation, then.

What about the lay leadership you mentioned?

BROEKEMA: That started about that time. Dr. Sung, a great evangelist, went throughout southeast Asia, starting in north China. He was a Foochow man. He had his Ph.D. in the United States, but he wasn't a Christian then. He became a very enthusiastic Christian, though.

CARLSON: Did you ever meet him?

BROEKEMA: Yes. I went to his services. He was a born actor—the Chinese love to act—and he hopped around on that platform! I've never seen anyone like him. He would wear out his interpreter because he spoke Mandarin. I never heard another trans-
He put up a big tent in Amoy that would roof at least a thousand people. More than that, I'm sure because we could have put that many in our church. Our church held a thousand. Everybody came and it went on for a couple of weeks before he moved on. One time, in the summer, he had a Bible-training class for a whole month long. The churches were growing tremendously as a result of his work. He started preaching bands, so every church started preaching bands. They all carried little flags and would go out into the villages and preach. They covered the whole area. Every section, the whole of South Fukien, was touched. Some of these people had just become Christians. Well, you know, it doesn't take long and then young converts are dry. You have to have training and you have to grow. That's how we started our lay leadership training.

We realized we had to do something to nurture them; they had the zeal to go out, but after a while that zeal lessens. We would have lay training for a month and we used our building. Other areas had that, too, but our place started that. We needed quite a faculty to teach them, for besides teaching the Bible, we had other courses, too. It worked out to be a three-year course and while it wasn't grand, it did help those to know a little bit more than what they did know, so they stayed with it for the three years. By that time, the Communists got in, we had to stop. The laymen would go out into other areas.

In 1942, we were celebrating our 100th anniversary of the Amoy mission, and the five years before that, 1937-1942, we hoped to bring the Gospel at least once to every home in South
Fukien. That was a tremendous job--in some areas you could walk all day and never see a soul. It took a long time to reach those areas. So it was in Tong-an in the hill areas. Everyone can't go on a team like that--it would take forever to reach every home. So they had a team, a preaching band from another area, they were very zealous, the Aa-hai, and they offered to come and help us. So we had to hold the fort and they would go out into the hills. Ten of them went into the hill country and worked for a month and then they went on back home again.

I was so thankful that I was on the ground floor of the thing, so to speak. There was one pastor in Amoy. I was on the island with this pastor when he started. He was very zealous and was on the project to reach every home. He said that we had to reach Amoy island, reach all those people, and then we could go farther inland and reach other areas. He mapped it all out and they had several pastors working together. I was with them as they went out on the first trip. It was really thrilling.

CARLSON: What was it like?

BROEKEMA: We first went into the church and had prayer, and then we went out into the villages and we would have Scripture and tracts for people who could read. We would go to a home and speak, and invite them to the church. If you got a good reception, you would sit and talk longer with them, and if there wasn't time then we at least got acquainted with them,
and would ask them to come to the church. This was done throughout the whole neighborhood--everyone was talking about it. Then, we would have a meeting in the church that night. Some developed in different patterns, but it was something along that order. We also had morning prayer meetings--at dawn. The pastor would suggest things for prayers, and then we would kneel down and pray, each in turn.

With Dr. Sung, everyone prayed out loud. At first to me it was just bedlam--you'd have 2,000 people all praying at once. I came home and said to my colleague, "I can't pray like that!" She said, "You'll just have to, and then you will. If you just keep still, then you can't. Just pray out loud and you'll be one of them." So I learned to do it (laughter). The Lord uses different methods in different people. That was one of Sung's methods--everybody prays out loud, and all of the sudden--"Amen!"--and it stopped. Well, there is power in it. You can say what you want, but there is.

One of the pastors said to me one day, "The people who are just getting interested say that they don't want to go to church because they don't know how to pray. This way when everybody prays out loud, they hear somebody else pray and then that's what they want to say, too. That's how new hearers learn to pray." Well, there's benefits in all things.

These lay leadership teams went out, so we tried to train these teams. We used posters a lot in our evangelism in China, and explained them. But some didn't know how to do it, and so we would call in some of our best preachers or pastors who knew how to do it and have them tell others how to use the charts. With lay leadership we'd make the students get up and
do it, too. Sort of teacher training. We had one very good Chinese woman evangelist. She taught them how to do it. Then we criticized them, to see that they did it right.

CARLSON: Why do you think Dr. Sung had such a great appeal? Was it the fact that he was a zealous evangelist, or Chinese...

BROEKEMA: Oh, he was Chinese. Sure. But he was just a man of God, absolutely. The Lord used him and prepared him.

CARLSON: You mentioned before that the Depression had some impact on your activities. The Synod Reports said that some of the Chinese took salary cuts voluntarily. Did you feel that the examples you were setting as missionaries and as Christians were the inspiration for this kind of action among the Chinese co-workers?

BROEKEMA: Well, I suppose it would be. We were working together. The Koepp family stayed eight years. At that time, we had seven year terms and they stayed over a year. A couple of families did that. Otherwise they were afraid that they wouldn't get back. That was a hardship on the family.

CARLSON: When Amoy fell to the Japanese in 1938, you went on furlough?

BROEKEMA: Yes, I had been there seven years, and it was time. We were just having one of those lay leadership training sessions.

CARLSON: So you were away from Tong-an?
BROEKEMA: I was in Tong-an. It was right at our center where we lived. At our compound we had the hospital, the ordained missionary residence, the single ladies' residence, the junior high, and the conference building.

This pastor that I had been with when he started his program of evangelism in Amoy island was one of the teachers at this training conference. We had to use these pastors in our programs. We didn't have a set staff but we picked out people who could come for two weeks and teach it. He taught them how to use posters and he taught the Bible. His church on Amoy island was just 15 miles from this place to Tong-an city. That's how near we were to the Japanese all during the war. He was up there and all his congregation started to come up to us in Tong-an because the Japanese were coming in and taking over. Well, they fled upcountry.

My furlough was approaching and they said that if I was going to go, that I'd better go now as long as there was a way to get down. So I had to leave. Dr. Koeppe wasn't well—he had pernicious anemia—and he had to have his medicine. He was up in Tong-an for this training school. He said, "I'm no good to you here. I'm a liability not an asset. I've got to get out."

CARLSON: What kind of reports were you getting from the Chinese who were coming from Amoy? What did they have to say about the Japanese?

BROEKEMA: Oh, there were all kinds. Some weren't too bad,
but they just didn't want to be under the Japanese, so they came across as long as they could get across. All these refugees began to come in. We left, but before we left, the church began to settle a lot of them down in places. Then we had to close our training school and disband it.

CARLSON: This is when the story about the litter bearers comes in?

BROEKEMA: Yes, when we were leaving. We gathered our things to leave in a hurry, to get away while there was still a boat. The consul had to come and get us out. We had a little launch and we came out right across the bay. We had to come down the coast. We couldn't walk that long distance. We had to have a sedan chair. People who are chair coolies mostly are opium-smoking people. If they don't get their opium, then they can't go on. They just have to stop and take so much opium to give them the strength to go on. We told them to come at a certain hour of night -- about 3:00 in the morning -- because we thought we could make it before the tide went out. The tide comes in, but it's only in a short time. Wow! You have to be there for the tide waits for no man. We learnt that early. The chairbearers stopped so often and we knew it was getting later, and we thought we never were going to make it. We tried to prod them on and finally we got to our place. We were too late. The boat didn't wait for us. They had started to go out. The people were yelling and they said, "Go on farther down, go on farther down. A little ways down and then you'll catch the
boat there." We went a little farther down and finally they stopped us. They carried us on their backs and got us to the boat. We had to go through the water because there was still water there. They got us on the boat and that took us down to Amoy.

CARLSON: You also started youth conferences. What were they?

BROEKEMA: That was during the war. I don't remember exactly when we started them. You see, it all mushroomed, grew, as a result of Sung Phok-su. The young people became converted and eager to be a part of everything. We had been to youth conferences at home, and we thought we really ought to do something like that for them. You see these opportunities and you just go ahead and plunge in. That's what we did with our youth conferences.

We had them in one's area. Each area was a little bigger than a county or something like that. We'd have them for about a week in an area. Well, of course, it was nothing like the youth conferences here! When I was home on furlough I would say, "Yeah, you go and you have a nice swimming pool and all we have is a church." We didn't have any conference ground. Often it would be in a school during vacation time. We would have play and recreation, and we tried to make it a well-rounded program, but it wasn't anything like what you have here because we didn't have the facilities. But we did have some good times and we were able to carry on some fine conferences and helped the young people in their evangelistic efforts. During the Japanese War, the roads were all destroyed
making travel very difficult. Gradually the missionaries were fewer in number. Finally, there were Dr. and Mrs. De Pree in Eng-hok near Leng-na. The Seminary had been evacuated to Eng-hok. Dr. Eckerson and I were in Tong-an. He wasn't well or able to leave the station. Mr. Angus took the whole area. In the summertime, we would hold youth conferences in different places in order to have something for the youth. We tried to keep up our other conferences, but sometimes we didn't keep all of them. So he walked from place to place just keeping up the morale of the people. In the summertime, we did this youth work together and then Christmas he would come and spend with me. That's all we had but we kept going. When the war ended, Dr. Angus was with me and came down with typhoid. We had a conference planned for up in this area, Choan-Chiu. The English Presbyterians invited us up there, but we couldn't go because he was sick.

CARLSON: You mentioned in your vita that you took in US Army personnel during the war.

BROEKEMA: Yes, they would walk to Tong-an along the coast and then up to Choan-Chiu, another day's journey away. That was where the English Presbyterian compound was, and they could stay there on their journey along the coast.

This was special duty for the soldiers. It was especially dangerous and they were getting special pay. Dr. Eckerson had told the authorities in the city that the soldiers, if they wanted, could stay with us in our ordained mission house which was vacant. The authorities would have an inn for them to stay
in, but Chinese inns aren't very nice places, you know. So, in, I kept the ordained mission house as a hostel for them. Usually, there was only one person, sometimes two. So the officials always told them that if they wanted to stay with foreigners, go ahead. Well, of course, they would rather stay with a foreigner than in a Chinese inn. They didn't come every week. Sometimes it was every two, three or four weeks. But whenever they would pass through, we'd have them in.

It was nice for us to see somebody from home and it was pleasant for them, too. They generally would come on a Saturday night and sometimes they stayed over Sunday. They didn't have to travel on Sunday, but some of them didn't care whether it was Sunday or not. It didn't make any difference to them, so some of them would go on.

I had some interesting ones! One of them thought we were the craziest fools on earth.

CARLSON: Why?

BROEKEMA: "You're staying here!? What are you doing here? This is dangerous territory ...." and all that. We were only fifteen miles away from the Japanese and he thought we were just cuckoo, that's all. Well, maybe we were in their sight.

One time I had a Lutheran boy-- a young fellow -- and he was so homesick. I told him I was entertaining Chinese guests who didn't talk English that night. He said, "That's all right." We were then eating mostly Chinese food and we were living at the conference center because they had Chinese stoves. It was
better than my house because I was saving oil, so we just used the Chinese facilities. Then I had my living room in my own home. So, we had dinner at the conference center and then returned. I asked him to come upstairs to my living room; my study was downstairs. He just stood there and he looked. I said, "Won't you sit down." "Gosh!" he says, "I never thought I'd see an American woman in China, and then to see a bit of America here in your home!" Oh! he just couldn't get over it. He just couldn't get over it. He stayed over Sunday and went to church. I couldn't sit with him because the men are on one side and the women are on the other side. "That's all right," he says. In the afternoon, after dinner, he came over to talk a while. He really was lonesome. He took out all his pictures, showed me his girl, and we just talked. He was from New Jersey -- a loveable chap. He had a box of candy. Chocolates, lifesavers, gum and all that that I hadn't seen for years. He was going to leave it with me. I said, "Don't be foolish, you'll want this on the way." "Oh, no I won't," he says, "I get some every week." Oh! I thought, every week and I hadn't seen any for years.

So, it really was fun. Another time we had a colonel in the Air Force who was such a fine man. Mr. Angus was there with me then. He said he'd be back in a few weeks. That was just before Christmas so we decided to move our Christmas celebration up and celebrate with him. He was so touched. So you see, you have so many nice things like that there. Just different.

CARLSON: The men and the women were on different sides of the
church? Did that ever change?

BROEKEMA: Yes, not all completely but it was changing when we left. Some of the younger groups were changing it. They would sit together, but some of the older ones wouldn't think of doing that. When we first went to China, there was one church that had a screen between the men's side and the women's side.

CARLSON: What was the local reaction to your having servicemen? Were they curious, excited?

BROEKEMA: Oh, no. I tell you though, the G.I.'s did a marvelous thing with the kids. They loved kids wherever they were. At one station, we hadn't been there for a long time, but when we got there, the G.I.'s had been there and you knew it. There were the kids, little kids -- what did they say -- "O.K.!

(laughter) They hadn't seen foreigners for two or three years when we came so we knew that the G.I.'s had been there. The American G.I.'s love children wherever they are and the Chinese are very hospitable.

CARLSON: Your furlough came again in 1946-48 and you again returned to the United States?

BROEKEMA: Yes.

CARLSON: Then you went back and were loaned to the English Presbyterian with a Mrs. Jett. You helped her with her short-term school?

BROEKEMA: No, just the general work. We didn't have a short-
term school. We made a trip to Toa-chhan one week before Easter. It took us three days to get there. We were there on Easter Sunday. On Monday morning, just about an hour's ride in a sedan chair from there, my sedan chair broke and I fell, breaking my wrist. It was ten days before I had it set.

CARLSON: After you finished your work with her, you went back to Tong-an and you were going to move to Chang chou?

BROEKEMA: Yes. The Communists were coming. I went to a doctor in Amoy and the Communists were getting nearer. They had already left Shanghai and were coming down the coast. The mission said it was crazy for me to return to Eng-chhun. Mrs. Jett would be leaving soon perhaps. She packed up my things and sent them to Tong-an. The plan was that I should either go to Chang chou or to Leng-na, but then I couldn't get out because the Communists wouldn't let us move. They had come in while I was in Tong-an and they said I'd just better stay there. They wouldn't let anyone move. It was a blessing that I was there because I had always been there and everybody knew me. Miss Nienhuis, who was with me, was just new there. She had always been in Amoy. The people didn't know her, but of course the church people trusted her, although you never could tell in times like that what somebody would do. But we were well taken care of.

CARLSON: After World War II, there was severe inflation in China. It has been said that the Chinese were too involved in the problems of existence to worry about their spiritual needs. Did you feel that this was the reaction?
BROEKEMA: I don't remember anything like that. Maybe some areas more than others, but there was plenty of work to do. The inflation! Oh, my! I had millions of paper dollars. I had to pay some of the workers and Dr. De Pree would send me a check for the district that I would pick up at the Post Office. I would come home with, not a suitcase, but a half-suitcase size bag of money—all paper. I would give it out to those who were dependent on me for their salaries. When I got mine, I would very quickly buy rice. We never kept currency because it deteriorated all the time.

CARLSON: You listed on your vita sheet some of the difficulties you encountered and you mentioned a minute ago that you were under house arrest. That you couldn't move. Exactly what could and couldn't you do?

BROEKEMA: (Broekema drawing a map of the compound) This is the ordained missionary's house. Over here is the hospital and here was the doctor's house. When the Communists came in they took over the "Koeppe" house. We had a Chinese doctor living in the house formerly occupied by the mission doctor. Here's the tennis court, and here is our house. Here is the junior high and here was our conference building. This is the main road, and then there was a road here in front of the hospital. This was all open. Right here is a temple. Right along here was a ravine. They had guards here on the tennis court all the time. Not guarding us, but guarding what they had in this house (the Koeppe's) They had the "up and ups" in this house -- the heads of the departments of
the military and the government. They were in this big house, the Koeppe house. We couldn't go out for any distance, but we did go out up the road here. The outskirts of town is all a fertile valley, and we would go out for a walk up the road, but that's all we could do.

![Map diagram]

Fig. 2. Map based upon Miss Broekema's sketch of the compound and a photograph given to the Project.

CARLSON: No guards would follow you?

BROEKEMA: No, they didn't care. One time, we had a hard time getting back in, because while we were gone they changed the guards and they wouldn't let us in. We couldn't talk because they were from up North and they spoke Mandarin. The servants had the hardest time. Finally, the servants got
someone who could speak Mandarin and could explain to them who we were. They let us in, but they certainly had been adamant. That was the only time that we had any trouble like that but you never knew what they were going to do.

One day we had an experience. As you entered our house, there was a stairway that went right upstairs. The South Chinese are small people, but the people from North China are much larger people and here a big burley fellow come into the door. I saw him trying to come in. They never wait and knock. They just barge in. So I opened the door, and he just charged in past me and went right up the stairs. He had one of these masks on -- did you ever see one of those in the Orient? Well, he had a black one, not a white one. He was a burly fellow, a big fellow. I thought, "Oh, stars!" And he up the stairs and I after him. I said to Miss Nienhuis, "You stay down here. I'll go up." I got upstairs and I thought, "Say, I'm not going to get in a room with him." (laughter) Our house was such that you could go from one room to the next, and I could stand in the hall and see where he was going; what he was doing. I thought, "I'll just stay right here." He went through all the rooms and went down. Never said a word and then went out. And I said, "Well, Jean, I guess we'll soon get our walking papers, or will they come and say that two women don't need this big house." Two rooms were empty because this other girl had gone home. We were alone, so we didn't use everything. But, the Lord protected us, and again the guardian angel took care of us, and we never heard anything more of it. But you never knew what they were going to do.
I had a low window in front of my study right off the porch and I had a table with crossword puzzles set up in such a way that I could do them from any corner in a short time. The guard would sit on the other side and watch me do it -- one of the soldiers. They were friendly to us in a way -- they didn't bother us. They really didn't bother us. They were looking at us all the time through the window, watching us eat and everything else, but what can you do? Just accept it.

CARLSON: How did they treat your servants?

BROEKEMA: All right. They didn't bother them. They just ignored us. They played tennis all the time. The first thing you would hear in the morning was the "click," "click," "click" walking across the tennis court. The last thing at night you would hear them "click" their guns. They were guarding their men; they weren't guarding us. It was just tense, that's all. You never knew what they were going to do.

A couple of times they came and, oh! The tennis court was packed. They brought them in from the streets. The people came in for a meeting. Some were soldiers and we thought, "Oh! what's going to happen here now?" They put up a platform. Because we had heard previously about these accusations, we thought they were going to set up somebody there. Maybe us. Maybe they were going to accuse us! But no, they put on a movie. It was all propaganda, the whole thing all the way through. We couldn't understand it, but we could see the pictures. We didn't let them know we were watching it, but we did. Every once in a while they'd have one of those on
the tennis courts. It was a big place for them to use. Then they would sort of have a sing. Oh! the Communists, they sang like everything. They got all their propaganda across through this, through singing. Believe me they did.

One time.... You see we had a garden and there was a wall next to it just outside the women's school. We came home one day and that wall was knocked down. So we wondered, "Now what are they going to do?" We were right open to everybody, you see. I said, "The next thing they are going to drive in here or something." And sure enough, just about late afternoon in came a truck, sort of like a van. It drove over our compound and stopped on the tennis court. I looked to see who was getting out, and I said to my colleague, "Say, Jean, look who's here -- Russians."

CARLSON: Oh, really? How did you know they were Russians?

BROEKEMA: You could see them. You could tell that they weren't Chinese! (laughter) You know they always kept saying that this was an agrarian movement. Baloney. It was never an agrarian movement. This was Russian dominated from the very beginning. This was steered by Russia, I'm telling you.

CARLSON: Did you ever get to go into town when it was occupied?

BROEKEMA: Oh, yes. I had to go in at times to the Post Office.

CARLSON: What kind of things were going on in town?

BROEKEMA: I never noticed anybody. It got so that it was hard. We could hear from our servants, through the grapevine we'd
know about things, so that when we went on the street, I'd take the least traveled road. If I saw anybody coming that I knew, I would turn my head and put my head down so they wouldn't have to recognize me, because they were getting criticized. They were saying awful things about us and it was hard for our Christians. We went to church until near the end, but not the last month or two. The pastor said, "We think it's best that you don't go to church anymore."

They couldn't believe it. When we decided to stay, we said, "We will stay, we won't run. We'll stay with the church as long as we can be of service, but when the time comes that we can't be of service and help you, then we'll have to go home." "Oh!" they said, "You won't have to go home, you can stay." Well, we weren't sure of that, but we'd stay as long as we could be of service. But when they locked us up in the house, we couldn't do anything. First they said, "Oh, just carry on as you do. We didn't come to chase you out. You just carry on." We carried on our work as best we could. We were curtailed here and there. The Communists spread it around that they didn't come to kill the Christians. "We know the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. We aren't going to kill you, we're going to freeze you out." And that's just what they did. This and that was curtailed. You couldn't have this meeting. You couldn't have that meeting. One day they called me up to the office and they said, "Now, you can't go out to visit any of these churches in the villages. You have to get a permit from the security police." Well, when I asked for a permit, they wouldn't give me one, and that's the way they did it.
CARLSON: How long did the Russians stay?

BROEKEMA: They just stayed there for a night or two because they had a big meeting. The air force, the infantry and all the different departments of the army were there.

CARLSON: Was this in 1950?

BROEKEMA: We left in 1951, so it must have been in early 1951. They wore heavy winter coats. I don't know just when but I believe it was in February, 1951.

CARLSON: Did your Chinese co-workers carry on with the work even though you weren't allowed to participate in it?

BROEKEMA: No, those things all had to stop. After awhile they closed some of the churches.

CARLSON: You brought out a picture of people from Hong Kong earlier. Do you hear from people in Hong Kong very often, or from people you used to know in China?

BROEKEMA: We can't ever hear from anybody in China. We never wrote to them. We would just incriminate them. The woman who worked with me, she got out later and she's in Singapore. But their news is getting less and less.

CARLSON: So you never hear anything from the people you worked with, if Christians are still continuing?

BROEKEMA: We know that all churches are closed in China. There is only one in Shanghai and Peking and that's all for propaganda. There was a new church building in Tong-an. It was
never dedicated. We were waiting for a special time to dedicate it but before we left, it was taken over as a warehouse. The best buildings in a town or city were churches. We had two big churches in Kuling that could seat a thousand people, and those are used as storehouses.

CARLSON: How did you get out?

BROEKEMA: They finally let us go. That took a long time, because we applied in December of 1950. The Hills were with us, too, and they were a young family, so we thought they should get out first. We were going to wait until they were gone before we applied. They left on Christmas. We thought they were never going to get out. We waited and waited so long. You have to wait until they give you a permit to go. Finally, we thought we'd just better apply, so just before they left, we applied.

They left at Christmas and we didn't get out of China until the 26th of April. It took us four months. In that time, they just tried to make it mean for you. They tried to find something on you. As I said before, our Chinese friends were very loyal to us. Miss Nienhuis had never been in that station before. Before us were the Esthers, but they had gone home before the Communists got in because of health reasons. He was working in the villages and they had quite a bit of public address equipment and other things. But we didn't know where things were because I had just come back, and Miss Nienhuis was new there. There was other equipment at the hospital and that the Hills had, that the Communists
wanted. Well, we didn't know anything about this, but they were trying their best to get something on us. I was in church work. The pastor wouldn't say anything about me, the local people weren't going to say anything. They couldn't do anything. They couldn't get anything on me.

If you are in an institution like a school, there's always some crackpot that will say something. Well, they couldn't do that to me because I wasn't connected with the school. Miss Nienhuis was in the hospital, so they tried at the hospital. They tried the doctor but he wouldn't say anything against her. So then, they accused her of stealing from the hospital. They tried in every way and couldn't get anything.

So then, one day down at the hospital .... We had an outdoor area. One of the missionaries had built little stone step seats in front of the hospital, a small park-like area. We formerly had evangelistic meetings there at night. We hadn't seen our people, or talked to our pastors or anybody all that time. We hadn't been going to church so we hadn't talked to them for at least two months. All of a sudden, we saw them come to our house. And I said, "What are they going to do, have an accusation meeting now? Are they getting all our workers together and trying to make them accuse us of something?" They didn't come in. They stood outside. Pretty soon, an official came in and told us to go down to the hospital -- that they would have a meeting at the hospital. So we went down to the hospital for this meeting. We sat on those stone steps with a lot of people around. And you know, if they want
to know about a certain thing, they will first go all around, all around, all around, round and round and round, and finally they will come to the point. I thought, what in the world are they getting after; what in the world do they want? It took them forever and ever and ever. Then, finally one of the pastors said, "Well, we think we know what you are after, and if you'll dismiss the rest of these folks--they had people from the village and all over--maybe we can get it accomplished if a few of us talk together to get what you want. Then we'll meet together tomorrow."

So, they said "O.K." Well we couldn't get ahold of our people; we couldn't get near them to ask them to ask them anything, so we went home. Then they came back the next afternoon. They came to our house--just these two pastors and the government people. They had told us through our servants what it was about. They wanted to know where all the equipment was that the Hills had left. We didn't even know they had some of that stuff. The doctors and pastors said they knew. So we said, "Well, we just have to play innocent, because we are. We just don't know." One pastor knew where some of the stuff was; they had sold it to somebody. But you see, the government people already knew where it was. They just wanted us to say it. So this pastor said, "I think if you went to so-and-so's place they might be able to help you." He knew this one man had bought some of the things. But they didn't want to incriminate anybody else either, but they were doing the best to help us get out. They wouldn't let us go.
Well, finally the Communists asked about the mission books. The people at Changchow had already gone. We were the last ones to leave Fukien except Dr. Oltmann who was up in Leng-na. All the rest of the mission had gone six weeks ago. They went the first of March. When they left, and they were leaving us two women alone, they were perturbed and sorry. But we were so thankful then that Mr. Koepppe had gone because he was the mission treasurer. Miss Nienhuis was able to say that the mission treasurer had already gone home and that she knew nothing. We had gotten rid of all our notes. We tore up everything; we burned all our books. There wasn't anything left to incriminate our people. We were thankful then that the Koeppes had gone. Well, they couldn't get around that.

Then they started saying something about the medicines in the hospital. They were trying their hardest to get something but they couldn't. Our people were very loyal to us. So finally, they said "O.K." We said, "Well, now can we go home?" And they said, "We'll let you know." They didn't let us know until just two hours before we left, that we were going that day.

When they came in the morning, we each had a trunk. All we took was our bedding because every night and every morning they examined your stuff. If you had anything breakable that they might like, they'd take it out. Well how can you pack anything breakable and get it down to Hong Kong after all these days of travel, every night opening your stuff. You just couldn't take anything, so
we just walked out of our house with everything in it except our bedding and our clothing. They said they would come in the morning and examine our things. Well they unpack your suitcase and your trunk and they take everything out. If they see something that they liked, that has to be taken to the security police so they could "study" it. You know that's goodbye. I had a beautiful bedspread that had been given to me and there was a young fellow there that thought that would be pretty nice for his bride. So I had to say "goodbye" to that. That's the only thing I'm so mad he got. (laughs)

Now, Miss Nienhuis, he accused her of taking all her sheets from the hospital. She said, "You go to the hospital and you will see that there are no sheets on their beds. They don't use sheets." The Chinese didn't like sheets, so we just used straw mats. Down in the city they used sheets but not up in the country. He insisted, "No, no. You took these from the hospital." Till the very last they were determined to find something on her. I don't know what they took out of her stuff, but they took some things. You always had to have some loophole, though, for them to take something. They had to save face. But anyway, we were just so thankful that they would let us go. Then they would seal the lock of your trunk with a very thin piece of Chinese paper and woe be to you if that's broken before you get to the next station.

So, then we went by bus over to Chang-chou, a big city where the rest of our people had lived. We spent the night in a big inn. When you get there, they don't open your trunks then, they wait until 11:00 or 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning,
and then they'll come and want to examine your things.

CARLSON: So they made it almost as difficult as they could the whole trip down?

BROEKEMA: Oh yes, absolutely. They took everything out and looked at it. If they wanted something, they'd take it. If they didn't, well all right. Then they'd seal it. Then they'd come in the morning before you would leave and do the same thing over again. They could make it just as inconvenient as possible.

Then they took us down to a place around in here somewhere and got the boat. Here's Chhiu-paw. We went down from Chang chou down this way to Ko'-'tin -- way down here by bus. We spent the night in a big warehouse where they stored everything before shipping it out. We went out escorted by one of the Chinese travel men. That was arranged by Dr. Koeppe. Dr. Koeppe would pay him in Hong Kong when we got out, so we didn't have to take any money or anything like that. We got to this warehouse and there were just boards. We rested on the boards and they served us food. We carried some food with us, but we were able to buy a little food there. That night, it wasn't very late when they came to examine everything .... (continued in interview III)
INTERVIEW III

CARLSON: Last time we had discussed your final evacuation from China and you had gotten to the point where you were spending the night at a warehouse on the coast. Could you continue the story of your evacuation from there?

BROEKEMA: Sure, I'll tell you. Ko'-tin was the name of the place. That's a little place that's right on the coast near Chiu-pho. We were to spend the night there in the warehouse and early in the morning when the tide comes in, the boatman would take us out. He would take us to Swatow. We were just settled in there, in the evening, and our guide had put us into the warehouse. Then the security people came in to examine our things. They went through everything and saw it all and if it was O.K. Then early evening a group, maybe six or seven, teenagers, came in and they said, "We're the local militia. We're on guard tonight, so we've come to examine your things." We told them that the security men had already examined everything. They said, "That's all right, but we are the local militia and we're going to see it." So we thought, "No use saying anything, all right, go ahead and look." We had been told when we left Tong-an by the man who took us out to Hong Kong, the travel agent, "Never take anything out of your suitcase. Let them look over it as they want to. Just open up your suitcase and let them do what they want, but don't take it out for them." So we
did as we had been told.

VANDER HAAR: Why did he say that?

BROEKEMA: I don't know. This was the rule...I don't know why. We had followed that procedure with our security men. So we didn't take anything out to show it to these kids. And they thought we weren't happy with them. But we didn't know that. We said, "There it is, look at it." So finally they did take things out of the suitcases. And they pulled our things out. What did they know about foreign ladies' clothing? They were having a wonderful time. Finally they came to our food basket. And they said, "What's this?" We had to take food along to eat. We said, "Oh, that's peanut butter." And I said, "Have some." "No," they said, "we wouldn't eat your stuff." Then they said, "What's this?" I said, "Well, this is medicine we carry with us." "What's good that for?" I said, "Well, that's if you have a headache." "What's this?" he said. "That's if you have a stomach-ache," I said. "Wouldn't take your medicine," he said. He was just trying to be really nasty. They went through a lot of things like that, and finally, after a while, they left. I thought, "Well, goodness gracious that's over now. Let's hope that's the end." About an hour later, we were already in bed, and I heard a bang on the front door. We were just above the door. Our bed was just boards with a mat on it. We looked out the window, and I said, "Oh, Jean, they're back!" It didn't take long and they were upstairs and they were stomping around. Our travel man told us to open the door and so we let them in. And they came in and said, "You despised us. We
came here to see your things and you weren't happy at all. You despised us. Now we're taking you over to the local security people, and you're coming with us." I thought, "We're not leaving this place. He said, "Yes you are." We said, "What did we do?" "You just despised us," they said. You see, we hadn't shown them anything, but we were doing as we had been told to do. Then one of the smaller teenagers got up on a chair and stood up. Miss Nienhuis is taller than I am. She was a large woman. And he stood up there and said, "See, I'm bigger than you are." Just fresh kids you see. And then he spit on his hands and he wiped them on her mouth and she took her handkerchief to wipe her mouth. He took it and threw it on the floor and stamped on it. I thought, "Well, we just have to be really careful." I didn't know what to do. But you just didn't know what to expect next from youngsters like that. You see, officials put authority into their hands when they weren't able to cope with it.

CARLSON: The Communists had?

BROEKEMA: Yes, sure. Then they said to her, "You're a nurse, huh?" We wondered how they knew all these things about us. They got it from the security people. They said, "You're a nurse, huh. Well, you're better than she is. But I suppose you take care of the rich and let the poor die." We didn't say anything. I just let them go on from one thing to another. Then one would say something, then another would say something. They kept that up. Then after a while they would walk to the other side of the room, quite a little ways from us, in a little hud-
I thought, "Now what." Then one of them came over toward me and he said, "Hey, you preach don't you?" I didn't say anything. He said, "You tell people that when they die they go to Heaven. Well, you can go right now." And he took his gun and put it to my head. It was a big long one and he held it to my head. I didn't say anything. "Well you do," he said, "you do want to go to Heaven, don't you? You can go right now." Pretty soon he stopped. Then they went back a ways and talked together, then another one came up to me and tried the same thing on me. Then our travel man came in and he called them off.

VANDER HAAR: Was your travel man a Communist, then?

BROEKEMA: No. He talked to them and he talked to us. We tried to explain we weren't rude to them but we just didn't understand. We tried to apologize. So I said to him, "You do something. You write a letter or something." We talked it over—what we could do; what they could do. So he went off with them and tried to talk to them. "Oh, no," they said, "they've got to come with us." They were determined. They had said that many times. Well, they did this harassing for over half an hour. Finally the travel man tried to say, "Come on, I'll write an apology for them." It took a little longer but finally he convinced them to let us go. So he wrote an apology and told us to apologize to them. So we tried to use our polite Chinese in saying "I'm sorry." They didn't understand us. They said, "We don't understand that language." So then we had to say, "I made a mistake." (laughter) So they went away. Then he
took this written apology over to the security police and talked about it. That was the end of it.

CARLSON: Then what happened? Did you take a boat from where you were down to Hong Kong?

BROEKEMA: No, down to Swatow. Swatow was the last city... that's the next province, Canton Province. We didn't go that night or all the next day. We had to spend an extra day there because we didn't have enough passengers. Then we were afraid. I said, "Stay here another night!" Our travel man said, "I guarantee you that nothing will happen." I said, "How can you guarantee that?" He said, "I'm sure nothing will happen. They realize that those kids went too far." But it was done. So we spent another night there and then we left. We got in at night there and then we left. We got in at night, I think, to Swatow. There you had to spend the night. The next day you went to Hong Kong. At Swatow we got on a British ship. We got on about midnight, I guess. Then, you could breathe a sigh of relief. You were on a British ship and it was just good-bye, good-bye.

VANDER HAAR: You were leaving an awful lot of people behind at the same time. How was it for the Chinese church members you were leaving?

BROEKEMA: Oh, we didn't see them at all. Of course we wouldn't dare. We hadn't been going to church since the 25th of February. We had told them the time would come when we would be a liability and not an asset, and that they would have to tell
us when to stop coming to church, because we knew the pressure was getting worse and worse. Oh, they thought that would never come. And we said, "Yes, it will come, and you let us know."

So just before that, it was right after the first of the year, the beginning of January or February, they had a big meeting up at Foochow. That's the capital of Fukien. The consistory people were supposed to go to that for brainwashing. Our one pastor didn't go, but the other one in the city went. When he came back it was around the 25th of February. Then the pastors sent word to us through the servants, "Don't come to church any more. You'd better not. It would be better if you didn't come any more." They were putting pressure on them, you see. We were number one enemy being Americans, and they were friends of ours. All that time there, for months, if we went down the street, and we didn't go unless we really had to, going to the security police and so on trying to find out when we could get out, if we saw any people coming that we knew, we turned our heads the other way so they wouldn't have to recognize us, and we wouldn't have to recognize them. Sometimes it was very embarrassing. Children on the road, you know, the little kids all knew us, and then they'd call to us and say "Good morning" to us, and the mother would be washing by the stream and she kept on washing and didn't look at us. It was quite embarrassing for us at times, because we didn't want to embarrass them. It was hard for them, too.

I found a paper the other day, a list of important events during the last two months in China.
VANDER HAAR: Would it be too repetitive to go through that now, Greg?

CARLSON: I don't think so. I think it would be worthwhile to have her go through the list of dates and have her explain just what she did.

BROEKEMA: All right. I don't know why I started on the 18th of January. I have put on here: "We made an inventory." They came to us ... I guess that was it ... we thought, "This is the beginning." We hadn't had anything really bothersome until about then. We thought, "The pressure is being put on us now." They told us to make an inventory of everything we had in our house. Everything in your possession, even to the last pin -- a straight pin or anything. Every single tack. Everything. That was a terrific thing to do, but we did it. It took days and days. We made this inventory and then it had to be written in Chinese, so we had to get somebody to write some of this for us. It was in Chinese character so we didn't dare. Then days, oh, weeks afterwards, they came and said, "Never mind." That was all a mistake, I guess. But you see what they put you through anyway just to harass you.

Then we wrote in for permission, asking them... telling them ... how we wanted to travel out. You had to plan your travel, how you wanted to go. From Tong-an it would be overland. If you wanted to go by boat, that would be another way, but by then there wasn't any chance to do that. The only thing left was to go overland. Some went overland like we did to Swatow. Then from Swatow it's by ship, if you can get a ship, or you go
overland again to Canton. That's in territory we don't know, we don't know the people, we don't know the language. We hoped not to do that. Anyhow, I don't know how we made the road out. You have to say where you are going to go and where you are going to stop every night. You have to know it that well, the travel agent has to help you with this. Then you have to get there within that time. If you don't, then it's all void; it's no good anymore. You have to get there within that stated time, regardless of the weather or what not. That's what you have to cope with. This isn't like traveling on a bus here and knowing you're going to get there at that time and date.

VANDER HAAR: At the same time did you have to write something about how you felt about the government?

BROEKEMA: Oh, no. We didn't have to say anything. You just had to ask for your travel and how you were going to get out. Then, on the 24th of January, one of our...I would say our very greatest leaders we had in south China, a Mr. Sim, was put in prison. He was up in Leng-na. Before that he and his wife had been down in Amoy and he was the principal of the Anglo-Chinese College. After the Japanese War...he went through the difficulties with the Japanese. Then when that was over and the missionaries came back, the Mission asked him if he would go to Leng-na, because that was a promising place and they really needed building up. So he and his wife and family met the challenge and we all rejoiced. They were some of the most highly educated people in our area. To go way upcountry into the hills showed their dedication. We had to have somebody take
over that school. So they agreed to go and we were so thank-
ful for their dedication that they went. He had said to us
years ago, before this, he said, "China's worst enemy isn't
Japan, it's the Communists." That was years before people ever
thought of Communists coming in. He was right. It wasn't
Japan, it was the Communists.

CARLSON: Do you remember why he was imprisoned? The charges?

BROEKEMA: He wouldn't do what they wanted him to do. You see,
he was a leader and a man like that, well, they wanted him to
come in and take over. He wouldn't join the party; he wouldn't
become a leader. He wouldn't join them, so they put him in pri-
son. Then five days later they put his wife in prison. He died
in prison after years and years. I don't know how long he...it
was after I came home that he died. I don't know just when.
But she got out.

VANDER HAAR: How did you hear about this?

BROEKEMA: We heard through his family. You see, his brother-
in-law is Wesley Shao, who is a graduate of Western Seminary
here. He is now in the Philippines. He is head of the big
Chinese Church in the Philippines. That's his brother-in-law,
his wife's brother. They would send out word, to Manila, to
the Philippines, and people in Hong Kong. That's the only way
we heard. We never wrote to any of our people. We didn't
want to incriminate them. But whatever word they got, these
people in Hong Kong, they would write us. That's the only way
we could hear.
VANDER HAAR: So then his wife got out then?

BROEKEMA: Not then, no. She, too, was in a long time. She has only recently gotten out. It's only God's mercy that she got out. It's only His strength that kept her. This woman was a very frail person. Always sickly and very...oh so thin. We thought she could never stand life in prison. It's just marvelous what the body could stand. She is now out. I think it's just two years ago now that she got out. We thought she'd die there, too. But they let her out. Why? You never know why. You can never tell why. Maybe they didn't want two of that family to die in prison. I don't know. Anyway she's out.

VANDER HAAR: Is she still living in mainland China?

BROEKEMA: Yes, she's living in Leng-na. She has children living there. Then I have February 9th; we were told to hand over the women's school building, the building we were using for conferences. The woman who was living there had to get out, so she had to go to the church and live. Then they took over that building. So, we were right in with them, I tell you! There wasn't any place left--just one house where we were. They were here and there and all around. Then, on the 13th of February, they had a big...I have down here "a pow-wow." I suppose I didn't know what to call it. I didn't want to make this...if anybody should get a hold of this...too explanatory. I suppose that's the reason. All of a sudden on our tennis court, there was a tennis court between the two houses, they appeared. One after another, the soldiers, these Communist soldiers on the
tennis courts. I thought, "What are they going to do?" They put up a big platform. The first thing you thought was, "This is going to be an accusation." They had these all over, accusing people. I said, "Do you suppose this is the end for us tonight?" You just didn't know what was going to happen. But it wasn't. They were all young, these cadets, and they just had a good time singing. The Communists did an awful lot through music. They sang the peppiest songs! (laughter) It's all propaganda. They went all through this for a couple of hours, and then they went away. Well, that relieved us. We had something to watch for a while. Anyway, we knew that was all there was to it.

We had been having a prayer meeting with some of our people—that was the last time we had our prayer meeting because we decided it really wasn't wise for us to meet together, so we just stayed at home. The next day, one of the elders of our church was executed. He was shot. He was an elderly man who had formerly been the principal of the boys' school. Later on, he left the school and went into business, and was a very successful businessman, and he was a leader in the community. He had been a village elder when the Communists came in. He was opposed to them. I'll never forget...he was the chairman of our junior high school. I wasn't in school work, but I was always on the Board. The principal called a meeting of the Board as soon as the Communists came in, right the next day. He sent word: "I'll come, but I'll not come to the missionary's house. If you have it at the church, I'll come." It was not wise to be close to us. Before that, we'd always had the Board meeting at our home. When he came into that meeting, he sat there.
There were just a few of us waiting for the others to come. He said, "This is China's darkest hour. I've been through the revolution, I've been through a lot of things in China, but this is the worst. This is China's darkest hour. This is the worst." Whatever we wanted to do, any plans we suggested, he said, "No use thinking about things, just prepare your hearts. This is China's darkest hour. Prepare your hearts." I don't know how long it was after that, he was put in prison. I guess it was shortly after the first of the year that he was put in prison. They wanted him to be a village elder and just as they came in, he gave everything away to his son. His son was in the business with him. He said, "I'm an old man and I can't take care of the business any more." Everything he had been in, he handed over to somebody else. So they wanted him to be a village elder. Of course, his word would go. If he would say something in the village, to do this and this, they'd do it because they had great respect for him. They knew they were getting the right man to get him, but he wasn't going to go along with them. He wouldn't become a Communist, so he said, "No."

VANDER HAAR: Had he been a village elder before?

BROEKEMA: Yes, before the Communists came in he had been a village elder. He had been in the village government. So they put him in prison. He had a young daughter in high school--senior high school--and she was quite a leader. She was just like her father--a real leader-type. That's what they did to all these high school kids. Anyone who had leadership ability,
they worked on them. The other ones they let go, but they worked on those with leadership ability, and they said, "Come on, now, you join the party." Well, she didn't want to, and her father kept telling her, "Don't you join that youth group." She didn't want to do it. But they worked on her and worked on her and worked on her. That's how they do it--brainwash them. And they work on them until they just wear them out, until they finally acquiesce and say "Yes." The Communists said, "If you do, then all the other ones will." They get out the leader, you see. So she joined, and that just about killed her father to think that she would do that. When her father was in prison--she heard that he was in prison--she right away left where she was and went to see him. She came home and went to the prison to see her father. The officials said, "Who are you?" She said, "My father is here in prison and I want to see him." "Who are you? It's nothing to you. You just get out of here." They wouldn't let her see him. You see it didn't mean anything. The poor girl was crumpled about that. After about a week or two, he wasn't in prison too long when that day, the 20th of February came. Whenever they executed anybody, they always did it by shooting them. They would always take them out to a big area like a baseball diamond. It was a play field. Every house had to send a representative whether or not you were a Communist, to this place. Then they say that this man did so and so, and all the things that he did or didn't do that were wrong, and so now what do you do, you see he's worthy to be killed. Then they shout and yell and they say "It's the peoples' choice." It's not the peoples' choice--they
were all pushed into this. It was just terrible. We heard the shots, and every day there were people being killed while we were there. But that was a sad thing for the church, when this Mr. Young was killed.

Then the 25th was the last Sunday we went to church.

Then on the 28th, that was another episode. The principal of our school was Mr. Beh. By the way, he was the brother-in-law of this man, Mr. Sim, and this is Mr. Beh. Their wives were sisters. They were quite the leaders in our churches. He was the head of our junior high school. We weren't surprised that he was put in prison, because he really worked with the Nationalist government. Our Christians were the strongest patriots because we believe that we should be good patriots, good citizens, and that's what we taught. We taught good citizenship in the schools and the churches. They were leaders.

So he was in prison for a time. Many people thought, "Well, this will be the end...the end of him."

So one day, I don't know if it was that day or another day, it doesn't matter—it was so long ago—they had an execution up at the temple. I told you that we had a little temple just across the road from the school. When they were going to execute somebody, they would have him near his home, at a temple or some big place that people could see and then they'd know it, but it must be near where the man lives. We thought, "Oh," when they prepared this platform. And I thought, "Just like when they have a theater." They have plays in front of a temple. They put up a big platform and then everybody can stand outside, and everybody can see. You don't pay for tickets; it's all in
your gifts to the temple. "Well," you thought, "is it going to be a theater or what?" And then I thought, "Oh, no!" and we heard our servants talking and they said there was going to be an execution tonight. "They're going to shoot somebody tonight." "Oh!" then everybody began to think, "it's probably Mr. Beh. This is right in front of the school. The other part of the school is farther down the road. It's right in this area. It must be he." Well, you can imagine sitting in our house and you find your dearest friend, your co-worker, being shot. We, of course, wouldn't go out. We stayed in our home, but we could look through our bathroom window, then we could see the place. We sat there.... I knew the servants would come and tell us afterwards, but while we were waiting we didn't know when they would come up. Later on they came up and said, "It's not Beh, it's someone else." It was a man from down the road a ways. Just what he did I don't know. He wasn't very well known to us. Anyway he was the man who was shot, not Mr. Beh. But they were so sure in the church, the family was so sure, that they prepared a coffin so they could take care of his body right away and bury him. They were so sure it would be he. But it wasn't he.

CARLSON: Did the Communists allow Christian burials afterwards?

BROEKEMA: They'd hand the body over to the family and you could do what you want with the body. They wouldn't care about that.

VANDER HAAR: Did Mr. Beh eventually get out?
BROEKEMA: Yes, he did. Later on he got out. That, too, is a miracle. Absolutely a miracle. I don't see how that could ever have happened, because if anybody would be taken and kept and let go ... oh, I just don't understand it. But he is still living today. He's working hard at copying Bibles for people to read, using the new script. The Communists have changed all the language and writing. All the new Bibles are being printed in new script. He is copying now... these are being read over the radio every day through Temple Time and Far East Broadcasting. He writes them every day, copying every day, and trying to get them out to people as he copies them.

VANDER HAAR: He's still on the mainland?

BROEKEMA: He's still in Kulangsu. He's not in Tong-an, he's down in Kulangsu. So that was Beh.

Then on March 1st, "Chang chou left." The Poppens, the Hofstras, Jeanne Walvoord, the Koeppes, and then a British family -- I guess that was it. They sent word to us, they telephoned -- you could telephone for something special -- and they telephoned and they said, "Have you had good news?" I said, "No, I haven't had any news. Have you had good news?" They said, "Yes, we're leaving tomorrow." That was kind of sad for us, but we were glad they were getting out, maybe we could get out then, too. Then on the 16th, I went in again to the security police. I saw the secretary and I asked him when we could go. We had put in our permit. He said, "When it comes you can go." But it didn't work. About every four days I'd go down there. I got to be a little pest. (laughter) Then
on the 25th Dr. Angus left. He had been up in Leng-na. Another one of our preachers was taken. I've got his name down here, "Gau-long taken." Then when I went on the 26th to see the security police I had to wait and wait and wait and nobody came, so it was no use. Then I had on the 28th "permit granted." And at once we put in our road again, because we didn't go then when they said we were going to go. So we had to put in our road again. April 2nd, I went again and no answer. Then on the 4th "demonstration." I don't know what that demonstration was. You'd think I'd never forget some of these things.

CARLSON: Had you gone into town and witnessed some kind of Communist activity going on there?

BROEKEMA: This may have been...maybe they had something around the...a big doings down in the city, a parade. I think so, something like that, because all the schools had to go. That was probably it. I remember them doing that one time. That was probably it. Then the 5th, that was the execution at the temple. Then on the 7th they had movies all of a sudden on our tennis court. We had movies. They'd never tell you what was going to happen. We didn't bother them, they didn't bother us. They didn't bother you any. They were just ruling the place and you were just there by sufferance. You would just stay in your house and that was it, that's all. You didn't bother them. They had movies, but all propaganda.

CARLSON: What were the movies about? Did you watch the movies?
BROEKEMA: Oh sure, we were upstairs on the porch. We could watch it. You see we had a big house with a screened-in porch and we were upstairs and we could see it. It was all propaganda, stuff from up north.

CARLSON: What types of things would they show in the films?

BROEKEMA: About Communists taking over places and all the good...then when they come in how happy everybody is and all is happy, happy. Wonderful utopia. When the Communists get in then everything will be all right. It was all propaganda, all the movies were like that. That was all for these soldiers. Mostly for the soldiers who were stationed all around and they'd bring them all into the yard for that. One of our preachers who had been in prison was let out the next day. Then I have here "preparation for another big pow-wow." I suppose they came in for some more of those young kids training. Then we set a date, on the 12th, we set a date for when we were going to leave. The 13th..."change settled..." Oh, we took whatever money we had left with us to the bank and cashed that in. In the afternoon,"told to prepare the baggage, examination in the morning." They had to examine all our things we were going to take out. We only took our bedding and our clothing in one trunk--our bedding and clothing, that was all, and then a food basket that we carried with us. We took so little because every night they would examine your things when you came to a place and then in the morning they'd examine it again. If they saw something they'd like they'd take it out. Well, how could you pack breakable things and travel for two weeks--it was just
impossible to do that. So we just left everything in the house. We let them examine our things and they closed your trunk with a thin rice paper. And woe be to you if that was broken during the travel. Ours was never broken. We were thankful.

VANDER HAAR: That's about where we started, correct?

CARLSON: That would bring us up to the events before the story of your release.

BROEKEMA: Yes.

CARLSON: You don't by any chance, have the date when the Russians that you mentioned in your last interview were on the compound.

BROEKEMA: I didn't put that down when they came. Oh, maybe that pow-wow thing was different. Maybe... I don't know, those Russians were around that time, too. The demonstration, was that it? No, it couldn't have been then. I've got written here "preparations for a pow-wow." Well maybe that was when the Russians came. One of them I have is the 19th, it could have been then, the 10th of April. It could have been around that time... I just don't remember just when they were there, but they came. This just led up to it and on the 19th we finally left. Oh, then we had a ... I told you they were trying to find something on us. That was on the 18th, and we had a meeting at noon.

VANDER HAAR: I noticed you were talking about a Mr. Beh.
It would seem to be a natural lead-in to the question of how active you think Christians still are in China?

BROEKEMA: Oh, they aren't. They can't.

VANDER HAAR: Perhaps underground?

BROEKEMA: Underground, yes. And there are Christians but there are no churches. No churches open in China. There's one in Peking but that's for propaganda. And there may be one in Shanghai, but that's it. All the churches have been made into warehouses or whatever they could use them for. They changed them. And the schools... the names of our Christian schools were changed to School No. 1 or School No. 2. I know in these twenty-five years only the older people would know that building was Talmage College or that was the Amoy Christian Girls' High School.

VANDER HAAR: I'm sure that must be somewhat frustrating for some of you who were there for so long. Is it? How do you feel about all the things that have happened since you left?

BROEKEMA: It just makes you sick. But you're thankful for the privilege of having lived and worked with such fine people to make Christ known. The Christians are getting together. They have done this all along. At first, you see, we had church... it hurt the Christians because we were close to our people and they didn't realize that things would change so quickly. So when we said that we'd better not come to church, when you think it's best not to come, you tell us. "Oh, no, that time will never come," they said. They
couldn't see that. We said, "The reason we're staying on is to be a help to you and when we can't be a help to you, we'll go home. But if the Communists don't chase us out, then we'll stay here. We're not leaving because the Communists are coming; we'll stay, but some of the women and children have to leave."
The Board said some of them should go early, but the men should stay. Some of the families did decide to stay. We'd stay as long as we could. Then they saw it coming and they ... with these propaganda meetings that they would have for the young students. Those were the ones they worked on, you see. The students are idealists and they worked on them. "We just have to get rid of some of these people. When all this is changed, when the Communists come in, then it's going to be a Utopia."
That's what they preached all the time. One of the pastors said to me one day about his little son, "I can't tell John anything anymore. I can't talk to him anymore." His son John was a little junior high boy. The pastor mentioned this Mr. Young, the elder, was killed while talking to his son.
His son said, "Yes, he's a rich man, and we have to get rid of all the rich people. We get rid of the rich people and the people who have money and the people who have property." The land-owners if you are a land-owner, and the elder had land.
That's number two enemy. Out you go. They could make it plain to all these people, to these kids, what they had to get rid of. Then they were going to start a new country. It was heart-sickening for the older people; people who knew more than kids without experience.

VANDER HAAR: There is so much talk today, with the Nixon trip
to Peking and reports about how there isn't the begging on the streets, there isn't the dirt like there used to be.... What do you think of those reports? How do you react to them?

BROEKEMA: You see just what they want you to see! There are very few people who come to Amoy, who get into Amoy. We've had one of our friends get into Amoy. He is an Amoy man; he came from the Philippines. They let him in to see is family. He could only go places where they would let him go. He could not see everything. They picked out a commune that was working really very well, I suppose, in north China and Peking, and that's a prize. They let you see that. But they don't take you out to the other villages-- the other places.

VANDER HAAR: So you're fairly skeptical about ...

BROEKEMA: I should say I am. They have done some things but it's taken the blood of the people to do it. They have put in railroads. They have made road improvements and things like that. I'll grant that. But of course, they've paid a terrific price to do it.

VANDER HAAR: Do you think that same type of progress might have been going on prior to the Communists coming?

BROEKEMA: Well, they started a lot of this. Chiang never had a chance because he was trying to unite the country, but China is a huge country, and he had so much opposition. Then, Japan hit. If Japan hadn't hit then, they never would have been able to hit. Chiang with all his faults -- he had faults --
was the best China had.

VANDER HAAR: What about the church itself? If you read anything academic about missions, they talk about very slow progress and the difficulties involved. How were things going, in your perception, for mission work prior to the Japanese or the Communists?

BROEKEMA: We were really going after we had that great revival in the thirties with Dr. Sung, the Chinese man. The church was booming. We couldn't train our leaders fast enough because we had such opportunities. Then when the Japanese war hit us, we were trying to reach our goal in 1942 for the 100th anniversary of the Amoy mission: it was to reach every home in South Fukien at least once with the Gospel. That was a tremendous project. We didn't have transportation like we have in the United States. When you get into the mountain country and the mountain districts, you had to walk fifteen miles to get to the church. Then you worked out from that church that day, and you could probably see two families in a day walking up and down the hills. We had to help each other. We had a lot of these preaching bands, which was Dr. Sung's innovation. That was a marvelous job. We had glowing reports from the preaching bands in the cities. Then war hit, and it stopped. We had our anniversary upcountry without the people from Amoy -- they weren't part of our hundredth anniversary because it was during the war.

CARLSON: I don't want to put words in your mouth, but do you feel sometimes that the Communists stole the glory from what
you had done. You had the compound, and the Communists came in and took over the facilities.

BROEKEMA: Oh, sure, they just took over.

VANDER HAAR: So many sources today, for instance in a recent issue of *Church and Society* magazine on the new China, some of the authors in essence said that the Communists had done socially what they as Christians had been trying to do -- such as medical care and that type of thing.

BROEKEMA: But they've taken away their freedom. There is no freedom in China today, and China had freedom before. There is no freedom. You have to do just whatever the government asks you to do, and they get it around in devious ways, and brainwash you. Oh, that brainwashing.

VANDER HAAR: Do you think Christianity can co-exist with Communism? Is it possible for the two to live together?

BROEKEMA: No, because they say there is no God. Well, God is our existence. You can't keep up with the Communists. You can't believe them. Today, they'll say it's black; tomorrow they'll say it's white. That's why we have to be very careful with this detente with China.

CARLSON: Just one final question. If you had a second chance, would you do it again and be a missionary ...

BROEKEMA: I sure would!

CARLSON: ... and would you do anything differently than what
you did? Would there be any areas where you would attack problems differently?

BROEKEMA: That's kind of a broad question to ask. Yes, I think I would try to get more in with the people. I was close to many of them, but I think I should have been closer.

CARLSON: How do you mean "closer?" Do you mean actually living ...?

BROEKEMA: Yes. I did live with them when we went on these country trips. I was living together with my workers. But, I think sometimes, perhaps... Of course, their society is quite different than ours, and their living. When you first go there ... things have changed from fifty years ago when I first went out. It's quite different. Our living at the end was quite different from when I first went there. When I first went there, the senior missionary who introduced me to our area, when she went on a trip she would take quite a bit of food with her. She couldn't eat everything, and I was fortunate that everything agreed with me. That's true -- our bodies are different. We're made differently, and she couldn't take living on Chinese food all the time. She had to take some foreign food with her. Well, their conditions changed, too, and later on, our food supply in the country, too. We began to see this. The missionaries brought in different types of vegetables and fruits that came in. We did have good fruits and vegetables in China, but we brought in some other ones like papaya. Missionaries brought that seed into China. At first the Chinese.... Oh, you'd know a village had Christians if you
saw a papaya, because they were the only ones who had the seeds. It's a very healthful food. It's good for vegetables, and it's good for fruit. I'm very fond of it. But the non-Christians were superstitious about it. It's a hollow tree, and it's broken down very easily. They had a lot of superstitions about that, and they never like those trees around the place. So, if you saw a papaya tree, you knew there were Christians there, because only Christians would have a papaya tree.

That's how a lot of our food, then, began to change, too. Conditions changed in China. As the Christian community grew, things were cleaner and all that changed. So then the years went on. Our latter years were different than the first. I always ate with the pastor's family when I traveled in the country to visit the churches, and I managed all right. Sometimes after a longer period, I was glad to get home for a little foreign food again, but I must say I thrived pretty well on it.

VANDER HAAR: So you would have tried to have lived a little bit more like the Chinese, perhaps in more similar circumstances?

BROEKEMA: Yes.

CARLSON: Maybe take the walls down from around the compound?

BROEKEMA: No, because it isn't just the foreigners who have walls around the compound. The Chinese did, too. That was protection. Every Chinese home had a wall around their place. That wasn't just foreigners that did that.
Our cultures were so different. We didn't go to China to change their culture but to introduce them to Jesus Christ, who knowing Him they would have Abundant Life. As the believers became new creatures in Christ, the results were shown in the community. So they changed as well as we changed.

VANDER HAAR: Thank you very much, Miss Broekema, for all your time and comments. For both of us it has been most interesting and very enjoyable.
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