



THE CARDINAL KUNG FOUNDATION



The Cardinal Kung Foundation

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Chinese Public Security Agents Ransacked the Home of the Underground Roman Catholic Coadjutor Bishop of Shanghai, and Seized his Religious Goods and Money



Stamford, Connecticut, U.S.A. - At approximately 8:30 PM on March 4, 1997, eight agents from the Shanghai's Public Security Bureau ransacked the tiny apartment where the 79 year old Bishop Joseph Fan Zhongliang, SJ resides with his niece. Bishop Fan is the Coadjutor Bishop of the underground Roman Catholic Diocese of Shanghai. The security agents seized his bibles, missals, catechism, the Code of Canon Law, breviaries, religious medals, rosaries, and other religious books and articles. Additionally, they seized all his funds amounting to \$ 20,000 JMP (about US \$ 2,500) which could be the entire treasury of the underground Roman Catholic Diocese of Shanghai. The search lasted three and one-half hours until midnight. No reason was given and no receipt was issued. Bishop Fan is now under close surveillance by the Public Security agents in Shanghai.

His Eminence Ignatius Cardinal Kung (Gong), the Vatican appointed Bishop of Shanghai, who currently lives in the United States protested such actions as *"violations of China's constitution which guarantees citizens the rights to religious freedom and to private property."* In his state of the world address on January 13, 1996, the Pope said: *"A persecuted believer will always find it difficult to have confidence in a state which presumes to regulate his conscience"*.

In the absence of Cardinal Kung, Bishop Fan is in charge of the underground Roman Catholic Diocese of Shanghai. Bishop Fan was in jail and labor camp for over 20 years as the result of his refusal to join the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association which was founded in 1957 by the Chinese Government to replace the Roman Catholic Church. The Patriotic Association continues to appoint its own bishops without Vatican's approval and to declare its independence from the Pope. It is recognized by the Government and is called the "official church". In his speech on

December 3, 1996, the Pope undoubtedly referred to the Patriotic Association as "a church which does not respond either to the will of the Lord Jesus, nor to the Catholic faith".

Cardinal Kung Foundation, established in 1992, is an advocate of the underground Roman Catholic Church in China. Two months ago on January 10, 1997, the Foundation released an internal Chinese communist document detailing procedures to destroy the underground Roman Catholic Church. "The search and seizure of Bishop Fan's property could well be a part of this procedure to pre-empt any Easter celebrations in the underground Catholic Church in Shanghai." said Joseph Kung, the president of the Cardinal Kung Foundation.

"It is atrocious." adds Joseph Kung, "The Chinese Government must abide by the international standards of human rights". He appeals to the bishops, religious superiors and lay-leaders of the Roman Catholic Church along with the human rights conscious business leaders in the free world "to be in solidarity with Bishop Fan and with all other persecuted christians and other religious believers to protest this barbarous act of the Chinese Government and to appeal the authority to cease such religious persecution. The seized property of Bishop Fan must be returned. If the Chinese Government cannot even respect such a basic principle, how could the governments and businesses in the free world expect the Chinese Government to respect and honor any other principles and agreements that the free world has entered into with the Chinese Government?"