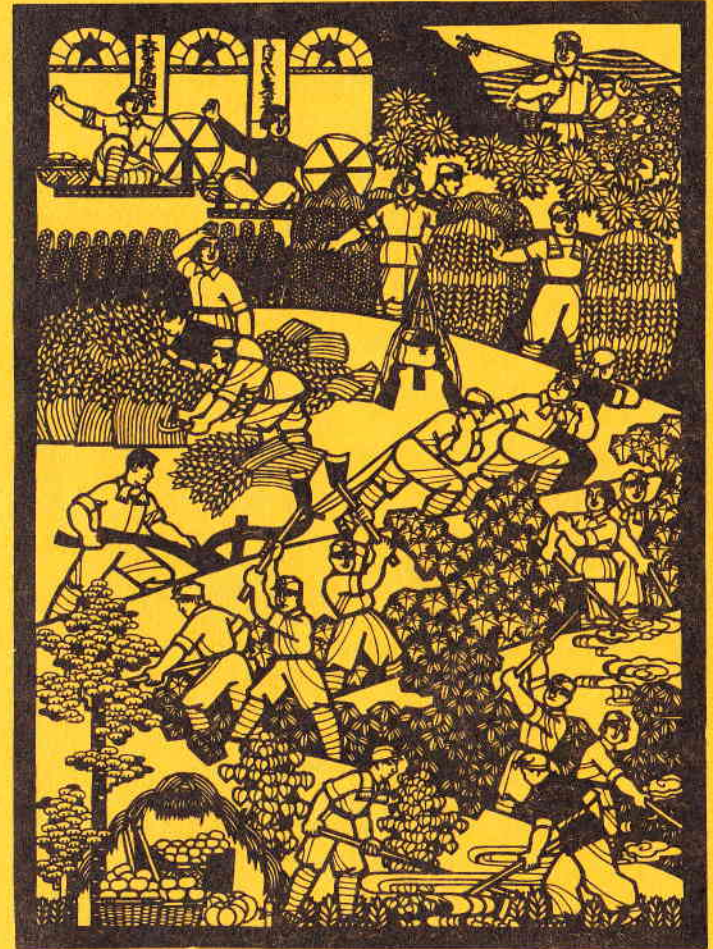


# People's China In 1973:

A GROUP REPORT



SCOTT NEARING  
HELEN K. NEARING  
DR. JEROME DAVIS

HOWARD FRAZIER  
HUGH B. HESTER  
BESS HOROWITZ

40 cents per copy postpaid  
three copies for one dollar  
seven copies for two dollars  
Reduced rates in quantity

Order from  
Promoting Enduring Peace, Inc.  
P.O. Box 103  
Woodmont, Conn. 06460

or

Social Science Institute  
Harborside, Maine 04642

## PEOPLES' CHINA IN 1973: A GROUP REPORT

1. SIX NORTH AMERICANS VISIT CHINA
2. CHINA'S CHILDREN
3. PEOPLES' COMMUNES
4. CHINESE FACTORIES
5. NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEES
6. HOUSING AND CLOTHING
7. CHINESE UNIVERSITIES
8. CHINESE HOSPITALS AND HEALTH CARE
9. RECREATION
10. SOME GENERAL COMMENTS

## SIX NORTH AMERICANS VISIT CHINA

Our group visited People's China from May 16 to June 2, 1973. All six members were serious students, deeply interested in China and its people, its development, its changing institutions. We paid our own way to and from China, and paid our own traveling and living expenses in China. Our visit was short because members of the group (all busy people) found it hard to agree on a mutually convenient time to take off.

Negotiations were begun several months in advance of our journey. As about fifty thousand others from all over the planet were applying for visas, we considered ourselves lucky to get to China at all.

We flew in to Peking from Karachi and Rawalpindi, over the white-topped range of the Karakorum mountains and were met at the Peking airport by our prospective hosts and guides, the China International Travel Service. With them we decided that instead of spending our precious fortnight on trains and planes, shifting from town to town, we would settle down in Peking for nine days and go to Shanghai for five days, making what excursions we could into the neighboring countryside.

All of us were seasoned travelers and experienced observers. Three of us had visited China previously, with four trips: two in 1927 and two in 1957. All of us wished to see and learn as much as possible during the fourteen day visit.

We asked to see what we could of education, industry and agriculture; and to meet spokesmen for China's new life style that is emerging from the Proletarian Cultural Revolution that began in 1966. Guided by two and sometimes four translators, more or less competent in English and all attentive, polite and alert, we saw communes, factories, schools, spokesmen for neighborhood committees; together with museums, public buildings, parks and concert halls.

Fortunately for us, several of our group had personal friends living permanently in Peking and Shanghai with whom we were able to spend some time and through whom we could get other glimpses of Chinese life.

## CHINESE CHILDREN

The most enthralling episodes of our trip to China were those involving young people, especially children. Bouncing with vitality and friendliness, they clapped us in and out of their classes and kindergartens with hearty greetings. With no self-consciousness or prompting they sang, danced, and recited for us with great good cheer.

Early in our stay we went to a kindergarten in Peking. We had just visited Textile Factory Number Two where the children's parents worked. We had seen the apartments in which their families lived. Their mothers and grandmothers had proudly shown the two, three or four room flats, with their hard kang beds, sewing machines, radios, posters, flowers, family photographs, and had even taken us into their kitchens where dinners were cooking. Now we met the third or fourth generation in their schooltime.

As we, a bunch of elderly, big-nosed strangers in foreign clothes entered the kindergarten room, the children rose from their seats and with eyes and feet dancing clapped and shouted "Welcome, Auntie and Uncle", "Welcome, Grandpa and Grandma." This went on until finally we were given tiny kindergarten chairs and sat down.

Immediately a pretty little 5 year old girl took command of the situation. She came to the middle of the room, faced us, and chirped some Chinese sentences. Six little urchins sprang up, seized three huge colored balls and executed a simple little dance, throwing the ball back and forth in pattern; the other children singing and clapping for us in unison.

Again the little announcer took charge. Another team of children gathered flowered hoops and did a more intricate dance to singing from seated children. The announcer gave place to a small boy who recited a long poem with grandiloquent gestures and piercing voice.

One more item was introduced by the pink-aproned little master of ceremonies. A fat little girl climbed into a big red papier-mache ball with openings at top for head to stick out and at bottom for her feet. With encouraging singing from the seated group another child tried to pull at the big ball. There was no response. Another and another joined the game, tugging and pulling in a long line. Finally six children, pulling away strenuously, joyfully got the great fat "radish" out of the ground.

The show was over. The teacher had not been in evidence. An "orchestra" of four tots had sat in a row and shaken tambourines and played on cymbals and drums for accompaniment. It was the children's show and admirably performed—with precision, vigor, snap and ease,

and with great spontaneity. They would not have been fazed by a Madison Square Garden audience or by T.V. cameras. Hurok should bring them over to the U.S. to spread cheer and goodwill. Well adjusted, cheerful little extroverts they were endearing signs of the new China.

The Chinese are great for tea, as everyone knows. Before and after every visit, whether it be to school, factory or commune: glasses of hot tea are served, usually at long or horse-shoed tables. After one viewing of a school, we were ushered into a conference room where teachers and officials took back seats and half a dozen children sat at table with us and took charge. Girls and boys around twelve years of age rose here and there around the table and with quiet courtesy and perfect poise welcomed us. They also voiced their appreciation for the opportunities given them at the school to learn and serve their country. Every boy or girl had something of their own to contribute, said it well and earnestly.

We went to a new residential area outside Shanghai. There, in a public school, we moved from class to class where chubby, brightly-clad youngsters sang, danced and recited as much for their own amusement as for ours. Their delight in their own jumping and hopping and singing were evident. They were also obviously happy to share their performance with the great big grandmas and grandpas from afar.

One class of pinafored children (around six years old) did four or five dances in costumes of the National Minorities: from Sinkiang and Tibet, Miaos, Mongolians, Uighurs. Their dances featured the daily life of the people: "I am a little carpenter", the boys hammering away at stools, one sawing at a table, two little girls painting a board; "I am a farmer on the Commune", simulating sowing and weeding and harvesting. In their last dance, as eight little girls and boys swirled and pranced around the room, in came a tiny boy in a long gown, a cap and drooping moustache. He was a comic figure from an older age and he stole the show, wagging his head and pulling at his moustache. Afterwards he attached himself to our group and, still in costume, waved goodbye to the end as our bus pulled out.

In this same school we entered one class of 5½ year olders which was called the Labor Class. Some children were seated at a small round table with tiny chairs, with a basket of small flashlight bulbs in the center of each table. The task was to fit two dozen bulbs into cardboard slots and then put them in containers. Well, we thought, is this sweatshop child labor? We asked and were told that for one half hour a week the children did some such contributory labor for industry. It was fun for them to put the bulbs in place as fast as they could; it was as interesting for them as any game, and far more productive.

There were "Children's Palaces" in every city of size in China.

## PEOPLES' COMMUNES

These were usually old mansions with many rooms, adapted to classrooms where the children of the city can come to play and learn. We visited one of the twelve in Shanghai and were led, hand in hand, by small escorts from room to room and floor to floor, viewing boys and girls engrossed in chess and checker games, ping pong, building model airplanes, boats and radios; taking part in choral singing, instrumental lessons and orchestra, painting and drawing, dancing and ballet. This was after-school recreation and education, participated in by children up to 12 or 14.

We also visited a school for children of high school age. The Nine Wall Middle School in Shanghai was founded in 1901, with 72 students; in 1927 it had 300; in 1949, 1000; and in 1973 it had 2,864, with a staff of 140. The 51 classes were too tightly packed, with an average of 56 students. Before Liberation practically no working class children were allowed to attend; now 80% of the student body come from working class families. We went into English and Mathematics classes, were shown examples of their work and were told that though the emphasis was placed on study of the humanities, the students also combined theory with practise by taking part in productive labor outside school time. Student graduates "go to the country" to work for two to three years. Then, on recommendation from the work place, they may enter the university.

Our general conclusion, after seeing hundreds of Chinese children and young people at close quarters, is that these bright-eyed representatives of New China offer the greatest hope that the Revolution will bear fruit.

Among the features of Chinese life that we saw, the Peoples' Communes are by all odds the most unique and significant. Other socialist countries have socially owned industries and public utilities, free education, public health and security services. But China has moved quickly and decisively from a rural economy based on private ownership and private enterprise, through a brief period of voluntary work teams and collectives, to rural communes of which China now has about 70,000.

The actual transformation from an agricultural based on semi-feudal land relationships and farming and gardening for profit, to social ownership and production largely for use, began in 1957-58 and spread rapidly across the country. In a phenomenally brief period China moved through cooperating work teams and early forms of partial collectives to the commune stage, which persisted largely unchanged through the Proletarian Cultural Revolution that began in 1966. Minor differences in the Chinese communes are swallowed up by their all but universal likeness.

Communes vary considerably in size. Each commune has the right to work a piece of land that is legally owned by the Chinese people. The greater part of that land is worked collectively by members of the commune.

The Double Bridge Commune which we visited on the outskirts of Peking has about 8,000 cultivated acres; with a population of 39,000, living in 8000 households. The working force is divided into 6 production brigades, and subdivided in 59 production teams. The chief products are wheat, rice, vegetables, fruit and fish. Commune production is grouped in three stud farms, three dairy farms, four pig farms, one duck farm, fish ponds, a flour mill, a factory for making herbicides, a machine shop and repair shop and twelve other minor enterprises.

Located on the outskirts of China's capital city, with a population of four million, commune productivity is directed chiefly toward the city market; from which in turn the commune gets city garbage and night soil for its compost piles.

Before 1949 much of the commune land was swampy and waterlogged for long periods of each year. Formerly the area occupied by the Double Bridge Commune imported grain. By draining some fields and using them for wheat and turning the more low-lying land into rice paddies, the commune has raised its grain production from 900 pounds per hectare to 6,300 pounds per hectare. It now produces grain for sale in the market.

Beside its sales of grain, the commune markets 20,000 pounds of

milk per year; 45,000 ducks; 10,000 pigs; 100,000 pounds of fish from its ponds. Its chief product, however, is vegetables---100,000 pounds daily for the Peking market.

The income of the commune is distributed in part as follows: 50 percent goes to its own members, who get from 300 to 400 yuan per year; 3% of the income goes as an agricultural tax to the state; 6% is set aside for improvements and betterments; 1% for a welfare fund. The balance is spent for operating the commune.

The commune has 18 primary schools and 6 middle schools. It also runs a nursery and a kindergarten. It maintains a fully equipped hospital. Each of the six production brigades has a staffed medical clinic. Each of the 59 production teams has a first aid station with partially trained medical personnel in charge. The commune operates two homes for the aged and the disabled. Each household contributes one yuan per year for the health services. (One yuan is about 50 American cents).

Two principles underlie commune policy. The first is self-sufficiency; the second is independence. The self-sufficient policy is obvious. Each commune provides for the food, housing, health and education of its members. It also provides for its own capital equipment: trucks, tractors, farm machines, electric power. Each has its own unit of militia. Each commune therefore enjoys a degree of independence.

In a larger setting the same two principles are embodied in the organization of a Chinese city. Shanghai, the largest city in China, has a population of about 10 million, widely spread. Within its boundaries and in its immediate surroundings there are fields of wheat, rice and corn, and endless vegetable patches cultivated by 197 communes producing primarily for the Shanghai market.

In 1973 Shanghai is self-sufficient in vegetables and greens, with a great variety of other products produced within the radius of a few miles. Each afternoon and evening food products from the communes moved into the city, with return loads of city organic wastes moving into the commune compost areas. This arrangement provides daily supplies of farm-fresh food, and transportation costs are reduced to a minimum as much of the food is harvested within or very near the city limits.

As a further step in the direction of independence, each Chinese commune repairs and often builds its own tools and machines. It also goes in for side-line industries such as brick kilns, machine shops and the manufacture of various goods and services outside the ordinary range of agriculture and animal husbandry.

Each household is allotted a private plot of commune land on which its members may raise vegetables, fruits, flowers and farm animals for their own use. This private plot land comprises between 3 and

6 percent of the cultivable land of the commune. This policy makes the private plots large enough to supply each household with essential local food, but not extensive enough to push the household into private production for sale and profit.

The Double Brigade Commune of Shanghai with its population of 20,000 is directed by a revolutionary committee of 15 members---8 men and 7 women. Of the 15, 12 are members of the Communist Party. Eight percent of the workers on this commune are Communist Party members. A committee of 15 is elected by the Party members of the commune. This commune selects its best young people to serve with the Peoples Liberation Army for two or three years. The young people not so selected compose the members of the Commune Militia. The birth rate last year on the Commune was 9.8 per thousand. Before the Cultural Revolution it was 26. The commune goal is 6.4 per thousand. The average family size in the commune is four.

Until Liberation in 1949, China, like so many Asian countries was peopled for the most part by land workers. A few were rich landlords. Many farmers owned some land, but many of the plots were too small to support a family. There were millions of landless peasants who worked when they could get jobs and who died of starvation in bad crop years.

Liberation ended landlordism. It also developed the commune in which the land is owned by the people and the products of farming and gardening are shared. People no longer starve in China. As techniques improve, more and more Chinese people are learning to cooperate at work and to share in the product.



## CHINESE FACTORIES

China's agriculture and animal husbandry are the foundations of its national economy. For this aspect of its life the 70,000 communes together with a number of state farms and experiment stations, are responsible.

Side by side with its agriculture, the Chinese people are developing a wide range of industries and public utilities. The chief center of industrialization is Shanghai but, following out the principle of local and regional independence and self-sufficiency, products such as agricultural and industrial machinery, trucks and busses and electrical appliances are being manufactured in several widely separated industrial areas.

China's land area is slightly larger than that of the United States. The principle of local and regional self-sufficiency, purposefully applied to China's sub-continental dimensions, is resulting in great savings, particularly in transportation. It also avoids the difficulties of congestion which accompany the concentration of industries in single centers.

Textile production is widely distributed in China. We were able to visit one of the textile mills located in Peking. The mill was built in 1964. Its 115,000 spindles and 2,400 looms are operated by 6,400 workers and staff members, 70 percent of them women. The factory runs three shifts of eight hours, with shifts rotating each week.

Peking Textile Mill Number Two provides housing for 80 percent of its workers, apartments for families and dormitories for single persons. It operates restaurants which serve food that may be eaten on the premises or taken home. It also provides nurseries and kindergartens for the children of its workers. Women workers have a 56 day leave after bearing a child. The average wage in the factory is 64 yuan per month.

Judged by Western standards China's wage scales are low, but living expenses are also low. Potatoes and tomatoes were two U.S. cents per pound when we were there in early June. Green vegetables and fruit were abundant, fresh and equally cheap. Rent costs a family about 5 percent of its income. A haircut, shampoo and singe in Shanghai for one of the members of our group cost him 35 U.S. cents. Admission to a movie is from 15 to 25 U.S. cents. Education and health facilities are free, with only token payment. An hour-long operation we witnessed in a Shanghai hospital cost the patient nothing, with general expenses during her week's stay in the hospital less than 50 U.S. cents per day.

We visited a Shanghai diesel engine factory that was established in 1947 as a joint enterprise venture of Chinese and United States capital. During the first decade of its existence the plant used western models,

adapting them to the needs of Chinese industry. During its second stage, 1958 to 1966, the factory developed its own designs, put them into production and began marketing and exporting high speed diesels. With the Cultural Revolution, the factory entered its third stage. Designing, building and setting up its own automatic machines and its own assembly lines, the factory began making its present-day models for bulldozers, cranes and other heavy equipment.

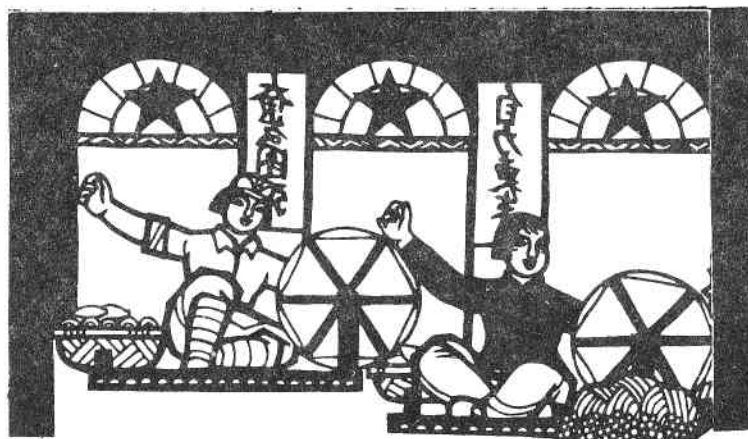
Working class consciousness in this factory was raised during the Cultural Revolution. The result was a doubled production of superior machines competitive in the international market. Today the plant consists of eight workshops employing 8,000 workers, one-quarter of whom are women.

Free medical care is provided for all workers. If they are disabled or sick for a period of up to six months, they continue to draw their regular pay. Beyond six months, they get sixty percent of their wages.

The engine factory maintains a restaurant and dining room, nursery, kindergarten, primary school and middle school for 2000 pupils. A polytechnical school is also maintained by the factory. Students from Shanghai schools go to the diesel factory for periods of a few weeks to a few months and learn practical work.

Safety is a prime responsibility of every Chinese factory. The accident rate is kept low by prevention measures and worker-training in self-protection against injury. Once every week there is a meeting in each production team for self-criticism and suggestions for improving production and safeguarding against accidents.

There is a trade union in the diesel engine plant to which 95 percent of the workers belong. They pay no union dues at present. The salary of the trade union leader is paid by management. The former union was badly disorganized during the Cultural Revolution. In the near future it will resume its usual tasks of representing the workers in their dealing with management, advancing production and living standards, and playing its part in the organization of socialism.



## NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEES

Paralleling country communes, the Chinese Communist Party after 1957 launched a program for establishing city communes. The city communes seem to have been only a limited success during the eight years from 1958-1966. The Proletarian Cultural Revolution in 1966 replaced city communes by revolutionary committees, which became part of the administrative governmental apparatus all over China.

Such a development is a logical outgrowth of China's age-long experience with the enlarged family. Traditionally, the Chinese people have lived in moderately large groups of blood relations and relatives by marriage and adoption. The enlarged family lived around a courtyard, worked together, and faced life's problems as a cooperating group. Like the commune in the countryside, the neighborhood committee is an extension of the enlarged family.

We met the chairman of the Feng Hsien Revolutionary Committee, Peking, in a large light airy hall, with windows open to waving willow and plane tree branches and red-tiled roofs. We sat at a long table with the eternally-served glasses of hot tea. The sounds of children shouting and singing came up from the playground below. During the discussion we learned the following facts.

Every neighborhood, every factory, every school, every hospital, every trade union in present day China is headed by a revolutionary committee. Local political administration has a revolutionary committee at four level--the municipality, the district, the neighborhood, and the street, lane, or block. These revolutionary committees are under the political guidance of parallel units of the Chinese Communist Party. A neighborhood revolutionary committee is responsible for the welfare of a group of families and individuals living in a particular area. It is shepherded by a Communist Party unit consisting of all the Party members living in the same area.

Neighborhood revolutionary committees are responsible for the social life of the neighborhood, for the cleanliness of its streets, the water supply, school attendance, the removal of waste. In a word, they are expected to oversee all matters related to neighborhood welfare and to take preventive rather than punitive action in dealing with them; Where necessary the neighborhood committee may call upon the police. If their preventive work is thoroughly done, however, there will be no need of police action. The neighborhood will be clean, healthful, secure.

The Feng Hsien Revolutionary Committee of Peking presides over a neighborhood with 52,000 people in 14,100 households living on 132

small streets. 22,000 office workers, 6,000 pre-school children and 7,700 retired persons and housewives live under its jurisdiction, in 25 street, land or block committees.

Street committees are responsible for periodic clean-ups of their territory. Each supervises a public health clinic, gives inoculations to babies, distributes birth control information. Those in charge of the health clinics which we visited have some degree of professional training.

The Feng Hsien Revolutionary Committee conducts seven workshops which turn out standard products such as garments, spark plugs, machine parts. These seven workshops employ 1,199 workers who are paid on a piece work basis. The Committee checks up on the ten elementary schools located in its territory, and on the four middle schools, and even helps pupils with their home work. They are also responsible for seeing that all goes well with the local hospital.

Organized or re-organized during the Cultural Revolution, neighborhood and street committees are more or less experimental. In theory they do for the cities what the commune have done for the countryside. Because of their short life span they may be lacking in trained leadership and experience.





## HOUSING AND CLOTHING

In the West, food is the most expensive item in the city family budget, with rent and clothing following closely. People's China has changed this pattern. Food still heads the list of family expenditures but rent and clothing have become incidental. Rent is a minor item in the family budget because the government pays the capital costs. The renter pays 3 to 5 percent of personal income, barely enough to cover carrying charges.

Clothing, especially that of men, is designed for utility and comfort, not style. Generally made of blue cotton, the clothes vary in weight from summer to winter, but the style remains much the same: a shirt and trousers, with a jacket added for warmth. Children are dressed in bright colors, especially red. Women wear trousers, shirts and jackets as do the men, but are branching out into more colors and more variety.

Changes in clothing styles are almost mandatory in the West, especially for women. The prestige factor and the attention paid to clothes in the West is overdone. China underplays these factors. The benefits resulting from this policy may well be on their side.

Chinese housing, especially in the cities, is provided by factories for their workers or by the city in the same way that water, light and paved roads and sidewalks are provided for citizens in the West.

In Shanghai we visited the Feng Tung Workers New Residential Area. It was built in 1952. Its buildings, from two to five stories high, provide 317,499 square meters of floor space. It houses 9,900 households with a population of 44,000. It has a central shopping area with a small general store in each lane.

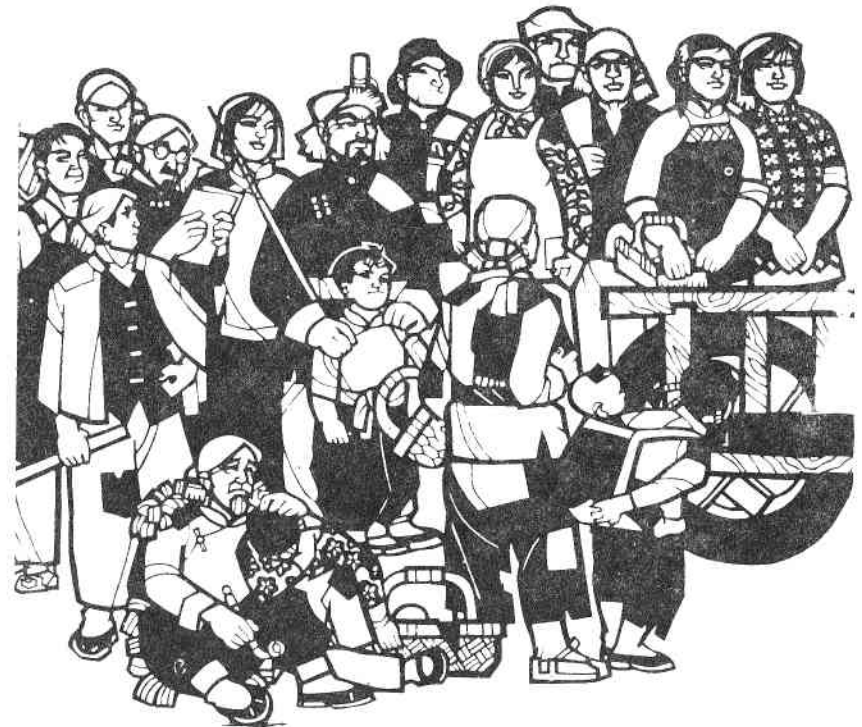
Feng Tung has a central cultural hall, a park, four nurseries, four kindergartens, nine primary schools, three middle schools. In each neighborhood there is a staffed clinic. Each lane has a health center where remedies for minor illnesses are prescribed and even occasional acupuncture is administered.

People living in Feng Tung are chiefly factory workers and their families, teachers and health personnel. The community also has many retired residents. One of their flats we visited was a roomy, airy three room apartment on a corner, with fine ventilation and trees outside the larger windows. It was an attractive home for a retired couple and their three unmarried children.

Members of the Feng Tung working class families not otherwise employed are given an opportunity to work in any of sixteen community workshops housed in eight buildings. Machine parts, electric gad-

gets, garments and other small items are sent in by the neighboring factories and processed in the workshops by about a thousand Feng Tung people. For this work they receive wages averaging slightly lower than in neighborhood factories.

There are eleven service centers in Feng Tung where retired persons may go to read, play games and meet together. We sat among the cheery oldsters in their clubs. One of us even learned a new knitting stitch to take back to America.



## CHINESE UNIVERSITIES

China's educational structure takes care of 120 million students in primary schools; 36 million in middle schools; and 200 thousand in 331 universities and schools of higher education.

During the Proletarian Cultural Revolution universities, schools of higher education and middle school were closed for longer or shorter periods. The students were given free food and transportation and urged to move about the country, spreading the works of Mao Tse-tung and urging that his thoughts be accepted as the guiding principle in remolding Chinese life.

Out of the turmoil and confusion of the revolutionary period a new educational system is developing in China. In pre-revolutionary China higher education was generally accepted as a privilege enjoyed by the ruling elite. Few sons and daughters of peasants or workers went to middle school. Even fewer received a higher education. Today, children of peasant or worker families have priority.

Peking University, founded in 1898 on a 320 acre campus close to the city, was recognized as an outstanding example of Chinese higher education. During the Cultural Revolution it was the scene of a bitter struggle between contending factions at all levels of university life. In the course of the Cultural Revolution the University was closed. In 1973 it is returning to its place as a leader in Chinese higher education.

After the Cultural Revolution the higher educational institutions were gradually re-opened under several limitations. First, each institution was headed by a revolutionary committee on which workers, army men, Communist Party members, students and faculty and utility workers were represented. At the same time a Communist Party unit was set up in each institution. It consisted of all Party members in the institution and had a supervisory responsibility for the institution and its revolutionary committee.

University affairs at Peking University are directed by a revolutionary committee of 37 members, of whom four are workers on outside jobs, seven represent the students, nine represent the teaching staff, three represent the service employees of the University. From the 37 members of the Revolutionary Committee 13 are selected as a standing or executive committee which directs day to day University affairs. No students are members of the Standing Committee.

There are about 3,000 members of the Communist Party connected with the University. These Party members select a 47 member committee which, we were told, "exercise leadership over all university activities, including the University Revolutionary Committee." Further, "the University Department of Arts and Letters is following Chairman

Mao's injunction and using the whole of society as a laboratory in which students establish and maintain their contacts."

University faculties were carefully combed for politically unreliable elements. Those members whose loyalty to the Revolution was open to question either self-criticised to the satisfaction of the revolutionary committees or they were sent into the countryside or industry to learn from the peasants and workers. We met professors and teachers of Economics and of Political Science who had been to the country for longer or shorter terms. They are now back at their facilities.

Tuition at Peking University is free to students from families of workers, peasants and soldiers. Workers with at least five years experience in agriculture, industry or the army draw their regular salaries while they attend the university. The highest salary paid at Peking University is 345 yuan per month. Apprentice teachers begin at 45 yuan; technicians begin at 40 yuan.

The present personnel of Peking University includes 2,200 teachers and staff members, with 3,400 students. Its plans for the future include the enrollment of 10,000 students. The university has at present 17 departments and 64 specialized disciplines, with 65 factories in which university students are expected to link theory with practice. This year 90 first year students and 6 teachers from the Department of Philosophy spent 50 days in a commune.

Graduates of middle schools do not go directly to higher schools. Instead, they are assigned to productive work in communes, in factories or other enterprises for two to three years. The assignments are based on planned quotas. As the number of middle school graduates far exceeds the enrollment capacity of higher educational institutions there is a drastic process of elimination at the work place. A middle school graduate, after two or more years of productive work, may be recommended by the director of his enterprise for a higher education. If the recommendation is accepted, the boy or girl may enter an institution of higher education. The final word is given by the University.

University courses vary in length: for instance, library science requires two years, theoretical physics four years. Starting this year there will be short courses of from three months to one year, designed for students who are unable to pursue regular courses. Beginning also this year, for the first time since the Cultural Revolution, some graduate courses will be given.

University students played an active political role in the Cultural Revolution. Today they are uniting education with politics and productive labor and thus "leading the revolution in education". They are undergoing what they call "the great proletarian teaching revolution." They advocate "not passive knowledge, but enlightened action."

## CHINESE HOSPITALS AND HEALTH CARE

The Lunghua Hospital is one of the ten surgical hospitals in Shanghai, located about eight miles from the downtown area. It has a staff of a hundred doctors and a hundred nurses, one-fourth of whom are constantly in the countryside servicing the rural people and training bare-foot doctors and medical teams. Altogether there are four hundred hospitals and health units in Shanghai.

On the morning of June 1 our group visited the hospital to observe an operation for the removal of the thyroid gland from a woman factory worker 35 years old. Our group observed the operation from the glass enclosure above the operating room. Three surgeons, two nurses and an acupuncture technician were attending the patient.

Twenty minutes before the operation began, two needles were inserted in the right hand, one in the flesh between the thumb and forefinger, the other a few inches above the right wrist on the outer arm of the patient. The first needle was kept in constant vibration by twisting, which deadened the thyroid gland area.

For an hour we observed the operation, seeing the incision being made, the cutting and tying of the blood vessels, and the removal of the thyroid gland, which was the size of a large egg. The patient remained conscious and talked to the doctors as the operation proceeded. No signs of pain were indicated on her face.

Within thirty minutes after the operation the patient walked from the operating room to the conference room, where we had assembled. She said she felt fine and had not suffered any pain during or following the operation. She looked ruddy and calm and not at all disturbed by our questions.

She left in care of three nurses and was to remain in the hospital for a week, with another two weeks at home to recuperate before returning to work. She would receive full wages during the period, with no cost to her for the operation except for her food while in the hospital. If she or we had been required to pay for the operation it would have cost \$7.50.

Following the operation members of the staff told us more about acupuncture. It has been practised in China for more than 2000 years. It is used both as an anaesthesia and for treatment of numerous illnesses; such as dysentery, malaria, arthritis, prostatitis, infections of the respiratory tract, deafness, and cancer. Supposedly incurable diseases have responded to acupuncture.

Acupuncture anaesthesia is now practised extensively in China for people of all ages, from babies to people above eighty. It has been used on more than 400,000 patients for major operations on the head, chest,

abdomen, and other parts of the body. It has been successful in ninety percent of the cases. In every major operation, when acupuncture is used, the usual means of anaesthetizing are always in the operating room in case a patient does not respond successfully to acupuncture.

Shanghai has a Central Medical Bureau directly under the control of the Shanghai Revolutionary Committee. The Lunghua Hospital is under the direction of its revolutionary committee of eleven: 4 doctors, 2 nurses and 5 Party members who represent the Party Branch Committee of the hospital.

Hospital workers, including doctors, are on duty during an eight hour day and a six day week. The highest salary paid in the hospital is 300 yuan per month for doctors and surgeons. Salaries begin at 60 yuan. Salaries of nurses begin at 48 yuan and go up to 120 yuan.

When we visited Hunghua Hospital fifty of its personnel were on duty in the countryside team. Among the doctors and nurses present at our conference on June 1, 1973, all had been members of its countryside team at least three times.

Health services in China are free or nearly so. To workers in factories, mine and like work places they are without cost to the worker. Members of workers families may be asked to pay a small part of medical costs. Members of Chinese communes, who make up a majority of China's working force, generally pay one or two yuan per family member per year into a fund for health care. This is supplemented by a contribution from the commune general income.

All of the health workers to whom we talked laid stress on preventive medicine as well as the need for taking care of those who suffered from ill health or accident. They agreed with us that the far greater need was to see that people stayed well and did not require medical attention.



## PEOPLES' RECREATION

We have spoken of the young people's recreation outside school-time in "Children's Palaces". Their other amusements are: going to the numerous parks (Shanghai alone has 32), to walk together, to play ball, marbles or to fish in the streams. Young people volunteer for country work and public projects. They enthusiastically dig away at tunnels or air-raid shelters (we saw a large group of them on the hospital grounds) and plant trees and bushes along city street or in the suburbs. They go to zoos and get to know strange animals. We saw hundreds of eager young faces laughing and enjoying the antics of mother and baby pandas, and fascinated by the huge elephants and their long trunks. A special pet of the children was a baby elephant just donated by Ceylon to the Peking zoo.

Young and old people frequent the numerous cinemas in every city and town. (We were told there are 42 theatres and 65 movie houses in Shanghai.) The price of admission is from 15 cents to 20 cents, and every movie or theatrical performance we attended was jammed. Popular concerts are held weekly in the cities we visited. There too we saw not an empty seat, and no wonder—with the cost of the tickets so minimal.

The Shenyang Acrobatic Troupe came to the United States last winter for a short tour and played to enthusiastic, capacity crowds in New York, Chicago and other cities. We saw an acrobatic troupe in Peking and another in Shanghai, both times in crowded stadiums. The entry price was only 40 feng (20 cents). (One of our group had paid \$50 for a seat in New York City.) The performers we saw were every bit as good as those sent abroad, with some youngsters (both boys and girls) well on the way to becoming star performers.

One of the Chinese forms of recreation that is not part of spectatoritis is their "Shadow Boxing" or Tai Chi Chuan, a form of slow, posured movements of hands, arms and feet done in hundreds of parks and along hundreds of avenues by thousands of Chinese in early morning—from 5 a.m. to 8. Old men and women stand silently and move arms and legs in slow dignified gestures; office workers stop for intervals on their way to work and unselfconsciously move arms and legs in what seems like a stately dance; agile young students prance about in a small circle with long bamboo red-ribboned poles. We saw younger boys rattle their sticks against each other's and then spring apart and meet again. Some wrestle; some do karate; some do what they call "monkey boxing". Some of the best performers we saw along the Wang Po River bank in Shanghai were young girls in pretty pinks and greens doing spirited acrobatic dances on their own. They were surrounded by crowds.

Most of the dedicated exercisers are ignored by the passersby, but any spectacular performance, particularly imitative trial runs by foreigners, as we found, brings a large and curious crowd of spectators. The walks and parks along the river in Shanghai were particularly alive for three or four hours in the early mornings with the concentrated performers oblivious of the crowds that meander by or stop to watch.

This is a unique form of popular recreation never seen by us outside of China. It is an extraordinary sight to see a population enjoying itself in such a healthy, artistic and body-building way.

In Peking alone over a million bicycles are registered. Chinese economic policy involves the production of busses, trucks and railroad equipment, but vetoes the production of passenger cars except for official use. Along the big avenues in cities there are well-paved bicycle paths full of pedalers. In country and cities young and old Chinese go to work, do their local errands and ride bicycles for pleasure. Outside our Peking and Shanghai hotels all day long and even late into the night streams of bicycles flowed quietly by, with only the tinkling of bells heard. This keeps city racket to a minimum, helps reduce smog, keeps people out in the open air, avoids the excessive drain on energy sources, and provides health-giving and enjoyable exercise for millions.

Most productive and creative among Chinese recreations is the mass effort to achieve essential social objectives such as flood control, irrigation, harvesting, land reclamation and building construction. In some of their most ambitious endeavors tens of thousands have been mobilized to perform miracles of dam building, land reclamation, water conservancy and tree planting. Under carefully drawn plans, in disciplined ranks, under floating red banners, with songs and cheering; young people, older people, boys and girls, men and women have united in common projects to promote the general welfare of China and its people.

## SOME GENERAL COMMENTS ON CHINA AND ITS PEOPLE

- A. Chinese children look exceedingly well fed and clothed. They have schools, playgrounds and health protection. They seem to be healthy, happy and carefree.
- B. Chinese adults seem relaxed and confident of their future. They are certainly busy. There is no unemployment. They have economic security. Prices have been the same for the past ten years. The proportion of family income spent for health services is minimal. Disorder, dirt and disease have been replaced by order, cleanliness and better health.
- C. Despite years of isolation imposed by Western governments, the Chinese are cheerful, hard-working, friendly and notably kind and hospitable to all who come to them with good will.
- D. China is engaged in a nationwide program of tree-planting, drainage, flood control, irrigation and intensive organic gardening and farming. The program includes millions of shade trees along city streets and country roads. Fruit trees, nut trees, berry bushes and grape vines are being planted on lesser slopes. Steep hills and mountains are being reforested. Deserts are being reclaimed.
- E. The Chinese are following the policies laid down in the speeches and writing of one personality—Mao Tse-tung. Red Army uniforms are in evidence but, with the exception of sentries on duty at bridges and official buildings, the soldiers carry no weapons.
- F. All members of our group were over sixty. We had come from cities like New York where elderly people walk about alone with considerable hesitation and keep off the street after nightfall unless accompanied. In China we walked alone, day or night, quite unconcerned and unaccompanied. So far as we experienced, a city like Shanghai (previously one of the most disorderly and dangerous in the world) was as orderly and safe as a New England village. Everywhere we left our rooms unlocked, without and loss or molestation.

On our way back to the United States, on the plane, we picked up a current issue of *Esquire* and read of Huey Newton's visit to China where "he felt secure for the first time in his life." "I felt as if I didn't need to lock my door. The Chinese warned me though. They said: "Comrade Newton, do lock your door. The country is full of foreign journalists these days".

- G. Peking streets and public places are so clean that on a Saturday afternoon when we walked with several thousands of other people through the grounds of the Temple of Heavenly Peace we did not see a single cigarette butt and only two pieces of scrap paper as large as a calling card. We picked up both and put them in a nearby waste container.
- H. Based on observation and second-hand information we assume that China, in 1973 is governed by one of the tightest, most effective and popular dictatorships that exists anywhere on the planet. The Chinese Constitution of 1953 is "tattered", to use the phrase of one local observer. As yet no other basic law has replaced it. At every level there are Revolutionary Committees which exercise much the same kind of local, regional and central authority that the Russian Soviets exercised at a like period in the wake of the Bolshevik seizure of power.  
Revolutionary committees, "serving the masses", are often appointed from the top down. In at least some cases, they serve for indefinite periods and select their own successors.  
Every revolutionary committee is supervised if not controlled by a segment of the Chinese Communist Party, which has a veto on its actions. Implementing and interpenetrating the entire apparatus of control and direction are members and representatives of the Peoples' Liberation Army. At the moment the Army seems to be subordinated to the Party. So far as we were able to learn, no deviation from or revision of Maoism is tolerated or even contemplated. In effect, Mao's utterances are China's basic law in 1973.
- I. Can anyone go to China? The Chinese reply to that question: We wish it was possible, because we believe that we have improved our pre-liberation living conditions almost beyond even our own hopes. We are convinced that if our neighbors from other parts of the world could come to China and see the results of our efforts, many of them would be inspired to go back to their homelands and do likewise. But we are only in the early stages of the revolution that has transformed our country. We are so busy changing conditions that we have not had time to provide the living quarters for guests, for transportation, or for the guides and translators that would be needed to take care of a big flux of visitors. Another year or two of preparation and we believe that we should be prepared to welcome any who would like to visit, observe, to suggest, and perhaps to learn from our experiences.
- J. Our group believes that Western governments should extend equal and reciprocal treatment to China, its people and government at the earliest possible moment.

Our group consisted of:

Dr. Jerome Davis, former Professor of Sociology at Yale; former President of the American Federation of Teachers;

Howard Frazier, President Consumer Education and Protective Association International;

Hugh B. Hester, Retired U.S. Army officer;

Helen K. Nearing, writer and farmer;

Scott Nearing, social scientist and farmer;

Bess Horowitz, Director *World Peace News*.

*PRINTED BY The Advocate Press, New Haven, Connecticut*

*PAPER CUTS FROM The East is Red*

*copyright 1972 by Peoples Press  
distributed by:*

*China Books and Periodicals  
2929 24th Street  
San Francisco, CA 94110*