I was a Prisoner of the Chinese Reds

By Dr. Arthur Stewart Allen, M.D., 15 April 1952

Note by Herbert K. Lau (劉敬恒) (Rotary China Historian) 7 July 2017:--

Dr. Arthur Stewart Allen (梁正倫醫師), M.D., of Montreal, Canada, was the last president of the Chungking Rotary Club (重慶扶輪社) in 1949-1950. He was the superintendent of the Canadian United Church Mission Hospital in Chungking (重慶仁濟醫院). Here is the remarkable first hand story of a veteran Canadian missionary who saw his friends turn into envenomed foes as the poison of communism crept through the soul of a nation he had exemplified the true Vocational Service as a medical practitioner for 21 years since 1929.

The Rotary Club of Chungking was the 24th Rotary Club formed in the Republic of China (中華民國), sponsored by Hankow Rotary Club (漢口扶輪社). The Club was organized in the Szechwan (*Sichuan*) Province (四川省) on 3 June 1937, and was admitted to Rotary International on 18 November 1937, Charter #4471, with 30 charter members of multi-nationalities. The Club met on every Thursday, 12:15 p.m. at Sullivans Restaurant. The Club's bulletin was《The Gorges》.

The Rotary Club of Chungking was terminated on 21 December 1950. Read Allen's letters to Rotary International on Pages 2-3.



Dr. Arthur Stewart Allen and a girl patient who recovered from chewing and swallowing disorder.

Copy for R.I.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL
GENERAL OFFICE
RECEIVED
MAY 31 1950
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FILE WHERE

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ROTARY CLUB OF CHUNGKING

No. 4471

CHUNGKING. CHINA

5th April 1950.

Mr. Chen Yu-hua,
5 Chung Shan Road,
NANKING.

Dear Governor,

Your long awaited letter at last came to hand yesterday. It is a great pleasure to read it as it relieves us a great deal from our worries about the future of the Rotary in China. We are very glad to note that most of the rotarians in Nanking and Shanghai are trying to meet every week. We envy you.

Now, allow us to inform you of our present difficulties. Since writing you on January 9, we held our meetings for several weeks, as per copies of minutes enclosed herewith. During the past few weeks some of the members left this city and some were not able to attend the meetings because of the nature of their businesses after the political change. Therefore, we have not been able to do much at the meetings, which in most cases, were informal meetings or only friendly gatherings.

In addition to the above mentioned difficulties, we also have been confronted by a difficulty with the Registration Office of the Municipal Government. Several members have been approached and questioned by the officers regarding the Club. Owing to the fact that two of our members happen to be foreigners and that some one of the members is involved in certain trouble with his subordinates in his own business organization, the authorities frankly expressed their suspician that the Club, although its aim and object are good for the society, might be utilized by those suspected members and that they would not issue a license to us even if we should try to submit our application for registration.

Under these circumstances, all members are of the opinion that it is wiser to suspend our activities and hold no meetings at all for the present until the situation clarifies itself. We sincerely hope you will keep us informed of the registration situation of the clubs in Nanking and Shanghai. We also hope you will use your influence to persuade the authorities in the Eastern District and in Peking to bring pressure to bear upon the authorities here with a view to reviving the Chungking Club. For the moment we think it is better to notify the R.I. not to send any further notices and publications to this Club to avoid any possible suspician.

Yours very sincerely,

Stewart Allen. T.C. Lee.

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ROTARY CLUB OF CHUNGKING

No. 4471

CHUNGKING. CHINA

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL
CENTRAL OFFICE
RECEIVED
MAY 31 1950

5th April 1950.

The Secretariat
The Rotary International
35 East Wacker Drive,
CHICAGO 1, Illinois, U.S.A.

Dear Sirs,

We are exceedingly sorry to inform you that, owing to the fact that most of the members of this Club have left this city and also owing to unfavourable conditions prevailing now in Chungking, we have decided to stop our activities and to have this Club suspend its meetings during the immediate future until our position is further clarified.

Please therefore do not post any further notices and papers to this Club.

Yours sincerely,

ROTARY CLUB OF CHUNGKING

Chairman. Secretary.

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allen
via H-K.

I was a Prisoner of the Chinese Reds

By Dr. Arthur Stewart Allen, M.D., 15 April 1952

I was a prisoner of the Chinese Communists for a year, eight months of it solitary confinement, two months with about twenty others in a cell so small we couldn't all sleep comfortably on the floor at one time.

After having devoted twenty-one years to hospital development and medical teaching in China for the United Church of Canada, I was accused of being a spy, a murderer and a thief. For four hours I was forced to kneel before a large portrait of Mao Tse-tung (毛澤東), China's little Stalin, while a frenzied rabble shouted taunts and accusations against me.

I was grilled, browbeaten and threatened by Communist officials seeking vainly for some charge on which they could bring me to trial. For two months I was subjected to a monotonous and fatiguing repetition of Communist propaganda in sessions of seven and a half hours a day which were supposed to "wash my brains of their reactionary thoughts." Finally, denounced as a treacherous enemy of the China to which I had devoted my adult life, I was conducted to the border and deported for allegedly "seizing" medical supplies and for having "criminally" evaded payment of eighty-nine cents' tax.

I had been a medical missionary in China since shortly after my graduation as a doctor from McGill University, Montreal, in 1929. Since 1938 I had been superintendent of the two-hundred-and-twenty-bed United Church mission hospital at Chungking (重慶), the largest Canadian-supported hospital in West China. Chungking, a crowded city of nine hundred thousand on the Yangtze River (長江), twelve hundred miles from Shanghai (上海) but only four hundred miles from the Tibet (西藏) border, was the second-last Chinese city to be taken over by Mao's Red army.

On November 29, 1949, I heard the first gunfire in the hills outside Chungking. Two days later the Reds marched unopposed into the city.

I was permitted to carry on as superintendent of the hospital for another year. In December 1950 Communists on the staff organized an accusation meeting against me, accused me of being a spy and enemy collaborator, and demanded my arrest. I was a Communist prisoner from that moment until a Red government deportation guard saw me safely out of China one year later almost to the day.

My bitterest memory is not the treatment I myself received. The most distressing memory of two years I spent behind the Bamboo Curtain of Red China is that of the hate and distrust which

have been deliberately and cunningly planted in the minds of the Chinese. I saw the tragic spectacle of a co-operative hospitable people transformed suddenly, by a few months of ingenious propaganda, into a nation of suspicious, abusive, unreasoning accusers fired with the idea that the outside world, barring Russia, has but a single aim: the oppression and exploitation of China.

A large majority of Chinese students and workers are now insolent and vehement supporters of the new Red regime. They have become intoxicated with a few catchwords and phrases like "Down with American imperialism!" All foreigners, all landlords and all the well-to-do have suddenly been turned into villainous and hated enemies of the new People's China.

One of their slogans is: "There is no such thing as a good landlord." And the Communists are using all their wiles to keep the people believing it.

In Hong Kong (香港) last January on my way back to Canada I visited a Chinese doctor friend who had just learned of the fate of one landlord who had been his friend for many years in Kwangtung province (廣東省), near Canton (廣州). He was widely respected for the scrupulous fairness with which he treated his tenants. When Communist authorities in Kwangtung were urging peasants to hold accusation meetings denouncing their landlords this man's tenants drew up a statement saying they had nothing to accuse him of and asking that he be dealt with leniently by the new Kwangtung government. The tenants said he had never demanded rent in years when crops were poor and had always made sure that his workers had plenty for their own needs before taking a share for himself.

The Communists questioned the tenants in more detail. Had he ever accepted gifts from them? In good crop years it is a widespread Chinese custom to give gifts of produce to a popular landlord and the tenants agreed that their landlord had in some years received numerous free-will gifts. The Communists skillfully distorted this aspect of the tenant-landlord relations and made it appearing to many of the simple and illiterate peasants that the landlord had been wheedling more out of them in the form of gifts than he was entitled to in legal rent. The Communists wound up by making the landlord appear as a villain and oppressor of the worst sort. According to the Communist argument he was not an ordinary oppressor landlord, he was far worse than that for he carried out his oppression with a diabolical scheme under which his tenants didn't even realize they were being oppressed.

This particular landlord was among the first executed in Kwangtung. He was a dangerous potential leader. He had to be gotten rid of quickly, for he proved too well the absurdity of one of Chinese Communists' fundamental claims: that all landlords are exploiters and robbers of the people. There was little ceremony or trial. He was simply arrested, left in a cell for a few days, then marched

out into a jail-yard where the top of his head was blown off with a single shot from a revolver held against the base of his skull.

China today is seething with suspicion and ridiculously far-fetched accusations. The most trivial and commonplace statements or incidents are misinterpreted and twisted into "proof" of spying or "reactionary attitudes." Everyone distrusts everyone else. Spying has become a national game with death too often for the loser. Children at school are taught that it is a duty to spy on and report upon their parents. Wives spy on their husbands. If a light burns late at night in a better-off Chinese home neighbors may notify the authorities that "he must have been having a secret meeting with an imperialist spy." If a student tosses and lies awake in a school dormitory he may be grilled by fellow students next morning on the assumption that "reactionary thoughts" kept him awake.

In Red China the walls not only have ears, they have eyes as well. One morning Dr. Ian Robb, a Canadian surgeon working with me in Chungking who has since returned to Canada and is now in Halifax, was cleaning up his library and came across one dog-eared volume that he thought he might as well throw away. He dropped it into the fire in the kitchen stove. There was no one else in the house. Next morning the chairman of the hospital's Communist labor union told him bluntly: "You burned a book yesterday. Why?" Startled, Robb asked him: "Is there a new law against burning books?"

"No," the Communist said, "but it is wiser not to without permission." A Chinese houseboy when lighting a new fire had discovered the ashes, still in the form of a book. He had reported it immediately. To the suspicion-ridden one-track Chinese mind it could mean only one thing. The doctor was secretly destroying a "reactionary" book.

The Communists suspect "imperialist trickery" in everything the foreigner in China does. While I was a prisoner my Red questioners produced the minutes of the Rotary Club of which I was president in the pre-Communist Chungking. They had searched the minutes carefully for evidence of "imperialist plots." One minor point had them highly disturbed. The U.S. vice-consul at Chungking, one of our Rotarians, in a brief farewell talk to a Rotary meeting had casually remarked that the Communists were only sixty miles away and it was no longer safe for him to remain. The position of the Red army was known to every coolie, yet the Communists pounced on this item as irrefutable proof that the Club was a group of imperialist spies. The only explanation they would accept was that the vice-consul had official information on Red troop movements and that Rotary was his medium for passing it on to Chungking's defenders.

Distrust and suspicion are so rampant that no one is allowed to spend a night away from home without explaining his reason for doing so and obtaining a permit.

In September 1950 Dr. Ashley Lindsay (林則) and his wife were closing up their home in Chengtu (成都), preparing to leave China. Lindsay had been vice-chancellor of the West China Union University (華西協合大學). He and Mrs. Lindsay are now in Toronto. After storing their furniture in the attic they told a Chinese helper they would go next door and sleep in the home of a fellow Canadian missionary. "We'll have to sleep there several nights," Lindsay said. "I'm too tired to take the application and get a permit from the government tonight. I'll do it in the morning." Their Chinese houseboy overheard the decision. "No, no, please report," he begged. "If you don't I'll have to report you in the morning. If I don't report it, someone spying on me will report me and we'll all be in terrible trouble."

The Communist conquest of China which I witnessed, before I was imprisoned and cut off from all news, was accomplished with little of the civil bloodshed and political arrests which usually feature Red seizures of power. But during the year I was imprisoned the Communists began a reign of terror and violence. Political enemies of the new regime—proven, potential, or merely suspected—are disappearing by thousands.

In Shanghai between April 30 and September 30, 1951, there were 1,742 executions of "counter-revolutionaries," according to an official Red announcement. Firing squads mowed them down sometimes two and three hundred at a time. In a single night near the end of April 1951 more than three thousand persons were arrested in Shanghai. According to figures published by the deputy governor of the province of Canton, 28,322 "counter-revolutionaries" were executed there between October 1950 and August 1951. The China Missionary Bulletin, a monthly review published in Hong Kong by the Roman Catholic Mission estimates executions in China already amount to "several hundreds of thousands."

Several of my Chinese friends have been killed for political reasons. All were members of the Christian Church in China and, for many of them, their "political crimes" were nothing more than wild suspicions which grew out of the fact that they had worked in close collaboration with Canadian and U.S. missionaries. All Chinese who were associated with Westerners through business or the church are suspected of being "imperialist collaborators" today. If a Chinese citizen receives a letter from a relative or friend in Britain, the U.S. or Canada, he becomes a marked man, likely to be arrested on the first flimsy pretext that arises. Missionaries who have left China have been warned not to write letters or attempt to maintain contacts with friends they left in China.

Hung by Hands and Feet

Before being deported I was given no opportunity to seek out my friends and say farewells, so I have no details of the fate of most of them. I have learned details of only one case, told me by a missionary who is now in Canada. I cannot identify him because this would jeopardize three

Chungking businessmen who pledged their businesses at guarantees of his "good behavior." (So good is the Chinese information service that a summary of this article will probably reach Communists in Chungking forty-eight hours after this magazine goes on sale.)

The friend was a feeble, elderly Christian named Hsu Hai-chin. Hsu was sixty-five, which is old age in China. He was so weak that it used to take him ten minutes to totter up the fifty-odd steps which led up a hill to our house. Hsu had worked as a laborer for Western families in Chungking for twenty-five years. Because of this long-standing foreign connection the Communists decided he must be wealthy and that he possessed a hidden supply of firearms. I believe someone who disliked Hsu deliberately fabricated the rumor to get old Hsu in trouble, for many old Chinese family grudges are being settled in this manner today. He was obviously poor, his home little more than a hut, and he would hardly have known one end of a rifle from the other, but the Communists are capable of believing anything of a man who has had connections with foreigners. They arrested and grilled him for days about where his "money" and "guns" were hidden. Finally they hung him up by his hands and feet and questioned him again for hours. Eventually they decided he must be telling the truth and let him go home. But the shock of the ordeal killed him. He died two days later.

Before the Communists came I had had no serious complaints from my hospital staff for years. On December 2, 1949, the day after the Communist arrival, trouble began. It became apparent then that there had been a number of Communists on the staff, unknown to us, and they immediately started stirring up discontent to let us know that they, as Communists, had some authority now. One Chinese doctor, Tien Bao-liang, who had worked very closely with me as a surgeon in the operating room, turned out to be an enthusiastic Red. But the most vociferous and troublesome group was a number of young Communists among the laborers on the maintenance staff and among the student nurses.

They resented the fact that they were working for a foreign institution. An attempt was launched to discredit foreigners on the staff, particularly me as superintendent. There were repeated criticisms of the food and they tried to show that I was giving foreign patients preferential treatment. One attempt to take over the hospital and put a Chinese superintendent in my place was officially blocked by the local Red government of Chungking, because the government had too many problems and didn't want the hospital on its hands at that time.

I tried to deal fairly with every complaint. Whenever necessary I yielded the benefit of the doubt to my opponents. By the following autumn I was beginning to gain the confidence and co-operation of the hospital's labor union and the Students' Communist Youth Corps and I was beginning to hope that I might be able to work permanently under the Red regime. My wife and

two daughters Phyllis and Marion had returned to Canada that summer—not because we feared more trouble with the Communists, but because of difficulties arising in the children's education.

In November, however, all the old complaints and grudges I had so painstakingly settled began cropping up again. I found later what was taking place. Red government officials had been intercepting and copying some of my mail without my knowledge and in one letter they thought they had evidence that I was a spy and underground worker. This letter comes into the story again later.

A lesser Communist official was sent to the hospital with a serious abscess of the liver. He was a very sick man so they sent along a special attendant to help care for him. This is a common practice among well-to-do hospital patients in China. The attendant lived at the hospital for six weeks. We have since learned he was a member of the Red police.

Events played into his hands. In December 1950 Warren Austin, chief U.S. delegate to the UN, made a speech outlining U.S. contributions to the development of China. It created a storm of protest in China, for the Reds interpreted it as proof that China was being "deliberately Americanized for imperialistic purposes." Protest meetings denouncing Austin, the U.S. and foreign "imperialists" generally were being held throughout China.

Later on the afternoon of December 20 I was invited to attend an anti-Austin meeting that evening in the nursing school auditorium. It was a veiled order, for at eight o'clock two members of the hospital's Communist labor union came to escort me to the meeting. Another Canadian mission worker and hospital employee, Miss Constance Ward, now in Vancouver, was escorted with me. Everyone must turn up for meetings of this type in Red China, because to stay away is to invite the charge of being an enemy sympathizer.

When we arrived the auditorium and corridor outside were packed with about three hundred hospital employees, their families and friends. The auditorium consisted of two classrooms opened into one by pushing back sliding doors. Desks had been replaced with chairs and benches to accommodate a crowd. Even the windows had been opened so that a group of people could see from the veranda outside. At the front was a teacher's desk on a small platform. Behind it a large picture of Mao Tse-tung dominated the whole room.

The crowd made way as we were led up to a front row of seats reserved for us and some of the hospital's Communist ringleaders. About fifteen minutes later Miss Fan Sheo-yin, dean of the nursing school, stepped to the platform and raised her hand for order. Miss Fan was a fiery little woman in her late twenties. She was small, even for a Chinese, weighing probably less than ninety pounds, and we had had trouble finding nursing uniforms small enough for her. She was a clever ambitious opportunist and had been an outspoken Communist since the beginning. I had

suspected all along that she had adopted Communism as a means of promoting her own position rather than because she had any real interest in politics.

"The meeting will begin," she said in rapid Chinese. "Many of you haven't been told, but the meeting has been called as an accusation meeting against Dr. Allen."

It had been announced as an anti-Austin meeting. I had expected trouble but had never suspected that events had reached this extreme. Only a few of the Communist ringleaders had known that the meeting was actually to be a denunciation of me.

Miss Fan fanned the Flames

The accusation meeting has become a popular and widespread innovation in Red China. Workers are urged to gather and air their criticisms against landlords, businessmen, foreigners or anyone whom they think has mistreated them or whom they suspect of being unfriendly towards the new Chinese regime. Chinese workers have never dared to criticize in the past and this sudden new freedom is being widely and excitedly used. Many of the grievances are imagined, but since the meetings are officially encouraged the Communist authorities have to cater to the mass hysteria that the meetings generate and arrest the victim if the crowd demands it.

As the tiny Miss Fan stood on the platform a few feet ahead of me, I recalled another occasion when she had been the accused and I had been her defender. Some months before the Communist turnover occurred in Chungking the student nurses had held a protest meeting in which they accused Miss Fan of taking bribes in return for the granting of diplomas to nursing students who had failed. I thought then the accusations were false, although later it became apparent they were true. I calmed the students and Miss Fan retained her position only because of my defense of her. Now the same Miss Fan, in a high emotional voice, was saying: "We all know Dr. Allen is a spy and an imperialist! This is your chance to accuse him."

Miss Fan, who acted as chairman throughout the meeting, called first on several accusers who had obviously been carefully coached in advance. One of the first was Fung Cheo-wen, a young laborer and errand boy from the dispensary, a big bullying type with a coarse voice who had been a constant complainer. "Fung" means "wind", and we had nicknamed him "the Big Wind." Shouting excitedly he accused me of oppression and hiding reactionaries. His whole accusation was based on one trivial and exaggerated incident. Payment of the staff on one occasion had been held up a few hours because I was away from the hospital. The accountant had come over to our home to ask my wife when I would return because a few members of the laboring staff, led by Fung, were demanding their pay. Mrs. Allen invited the accountant inside to wait for me. A few minutes later Fung came over and abusively accused her of hiding the accountant. "I'm not hiding him,"

she told Fung. "He's sitting right here on the chesterfield. Come in and talk to him." But Fung had ranted on about hiding reactionaries and refused to enter "the home of a capitalistic imperialist."

Following Fung, a student nurse came to the platform. She was one of several who were too poor to pay their own way and were receiving nursing training at the hospital's expense. When my wife had left China she left behind some of her old clothing for use as cleaning rags. Miss Ward, my fellow Canadian hospital worker, thought some of it was too good for rags and passed some articles on to the poorer students.

This particular student nurse came to the platform holding up a brassiere and some other underclothing. "Look at this!" she cried. "Mrs. Allen used to dress up like a queen, but this is the sort of rags she expected us to wear." And she flung the clothing at me as she spoke.

The first accusations were trivial things like this, designed to stir up resentment and excitement. Most of the audience had been supporters of mine up until this time, but the Chinese are emotional and easily led; excitement spread like a fever and in a short time even many former friends were accusing me. Soon the meeting was a nightmare of shouting.

Four Hours on My Knees

Ten minutes after the meeting began someone behind me shouted: "Make him kneel at the front!" The audience took up the chant: "Make him kneel. Make him kneel." I walked voluntarily to the platform and Miss Fan told me to kneel facing the portrait of Mao Tse-tung, my back to the audience.

For four hours I was kept motionless on my knees through a continuous succession of shouted accusations and taunts. Later Miss Ward was forced to kneel beside me. We weren't permitted to speak or move. Many of the accusers ran to the platform and delivered their evidence in a screaming frenzy. The accusations were interspersed with the shouting of slogans by the audience, which was divided into three sections, each section led by a cheerleader like rooters at a football game. Someone would say: "Dr. Allen is an imperialist spy." Then the cheerleaders would take up the cry and have the audience repeat it over and over, each section in turn, and each section trying to shout louder than the others.

The victims at accusation meetings are frequently slapped and bullied, occasionally forced out onto the street where some have been dragged or beaten to death. I was touched physically only once—when Miss Fan thought my head wasn't bowed low enough and stepped over and pushed my chin against my chest. But, psychologically, it was the worst ordeal I have ever experienced. Between 1938 and 1941 I lived through scores of Japanese bombing raids at Chungking, but the shouting and frenzy of this meeting were more nerve-shattering than any half-dozen bombings I experienced.

All of the accusations were pathetic examples of the wild and childish suspicions so rampant in China today.

I was accused of being a spy, or being a friend of Chiang Kai-shek, of working for American imperialists against China, of mistreating and even murdering Chinese patients and of oppression of the people generally. The evidence advanced as proof of these I charges was so flimsy and imaginative that it is difficult to understand how it could have had a vestige of meaning to any rational adult.

For example, to prove that I was a spy they cited two pieces of evidence. Our hospital and my residence were a mile or so outside the city of Chungking proper, but we had a clinic in the centre of the city. I spent every Thursday morning at the clinic, left at noon and spent the rest of the day in the city making business calls. I always strove to keep business appointments in the city restricted to Thursday afternoons. It was always six or seven o'clock on Thursday evening before I got back home. Many persons at the accusation meeting referred to this Thursday activity. "We know Dr. Allen spends Thursday mornings at the clinic," they said, "but he never returns home until evening. Where does lie spend the rest of the day? He just disappears. He must spend it meeting and collaborating with other spies and reactionaries."

The Devil in the Hospital

Their other evidence was equally fantastic. On one occasion I arranged to have a Swedish woman missionary admitted to the hospital late at night for a gastric examination. She had come from just outside Chungking and since she wasn't an emergency case I had entertained her at my home for the evening before taking her across to the hospital. The Chinese are suspicious of any night meetings. "If this woman had to enter the hospital," they asked, "why did Dr. Allen have her in his home for several hours first? Why did she arrive after dark? She was a spy! Dr. Allen is a spy!"

To indicate that I was a friend of Chiang Kai-shek they produced a record showing I had telephoned Chiang's home in 1939, eleven years before. Actually, I didn't make the call but I authorized it. We were planning a funeral for a Chinese Christian and we had to pass over a corner of Chiang's extensive property to reach a cemetery. The call was to seek permission to pass his guards.

All of these incidents were described amid thunderous shouts from the audience. I was given no opportunity to explain the real circumstances.

I was accused of maiming and attempting the murder of Communist officials. We had a daily average of about thirty Red patients at the hospital all the time and among those there were three who developed postoperative complications—-an average to be expected in any hospital. It was

charged repeatedly at the accusation meeting that I had deliberately performed faulty operations in these three cases in an effort to maim or kill.

After four hours of this, with my legs cramped painfully in kneeling position, Miss Fan cried: "Now we've found who the devil in the hospital is! What shall we do with him?" The crowd shouted: "Arrest him!"

I was held under guard at the hospital for two days then a warrant was drawn up by the foreign affairs bureau (because I was a foreigner) and my arrest was official. I was turned over to the political section of the public safety department.

That first evening I was taken before the Chungking political court for questioning. It was a small bare room containing only one long table and several chairs. The director of the political section was sitting at the head of the table and there were six other officials seated along the table, three on a side, in front of him. All wore the typical Communist uniform of padded and quilted cotton khaki with plain, unpolished buttons and no insignia distinguishing officers from men. The questioning took the line: "We know you're a spy and underground worker, so why don't you confess and get it over with?" When my replies didn't follow their suggestions the director finally declared: "You have a deep-seated reactionary attitude. You'd better go back to your cell and think things out a little more clearly."

This was my only appearance before a formal court until my trial eight months later, but on an average of twice a week I was taken to an office and questioned by a single investigator.

No Razor and no Knife

About a month after my arrest one questioner suddenly produced a copy of a letter which Red censors had intercepted six months before. At that time we were arranging to have a new X-ray therapy machine set up at the hospital and there was an exchange of letters regarding this work between me and a Canadian X-ray technician in neighboring Chengtu. Officials at the Red government arsenal producing ammunition had asked me to have the expert check the X-ray in the arsenal hospital while he was in Chungking. The X-ray technician in one letter stated: "Please let me know what has to be done and what is the financial setup respecting the arsenal." Communists grilled me repeatedly about this statement. They could have checked the whole story by merely asking their own arsenal officials about it, but they laughed and insisted this wasn't necessary.

The building in which I was held for the first eight months was the Chungking headquarters of the Communist political section, and not a jail. It was a four-story brick structure, originally built as a luxurious home for a Nationalist government official. My room was eleven feet square, furnished with a bed (a bamboo frame resting on trestles), a small stool and a table which did duty as a desk and washstand. I had to bring my own bedding. I was not allowed to have a razor or

knife. One night the bed broke and I salvaged a small piece of wire which I used for a few days digging bedbugs out of cracks in the wall, but hey discovered this and even took the wire away from me. I was allowed to shave once a month. There was one small electric light which I was forced to leave on all night so that the guard could watch me through a slit in the door. I had no haircut from December to May, then I was given one about once a month. I was allowed no visitors or newspapers and could neither send nor receive mail. It was several months before my wife and family in Canada learned what had happened to me.

After breakfast each morning, I was permitted fifteen minutes of exercise in an outdoor courtyard, during which I had to fill my basin with water for washing myself, clothes and room floor, visit an outdoor latrine, and clean the cuspidor which served as a urinal.

For the first three months 1 was always hungry. As a foreigner I was granted one special concession, a "western" breakfast of two slices of dry bread and a small glass of milk. The other two meals consisted of two or three small bowls of rice per meal with a small serving of a Chinese mixture of vegetables, meat and egg. After three months the Red authorities discovered that guards were buying extra food for foreign prisoners and to stamp this out they increased our rations.

On August 27, 1951, after eight months' imprisonment, I was moved to the Chungking jail for my trial. I was in a cell with many other prisoners and immediately after breakfast next morning about 9 a.m., a guard came to the corridor outside and in Chinese read off the numbers of three prisoners who were to be escorted elsewhere. I heard one number and recognized it as my own. The three of us were directed outside, down a street about a hundred yards, then into another entrance of the same building. One guard walked behind us with a drawn revolver.

Another guard led me into a courtroom. It was a simple room, about twenty feet square, with plaster walls that had once been white but were now a dusty grey, and a rough board floor without rugs. There was a big plain desk on a small dais at one end and several chairs and benches in front of it.

Behind the desk, side by side, sat the judge and a male secretary. They, the guard and I were the only persons in the room. The judge and his secretary were both dressed in the grey-blue cotton uniforms which all Communist civil servants wear. I didn't know which one was the judge until he started questioning me. Like most Communist officials the judge was very young; he didn't appear to be more than twenty-five. My guard sat down without ceremony on a chair by the door. I was required to remain standing during the three hours of the trial.

Are Apple-Pickers Decadent?

I must have looked like a hobo for I hadn't shaved in three weeks or had a haircut in five. I was dressed in shorts and open-neck shirt which I had worn constantly for almost four months of summer weather.

The trial was actually just another session of rigorous questioning. The Communists had abandoned hope of getting me to confess to their original charges and were back now to charges involving my distribution of medical relief supplies and tax payments on those supplies—-an old investigation which I thought had been shelved before I was even arrested.

As chairman of an international relief committee, I had been responsible for the distribution of medical supplies sent to the Chungking area by relief agencies in Canada, the U.S. and Britain. When the Communists "liberated" Chungking in December 1949 I had one hundred and seventy cases of these supplies, designated for various mission hospitals, including my own. After trying for months to obtain instructions from the Communists regarding the disposition of the supplies we were led to believe they could be distributed as originally planned. I notified the Communists by letter of what we were doing and proceeded to distribute the supplies. Three months later Communist officials in Chungking began asking about the supplies as though they had just learned of them. They professed surprise and indignation when told they had been distributed to the hospitals for which they were originally designated. The outcome was that I was charged with forcibly seizing government property and with carrying out a secret decision to distribute the loot.

The second charge read against me at the trial concerned a confusing series of calculations on tax payments. The crux of it was that taxes due the Communists from our hospital were underpaid to the extent of eighty nine cents. I confessed to this charge.

Now there came up what was probably the strangest episode of my whole experience in Red China, an incident that illustrated once more the unpredictable twists that can develop in Communist thinking.

My father had owned a ten-acre orchard in the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia. He died when I was thirteen and I stopped school and worked the orchard alone for my mother. I wasn't able to resume my education until I was twenty-one when I returned to school, graduating eight years later as a doctor. I had mentioned this briefly in a written account of my life which the Communists demanded months before. At the trial the judge noticed this. It seemed to impress him greatly and he questioned me at length about it. His thinking narrowly channeled by Communist philosophy. He couldn't see how a man forced to work at the age of thirteen by our "decadent capitalist system" could be an all-out capitalist. I believe this was an important factor in his decision to deport me from China, instead of imprisoning me indefinitely.

After the trial I was sent back to the jail for another two months before hearing my sentence. This period of imprisonment was far worse than anything I had experienced. I was in a cell about fifteen feet square that contained from seventeen to twenty three other prisoners---all Chinese. There was no furniture except a cupboard for our rice howls and a covered bucket sitting in one corner---the bathroom. We slept on the board floor. I had a sleeping bag less than three feet wide, but when we all lay down there was only space for the bag folded in half. Frequently I would be awakened at night by another sleeper rolling over with his knees on my back. There were two barred windows which contained no glass, yet often the air became foul with the smell of closely packed bodies. We were allowed out one at a time for a short period each day to visit the toilet, a cement-lined, outdoor ditch periodically flushed with water. Most of the time we were forced to use the bucket in the cell.

Here I received only two meals a day. Every meal consisted of a large bowl of rice gruel for each man, steamed bread (similar to dark heavy dumplings), and a large bowl of vegetables, highly seasoned with red pepper or ginger, between every five prisoners. We were given meat only three times in the two months I was there.

Our days were filled mainly with a seven-and-a-half-hour daily session of Communist re-education. The constant and maddening repetition of Communist arguments and denunciations of Western nations would he followed by periods in which we were required to write group summaries of what we had learned.

My trial had been on August 28. On October 15 I was sentenced. My sentence was a fine, amounting to about ninety dollars, and deportation from China. The judge's announcement that I was to be deported was a relief that started me looking forward to life again.

I spent one more week in the crowded cell before finally being released under guard to remain in a hotel while I settled business affairs and made preparations to leave China. Another two months passed before I was ready to go.

On the morning of December 18, 1951, a dull overcast morning, I left Chungking by river boat with a guard still at my side. I had seen none of my friends for a year. My twenty-two years of effort for West China and its crowded millions ended without a single person bidding me farewell.

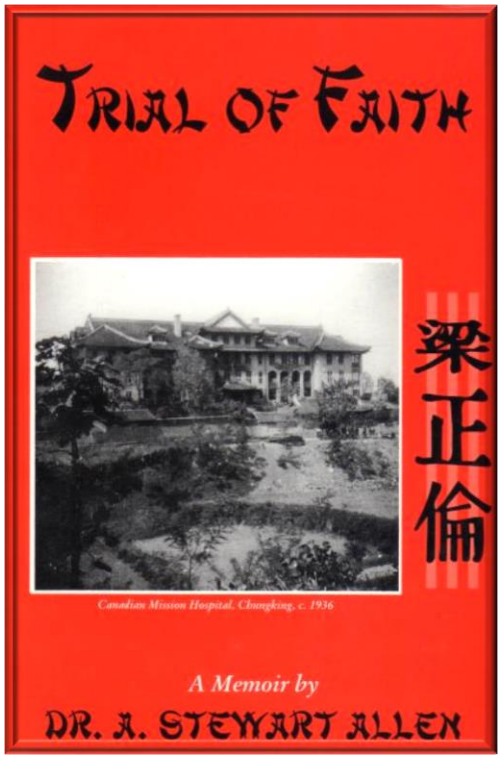
As the boat chugged downstream the last landmark to disappear was the grey-brick hospital against the pines of the Yangtze's south hank. Under my direction it had been modernized and its capacity doubled so that it was one of the biggest and most up-to-date in West China. Even after the black tile roof and grey bricks had disappeared among the pines the hospital's position was still marked by a pin point of red against the green hills behind. I know the hospital's Communist labor union and Miss Fan's vociferous Students' Youth Corps will be proud and happy to learn that the

last I saw of the hospital which I must still refer to as mine—-was the red flag of Communist China which now flies above it.

Ten days later I was a citizen of the free and democratic world again in Hong Kong. I had never understood before how free that world really is.



Rotarian Dr. Arthur Stewart Allen and RotaryAnn Winnifred Griffin Allen



Trial of Faith : The Imprisonment of a Medical Missionary Under Chinese Communism, 1950-1951.

This book was published in Canada.

Cover photo was the main building of the Canadian Mission Hospital, Chungking.