

*MK survivors have discovered
that healing is possible
when the secret is brought to light,
when those who care about them
acknowledge the truth
of their experience,
when the Church reaches out
and says,
**“This should not
have happened.”***

When MKs Speak Out



THE INDEPENDENT ABUSE REVIEW PANEL

Most children of missionaries value their experiences in distant lands. However, in the 1990s several found the courage to report to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) that years earlier they had been sexually abused while attending boarding schools in Congo.

Many spoke of serious life-long consequences:

- ▶ self-hate, low self-esteem, a sense of powerlessness;
- ▶ struggles with depression, alcoholism/ drug addiction, eating disorders, or forming long-term relationships.

One woman said, "I gave up my idea of God as a strong, loving deity who stayed by me in times of good and bad... I gave up my relationship with my parents and all adults as people who could be trusted... I gave up the joy of waking up to a new day full of promise and excitement."

Committed to furthering the healing process, PC(USA), in 2002, appointed the Independent Committee of Inquiry (ICI) to investigate abuse that had occurred in the Congo. In 2004, after the ICI had completed its work, the church extended its inquiry beyond the Congo. It formed the Independent Abuse Review Panel (IARP).

The work of the Independent Abuse Review Panel

The panel's charge is to receive and respond to allegations of **past** physical or sexual abuse "where either

- 1) **the accused** was formerly under appointment by (Worldwide Ministries Division or one of its predecessor Presbyterian Church world mission bodies) and not currently under appointment; **or**
- 2) **the abused individual** (adult or child) was formerly in the mission field because of a WMD appointment."

Proceeding fairly and impartially, the IARP

- ▶ pursues the truth by locating victims and others having knowledge of abuse;
- ▶ encourages healing by listening to victims and other witnesses; and
- ▶ promotes justice by encouraging the denomination's accountability.

All communications to the IARP are kept confidential.

How you can help victims

Learn more about the physical and sexual abuse of missionaries' children by reading *The Final Report* of the Independent Committee of Inquiry, available on line at www.pcusa.org/ici/ici-report.pdf, or get a printed version through the office of the Sexual Misconduct Ombudsperson (see address below).

If you or someone you care about was physically or sexually abused while parents served PC(USA) or one of its predecessor denominations as a missionary, contact

- ▶ **IARP**
P.O. Box 18241
Rochester, NY 14618
1-866-313-3694 (toll-free)
IARPanel@gmail.com
Website: www.pcusa.org/iarp

If you or someone you care about is currently being physically or sexually abused while missionary parents serve PC(USA), contact

- ▶ **Sexual Misconduct Ombudsperson**
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
100 Witherspoon Street, #3608
Louisville, KY 40202
1-888-728-7228 ext. 5285