

## WHAT'S REALLY HAPPENING IN CHINA ?

FELIX GREENE, formerly chief of the British Broadcasting Corporation's American bureau, went to China on his own in 1957, and his eye-witness report demolishes the old image of China that still exists in the minds of most people dependent upon the American press.

In a recent radio broadcast, Felix Greene said:

I went into China with all the prevailing assumptions and apprehensions. I expected to see a country of vast impoverishment and dreadful squalor and disease. I expected to see a people made sullen and unresponsive by the rigid coercions of a police state. That was the China I expected but that was not the China I found. No one can be in China for an hour without sensing an almost tangible vitality and order or seeing on all sides indications of the enormous optimism that is today energizing these remarkable people.

It is no good applying Western yardsticks to assess what is happening in China today, or to imagine that by seeing China through our own prejudices we will understand what is going on. What is happening in China today can be understood only within the context of China's own historical development. To say that China is moving through an industrial and social revolution of a scope and speed unparalleled in human history is true, but that is only half the story. It is what the Chinese are discovering and achieving in the field of human relations and co-operative endeavors that may yet be more significant . . . To try to understand China by applying an inappropriate yardstick is foolish enough but to try to understand her without even looking at the facts is madness.

This report, however, is more than an account of one man's journey to the Chinese mainland, since it extensively documents current Chinese Communist developments with reports by outstanding foreign authorities and other observers seldom heard in the United States.

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FELIX GREENE

今日中國實情



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**FELIX GREENE**



**CITY LIGHTS BOOKS**

*Cover photograph  
by Rune Hassner,  
Stockholm.*

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## FOREWORD

United States policy towards China has reached a dead end. This country made certain initial errors in the early stages of the Chinese civil war from which have flowed, like the unfolding of a Greek tragedy, most of our uncertainties and confusions and which have led finally to the present impasse. There now seems to be no step which we can take which is not without great danger, yet to let things drift and do nothing may in the end prove disastrous. One thing in this very tangled situation is certain—no sensible and humane policy can be devised unless it is based on realities and a knowledge of the facts. But it is precisely knowledge of the facts which we have been avoiding. The American public is almost wholly unaware of the new China which is moving very rapidly indeed to the forefront of industrial and military power. If we are to deal realistically with China we must correct our image of her. We can no longer look upon her as a vastly backward country, incompetently governed, handicapped by a lack of natural resources and whose people are temperamentally incapable of coping with the demands of modern technology.

Civil wars are always among the most cruel of human conflicts. No one can claim that either side in China did not inflict the most enormous barbarities upon the other. None of the great historic revolts of a people against unendurable suffering and injustice has ever been a picnic;

and the contemporary world always recoils aghast at the violence that accompanies them. This was true of the French and American revolutions; it was equally true of the Chinese revolution. Now that the dust has settled and the violence has largely subsided we must, I believe, admit to ourselves that we are still misconstruing the meaning of the Chinese revolution.

While in Peking I had access to the ambassadors and staffs of several of the Western embassies. I also had discussions with many highly intelligent Europeans who have lived in China for many years. Their reports on the present leadership in China were impressively similar in substance. China is not being led by a group of men hungry for personal power who have fastened themselves on a resentful population. It is, rather, a leadership that is genuinely concerned with the welfare of the people. Though changes in the leadership take place from time to time there is no evidence of that jockeying for power or of personal rivalry that we have so often seen in the Kremlin. Mao Tse-tung is not surrounded by yes-men fearful of arousing his displeasure. We are not, in other words, dealing with a Hitler or Mussolini or a latter day Stalin whose moral judgments were warped and whose actions were poisoned by a paranoid mistrust of those around them. China is being led by historically conscious, strong and enormously competent men who identified themselves with the people, who knew the changes the people wanted and sponsored those changes. They won their revolution because they voiced the demands of a people driven to extremities of suffering, who were determined to end the disease, hunger and corruption which had held them in subjection for centuries. If ever in history there was a people's revolution—this was it.

Americans may be dismayed that revolutionary success was attained and that so much since has been achieved

under a political philosophy which they detest. But facts do not disappear because we dislike to look at them. The present wholly negative policies of total non-intercourse and embargo are based on self-deception. We further this self-deception by preventing our newspaper correspondents from seeing for themselves what is happening in China lest their reports should destroy our illusion that the present Chinese leadership is a tyranny which may at any moment be overthrown or that might disclose that the condition of the people is not so bad as we tell ourselves it is.

Until we re-assess the meaning of the Chinese revolution in a realistic historical perspective, we will continue to base our policies on delusions and pretense—and that in the end can only lead to calamity. The tragic fact is that we find ourselves today in enmity with the first government in China that has succeeded—despite the violence of the civil war—in bringing unity, order, honesty, food, education, health, and above all *hope*, to the Chinese masses.

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## RAPIDITY OF INDUSTRIALIZATION

Since before the Korean war the United States and China have been isolated from each other. With only two or three exceptions, no U. S. reporters and no U. S. citizens have been permitted by the State Department to enter that country. During this period, unknown and unreported to the American people, there has taken place in China a social and industrial revolution of a size and speed unparalleled in the history of the world. The generally held picture of a vastly impoverished, hopelessly backward people, living in a stagnant society, is no longer a true picture of China.

From my discussions with the officials of several Western embassies and visiting industrialists in Peking and from the reports of many fact-finding delegations that have visited China from Western nations, the following has become clear:

- a. The Chinese are showing an astonishing mastery of advanced industrial techniques.
- b. In ten years, with Russian and East-European help, the Chinese have established industrial plants and technical training colleges on a scale that has made them already virtually self-functioning. Though many Russian and East-European technicians are still working in China their number is diminishing.
- c. In addition to the basic industries (coal, iron, steel, oil and electric power) China is now manufacturing for herself the machine tools and other equipment re-



quired for large-scale industrialization. Ten years ago she was, even by Asian standards, one of the most technically backward nations in the world. Today she has an advanced electronics industry; she is launching ships of 23,000 tons displacement; she is making large diesel-electric locomotives for her railroads; she is manufacturing jet fighter aircraft on an assembly line basis; she has recently completed a cyclotron and nuclear reactor and it would be wise to assume that she will soon be entering the atomic bomb and missile fields.

- d. China is developing her industries on a widely decentralized basis, thus making maximum use of her enormous population and making the country less vulnerable from attack.
- e. China is graduating more engineers each year than the United States and the number is moving up steeply. The Chinese are apt pupils and are readily trainable. (An East-German instructor of advanced electronics told me in Peking that his Chinese pupils were going through their courses at almost twice the speed of his German pupils.)

Mr. J. Tuzo Wilson, a Canadian, who is president of the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics has given a most absorbing account of his recent visit to Langchow in central China where 1500 scientists are now working and where ten times this number are expected to be working within a few years. Mr. Wilson reports, "The science in this . . . outpost of Asia is, though limited by manpower, unquestionably up-to-date both in technology and theory." <sup>1</sup>

- f. The present announced target is to "surpass British industrial production within fifteen years." The British

are convinced that this aim will be achieved much sooner. British coal production was surpassed in 1958 and they expect their steel production to be surpassed in 1959. A British economic report makes the following statement:

The pace of expansion is now such that within less than a decade China should become the third leading industrial power in the world, ranking only after the United States and Russia. <sup>2</sup>

### THE "GREAT LEAP" OF 1958

Though industrial expansion during the years 1952-1957 (the first five year plan) was considerable, averaging 19.2% per year, this was not superior to the rate of progress of Soviet industry during the years 1927-1932. But in 1958 Chinese industrial growth was enormously accelerated. Within *one year* Chinese steel production was raised from a level lower than that of the USSR in 1932 to a level not reached by the Soviet Union until after World War II. <sup>3</sup> The following are extracts from a British economic review of industrial developments in China during 1958:

The pace of China's economic advance in 1958 is unique in the annals of economic history. Gross industrial output rose by approximately 65% over 1957.

Government capital construction totalled \$91½ billion or 87% more than in 1957

About 700 large-scale industrial projects were completed—among them five open hearth furnaces at Anshan, of which two are as large as any in the world . . . The planned output of the Wuhan Heavy Machine Tool Plant in 1959 is not far short of the total annual output of heavy machine tools in the United Kingdom.

Government revenues in 1958 rose by over \$5.7 billion. Despite the unparalleled pace of expansion in all sectors and the

emergence of serious bottlenecks especially in transport, retail prices in 29 major cities actually fell by 0.9%. Foreign trade went up by 14%. New railroad track totalled 1,430 miles or more than double the mileage in 1957. Over 100,000 miles of new highway were constructed in 1958.

Local civil aviation network has been enlarged. There are now 18 locally-run civil airlines. Chinese built "An-2" type planes are now in service over some 3,700 miles.

In 1959 China should approach, catch up with or surpass the United Kingdom in the production of pig iron, steel, copper, aluminum, machine tools and power generating equipment, having already overtaken her in coal and cotton textiles in 1958.

British exports to China increased from \$31 million in 1957 to \$75 million in 1958. 4

Professor Charles Bettelheim, of the Ecole Pratique des Etudes, the Sorbonne, Paris, was a member of a delegation of French economists which toured China in the summer of 1958. Professor Bettelheim's reports fully support the British economic surveys. In a very well documented and cogently expressed series of articles Professor Bettelheim has explained how such an unprecedented increase in production was made possible and why he believes equally spectacular advances may be expected in the future. His general impressions are summarized in this quotation:

I cannot but relate the extraordinary impression created by the disappearance of all the social stigmas of "underdevelopment". Knowing Asia, and having seen the misery of some of the peoples of that continent . . . I was deeply impressed to see, in the towns as well as the villages, a properly dressed, apparently well-fed, healthy and cheerful population. Though I had read a lot about present China, I did not visualize such a transformation, and I can say that all through my stay this feeling of a transformation, a change of a magnitude and rapidity unprecedented in history, never left me.

What also impressed me was the remarkable variety of the goods available in the shops, and this with regard to food products as well as with regard to clothes, cottage industry

products and industrial consumer goods manufactured in China. For one who has seen the austerity of the Soviet second five-year plan years, this was also a great surprise. 5

## CHINA'S NATURAL RESOURCES

The long-held opinion that China lacks the mineral reserves required by a major industrial power must be corrected. Intensive geological surveys, which are still continuing, have disclosed the following reserves:

*Coal*—Total known reserves adequate for centuries. Well distributed over country.

*Iron*—Third largest known reserves in the world.

*Copper, tin, tungsten, molybdenum, mercury*—largest reserves of any country in the world.

*Aluminum, lead, manganese*—second only to Russia.

*Chromium, nickel, asbestos, diamonds*—adequate reserves for all foreseeable needs.

*Petroleum*—is the only resource at present in short supply. Two large new fields have recently been discovered. The Chinese are claiming that their known reserves of oil are now greater than that of Iran. This may be exaggerated. In addition to petroleum, known and indicated reserves of oil shale of 6,000 million tons give a secondary, less economical reserve of oil.

*To sum up:* China has the essential mineral prerequisites for establishing herself as a major industrial and military power. 6

## AGRICULTURE

Advances in agriculture output have been as startling as the advances in industry; and, as in industry, the advance in 1958 broke all previous records. The average annual increase in agricultural production during the years 1952-1957 was on the order of 6% per year.<sup>7</sup> During the winter of 1957-1958 immense efforts were made to bring new areas of land under irrigation. One hundred million peasants, who would have been seasonably idle, took part in this intensive drive and during the four winter months no fewer than 74 million acres were placed under irrigation. Other efforts were made during 1958 to increase total food production. Deep ploughing, close sowing, a huge increase in the use of fertilizers, insecticides, tractors and so on gave immediate results. Peasants were given scientific advice but were also encouraged to experiment themselves and all kinds of novel and untried methods were tried, sometimes with considerable success. One British report estimates that no fewer than 64,000 young men and women from the universities and colleges went into the rural areas during 1958 to assist local production teams and provide modern technical knowledge both for agriculture and local industries.

The results surpassed all expectations. A British report states:

Gross agricultural output rose by more than 70% in 1957. There is simply no parallel in China or anywhere else for such a phenomenal expansion in agriculture and the achievement is all the more impressive in view of the fact that last year's weather conditions were not particularly favorable and in any case the vagaries of climate in a continental country such as China never accounts for more than a 6% year to year variation in crops.<sup>8</sup>

The most detailed western report on China's development of her agricultural resources has come from M. Rene Dumont, Professor of Comparative Agriculture at the Agronomic Institute in Paris. He is probably the leading western authority on Asian agriculture. He visited China in late 1955 and again in the autumn of 1958. Here are some extracts from his report:

An increase of 60 to 90 percent in the harvest in one year, for a "continent" the size of China, is a phenomenon absolutely without precedent in the world's agricultural history . . .

How has this increase of 60 to 90 percent been attained? In 1955-56 the irrigated land had risen to 66 million acres and then increased in one year by 19.7 million acres, a phenomenon also without precedent. In the campaign of 1957-1958 alone, the area under irrigation is reported to have been further extended by over 74.1 million acres. Thus more was achieved in 15 to 18 months than had previously been achieved in two thousand years. Unquestionably irrigation is the *decisive factor* without which it would be impossible to explain such rapid increase in output . . .

Of course I cannot hold myself personally responsible for the absolute accuracy of all these figures, though they are official. At the same time, the amount of information collected is sufficiently consistent for me to assert on my own responsibility that what is happening in China is the most impressive agricultural advance in world history.<sup>9</sup>

The total grain harvest in 1958 was 350 million tons; her wheat production exceeded that of the United States for the first time, approaching that of Russia. China has at her disposal today more than *half-a-ton of grain per head per year*. Present plans call for a further 40% increase in agricultural production in 1959 with special emphasis on animal products. The fact that China today has a *food surplus* for the first time in her history and may within a few years become the chief food provider for other Asian countries will significantly enhance her political influence.

As a result of agricultural advances in production (in vivid contrast to what I saw in India and other Asian countries) I saw no child anywhere in China showing any marked indications of malnutrition.

## POPULATION

China's population today is approximately 663 million, increasing by 2.2% per year. This represents an *annual* increase equivalent to the present population of Canada. China's population is increasing by the present population of the United States every twelve years. It also represents an *hourly* average net increase of nearly 1,700. In 1956 the Chinese government made limited efforts through birth control clinics, education, etc., to reduce the rate of increase, but this policy has never been fully developed and was never extended to the peasants who still represent about 85% of the Chinese population. A great deal has been written outside of China about China's "population problem" but the officials in Peking do not appear to share the anxieties usually expressed elsewhere. The increase in agricultural productivity, even before the enormous rise in 1958, was twice or three times the rate of population increase. Since 1958 the rate is far higher. Irrigation is opening up vast areas of land hitherto barren and unpopulated and there are repeated reports in the Chinese press of actual man-power shortages in certain areas.

## EDUCATION

Tens of thousands of small rural schools have been established by the present regime. Teachers are still in short supply, and I found village schools where the teacher

could spend only two or three hours a day as she was teaching also in neighboring villages. An impressively large number of teacher-training colleges have been built or are in course of construction and China in 1958 graduated three times the number of teachers than were graduated in the United States. The drive against illiteracy is comparable to that undertaken by the Russians after their revolution. The most recent figures indicate that illiteracy is reduced to less than 20% of the population—a Chinese estimate which cannot be verified and which if true would be impressive. It is a common sight in China to see small children teaching their parents the rudiments of reading and writing; and college graduates are urged to return to their villages for a year or more to pass on to others something of what they have learned at college—especially to the older peasants who are not covered by the regular schools for children. The same intense eagerness for education that travellers report from Russia is apparent to any observer in China today. The Editor in Chief of the Reuters News agency of London wrote this about China's educational efforts after a recent visit:

Learning is no longer the prerogative of the limited few. Universities are crammed to their limits. They turn out young men and women burning to place China on an equal technological footing with the Western world.<sup>10</sup>

Professor Charles Bettelheim of the Sorbonne, whose comments on China's industrial development we have already quoted, tells us in the same report that the number of primary school pupils has increased by over 300% since 1949; that 90 million adults are learning to read and write; that the number of pupils receiving secondary education has risen 690% since 1949 and the number of college and university students has increased by nearly 400%.<sup>11</sup>

Today in China a great educational "reform" is taking

place. Students at all levels and in large numbers are participating in small industrial undertakings which are springing up everywhere; or are leaving the cities for several weeks on end to help in agricultural work. A great deal of criticism has been directed by the scholars and others of the Western nations to this mixing of education and physical work; and it is perhaps true that this educational reform has been taken to extremes. Stanley Rich, the ABC correspondent in Hong Kong, for instance writes in the *New Republic* with horror at the Chinese attempts to wipe out the distinctions between mental work and manual work, between peasants and intellectuals. Mr. Rich draws the conclusion that "the worker . . . is stripped of his technical identity. He may be a teacher one day, a farmer the next, a steel-smelter the next."<sup>12</sup> But this, surely, is precisely what Western sociologists have so often called for—a move away from the increasing and deadening specialization of our way of life which tends to limit human beings to an ever narrower range of experience.

It is interesting to see that Dr. Joseph Needham, of Cambridge University, perhaps the greatest Western sinologist, has written this after a recent visit to China:

There is no question that at the present time a great mystique of manual work has grown up in China. I believe that this is a true expression of the mass feeling of the people, canalised by the party leadership but by no means something imposed from above. In China in the olden days there was a great traditional aloofness of the scholars . . . from manual work—perhaps nowhere in the world was this more marked. Now the Chinese people are determined to overcome it. There may be exaggerations in particular times and places due to excessive enthusiasm, but the movement is fundamentally sound.

All cultures and civilizations have suffered from this divorce of theory and practice. But the greatest thinkers, experimenters, and artists have always seen that only when the manual and the mental (or the intellectual) are combined in one indi-

vidual's experience can mankind reach its highest stature. The combination not only brings true knowledge of Nature but also deeper sympathy with those members of society whose contribution must still for some time be primarily manual. . . . To think of manual work as a humiliating punishment is to misunderstand utterly what the Chinese are doing.<sup>13</sup>

## MEDICINE

No one visiting China today fails to be impressed with the degree of cleanliness and order which is found now throughout China. It comes as a staggering surprise to those who have become accustomed to the squalor and filth of so many of the Asian countries. Streets, trains, hotels, schools, houses are as clean as ours. Even the slums—though the huts are terribly poor and the road between them merely an earth path—are (as one British Medical report described them) "under hygienic control". Professor Brian Macgraith, formerly Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Oxford University and a member of the British Medical Research Council, was a member of a team of nine top-flight British doctors who visited China in 1957 to see what had happened to medicine in China since the revolution. Here are extracts from Professor Macgraith's report:

In some of the more densely populated areas considerable success has already been achieved in the control of gastro-intestinal diseases such as typhoid and bacillary and amoebic dysentery, together with many of the common worm infections. This has necessitated a gigantic clean-up of the affected areas, a task which at the beginning must have looked almost hopeless.

The standard of hygiene reached already is, however, most impressive. In the large cities and towns, for instance, there is a notable absence of flies and an even more striking absence of litter. The successful control of flies, the litterless streets and fanatical household cleanliness are having a profound

effect on the spread of gastro-intestinal infections, especially in children.

How has this been done? How, for instance can a notoriously dirty city be tidied up? The answer lies in the will of the people who must be persuaded that it is worth while making their dwelling places clean and keeping them that way. The public co-operation demanded in such an exercise is immense, and the Government has been remarkably successful in achieving it. This may have been easier in a totalitarian State than elsewhere and there was probably some element of compulsion needed to persuade the population to clear away hundreds of thousands of tons of dirt and litter from the streets and to swat flies and trench maggots until the insect population was brought under control. Nevertheless the Chinese man in the street is essentially practical and no amount of cajoling without a good leavening of common sense and social persuasion could have given him his present passionate belief in hygiene.<sup>14</sup>

Dr. F. Avery Jones, Director of the gastro-enterological unit at the Central Middlesex Hospital, London, was another member of this team and the following are extracts from his report in the *British Medical Journal*:

The cleanliness was impressive, with complete absence of litter and filth and practically no flies. Many litter boxes were to be seen, particularly in the parks. Even the mules had dung sacks under their tails to prevent them soiling the streets. The eradication of flies had been the result of a national campaign and had proved an important contribution towards the public health . . .

The Chinese policy is to expand rapidly the number of Western type doctors, and last year there were over 8,000 medical students starting a five year course . . . The practical subjects of the five year curriculum are essentially the same as in Western medical schools. All the students learn either English or Russian.<sup>15</sup>

And some brief quotations from a most interesting report by Dr. T. F. Fox, the Editor of the "*Lancet*":

Hospitals are multiplying fast: every county in China is said to have one now. (The Chinese claim that no fewer than 860 hospitals have been built in the last eight years.) But there are, of course, far too few . . .

The results, as reported to us, are certainly remarkable . . . In the Peking district we visited, there have been no cases of fatal puerperal sepsis since 1954 . . .

Maternal mortality in 1956 was said to be only 0.3 per 1000 live births in this district and 0.28 in Shanghai . . . The rate for England and Wales in 1955 was 0.54.

In cities the immunization program is elaborate. In Peking 90-97% of the infants get B.C.G. at 10 to 12 days . . . at 2 to 6 months the infant is vaccinated against smallpox . . . Later the child is immunized against whooping cough, diptheria and commonly against epidemic encephalitis . . . All this effort is having its effect.

Dr. Fox ends a very detailed medical report with the following remarkable tribute to the Chinese:

I came to feel that if humor, ingenuity, kindness and fortitude are the human qualities that need preservation, there is no reason to be much disturbed by the thought that the Earth might be ultimately inherited by the Chinese rather than ourselves.<sup>16</sup>

These reports by British doctors were written before the development of the People's Communes. Here is a more recent report (1959) by Dr. J. S. Horn, F.R.C.S., formerly surgeon at the Birmingham Accident Hospital, England, and now acting as Consulting Surgeon at the Peking Medical College Hospital:

Since the People's Communes were set up they've been establishing hospitals at county level and clinics (or working brigades) in every village, as the rudiments of a nationwide rural medical service. For example, in one county of Hupeh Province they already have 685 clinics. These are still very simple affairs, just a few rooms each, with essential drugs . . . and the People's Communes are beginning to set up medical training classes. It is moving to see the peasants come to the clinics offering gifts—mosquito nets, thermos flasks, basins, kettles, and so on—and money too—to equip what they know are the beginnings of their own "cottage hospitals."<sup>17</sup>

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMUNES

During the summer of 1958 a gigantic upheaval took place in China. Within the space of a few weeks the rural life of China underwent an historic transformation. The full story of the development of the People's Communes has yet to be pieced together, but from my discussions with several informed British observers who have seen the Communes at first hand, I believe that this, broadly speaking, is what happened.

I have already described (see "Agriculture") how in the winter of 1957-58 large-scale efforts throughout the country were directed toward the expansion of water conservation and irrigation. In the course of four winter months—when they would normally be idle—one hundred million peasants extended the area of land under irrigation by no less than 74.1 million acres. This was done through thousands of *local* projects, locally planned. In many instances it was found necessary, due to the nature of the terrain or the size of the project, for several co-operatives to combine their efforts. These combinations of co-operatives, arranged locally to meet the needs of particular irrigation projects, might be considered the first intimations of the Commune movement.

Meanwhile, the government had publicized improved agricultural methods—deep ploughing, close planting, use of fertilizers, etc.,—which created a sudden huge demand for water-pumps, ploughs, seeders and spreaders, which the existing national industries were quite incapable of meeting. The peasants therefore set about making their own implements in local workshops, and even began smelting their own iron. Once again many co-operatives found it easier to combine in larger units in order to support these small and medium-sized rural industries.

At this stage several co-operatives in Honan province decided, by local autonomous decision, to make permanent these temporary combinations. These were the first "People's Communes". The State Planning Commission in Peking admits that even then—in mid-Spring—it was still quite unaware of what was in store and wholly miscalculated the intensity of the local drive behind these combinations of co-operatives. It was only when Mao Tse-tung visited Honan to study this movement personally and news of these first Communes was published in the newspapers that suddenly (as happens in China) everyone wanted to do the same thing at the same time. In August the Central Committee gave its general approval and within four months 99% of all the co-operatives had combined into approximately 26,000 Communes. The size of each Commune varies considerably—it might consist of anywhere between 12,000 and 100,000 peasants.

No fixed pattern for these Communes has yet been established and there are still many varieties, but broadly speaking, the Commune has taken over or been integrated with the local political administrations, has taken over responsibility for roads, electric power, medicine, welfare, housing, schools and even banking. The Communes have made themselves responsible for the development of local industries, the training of a local "home guard" militia, the provision of day nurseries, canteens and restaurants and even barber shops. Most of the Communes provide free food; this food can be eaten at the communal canteen or taken home to be eaten there. Perhaps the most welcome development for the peasants has been the payment of *monthly* wages instead of the traditional twice-yearly hand-outs.

The Communes are locally governed. In some the peasants elect delegates who in turn elect the Commune leaders from their number; in others the peasants elect the leaders

directly by show of hands at open meetings. It is not required that the leaders be members of the Communist Party.

The American press has universally condemned the Communes as a further development of Chinese communist ruthlessness. *Life Magazine*, for instance, speaks of the "iron grip" that the Communes exert upon the peasant, the "harsh regimentation which tears families apart, puts children in barracks, even regulates sex." Cartoons in *Life* have shown peasants leaving their burning villages under rifle threat and women weeping bitterly for their children.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, Scripps-Howard syndicated a series of four articles under the title "Chain Gang Empire" and the thesis of these articles was that the Chinese regime is trying to "weld its teeming millions into a faceless mass . . . the first serious effort in history to put a whole nation on what amounts to a prison chain gang." The cartoon accompanying the first article shows a line of skulls above a blood-spattered wall on which are written the words "Bestiality", "Chain Gang Tyranny", "Family Destruction", "Slave Labor".<sup>19</sup> Even Joseph C. Harsch, the normally sober correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor*, has described the Communes as the "greatest mass sacrifice of human heritage, human comfort and human effort in all time."<sup>20</sup>

What truth is there in this appalling picture? Some, undoubtedly. Without question this vast rural upheaval cannot have taken place without excesses of enthusiasm, the over-persuasion of reluctant peasants by their fellows and some intolerance. But beyond this, the picture presented by the American press seems so distorted as to give a totally false impression of the real facts. The articles I have quoted were written by writers who, because of the State Department ban, have had no opportunity to see for themselves the conditions in China. It is difficult to find any reconciliation between these press reports in America and the more

moderate and considered observations of the British, French, Italian, Canadian and New Zealand writers who have been able to study Chinese developments at first hand. The development of the Communes started after I left China, but I have had an opportunity to question several competent British observers who went to China specifically to study the Communes and not one of them (though they were, as I was, permitted to travel freely) had seen any cases where families were separated or made to live in barracks, where children were severed from their mothers or where the authorities were using any physical coercion.

Any one who knows China and the traditional closeness of family life there, would realize that any attempt by any government to "break up the family" would be doomed to failure. On December 10th, 1958, the Chinese Communist Party adopted a Resolution which outlined in great detail the general principles of administration which were to govern the People's Communes. There is no hint anywhere in these instructions that family life would be disrupted or children taken forcibly from their parents. The following two paragraphs from the resolution give rather the reverse impression: (The italics are mine.)

Nurseries and kindergartens should be run well so that every child can live better and receive a better education there than at home, and so that the children are willing to stay there and the parents are willing to put them here. *The parents may decide whether their children need to board there, and may take them back at any time they wish.*

The old existing houses must be reconstructed step by step; new, picturesque townships and village settlements must be built by stages and in groups; these will include residential quarters, community dining rooms, nurseries, kindergartens, the Homes to Honour the Aged . . . schools, hospitals, clubs, cinemas, sports grounds, baths, and latrines. The construction plans of townships and village settlements should be thoroughly discussed by the masses. We stand for the abolition of the irrational, patriarchal system inherited from the past and for the



development of family life in which there is democracy and unity . . . Therefore in building residential quarters, attention must be paid to making the houses suited to the *living together* of men and women, the aged and young of *each family*.

It is true that the Chinese people have broken the feudal patriarchal (family) system. It must be known that this patriarchal system has long since ceased to exist in capitalist society and this a matter of capitalist progress. <sup>21</sup>

I particularly questioned the British observers about the militia training. All men between the ages of 17 and 40 are expected to be members of the local "home guard" (not directly connected with the national army) and they are required to drill and have target practice usually two evenings a week. The peasants, in some cases, keep their rifles and take them home with them at the end of drill; in other cases, the rifles are "stacked in some shed or barn near the drill field." This surely is eloquent proof that the "widespread tyranny" is a myth of our own making—for when in history have slave-drivers given arms to their slaves?

The Party Resolution of December 10th, 1958 says this in connection with the militia—"The whole of our people are determined to arm themselves." Also "The militia should be equipped with necessary arms produced by arsenals set up locally." This is somewhat reminiscent of the 2nd Amendment of the American Constitution in which the "right of the people to keep and bear arms" is affirmed.

The local spontaneous nature of the Commune development has been altogether missed by American writers who cannot conceive of such a movement being essentially a grass-roots affair. Here are some comments made publicly by observers who have recently been to China:

*Dr. Joseph Needham*, of Cambridge University, the erudite and universally acclaimed historian of Chinese science, whom I have quoted earlier; a man who lived much in China and speaks fluent Chinese, was in China in 1958 when the

Communes were just starting. He conceives them to be primarily an extension of co-operative production he had seen everywhere. (My italics)

I traveled some 12,000 miles within the country by train and road . . . meeting hundreds not only of scientists and scholars but all sorts and conditions of men. My most outstanding impression of China this year was of the unreality of the ideas so cherished in the West that the population is dragooned to perform its tasks. On the contrary, everywhere one sees spontaneity (sometimes overrunning government planning), enthusiasm for increasing production and modernization, pride in an ancient culture equipping itself to take its rightful place in the modern world. What has been done in public health, social services, industrial development, and advancing amenities of all kinds and what one sees going on under one's own eyes would be absolutely impossible without the *willing and convinced cooperation* of all types of workers, manual and intellectual.

A new type of social engineering, the product of leadership from within, not from above, raises up movements as urgent popular demands and not as the mechanical result of drives from the central government. <sup>22</sup>

*R. H. S. Crossman*, a British M. P., who in many other respects is critical of developments in China, writes this after visiting three Communes in different areas of China:

In each Commune I was informed that the Committee had been elected by a show of hands . . . it was emphasized that the only whole-time officials were the Chairman and his deputy; everybody else on the committee had to work half-time in the fields or in industry. In contrast with what I had seen in Russia, moreover, there was no question of the peasants being controlled by university experts or party bosses.

I was told in T (one of the Communes visited) that the total number of educated people was about 30 . . . yet they were able to show me a dam whose construction they had just completed. And when I asked who had drawn up plans, I was told that the school-mistress had copied the dam out of a chapter in a text-book brought back by one of the children from the Technical High School in Tientsin. I checked on all this very

carefully as we sat in a teahouse under the trees beside the dam. No, they had had no other help from the authorities above them and no interference either, except for formal approval of the site they had selected . . . Everything was home-made including the cement and the iron work—apart from the old engine in the power-house. That . . . had been brought home by a delegation which had found it in Harbin.

In both the other Communes I visited I found similar evidence of local peasant initiative.

Mr. Crossman describes the home-made iron furnaces, the ploughs being made by smithies, women making ball-bearings with pestle and mortar, and continues:

Certainly the implements they were producing were admirably suited to the agricultural methods . . . enjoined. How much more sensible to proceed in this fashion, encouraging the peasants to learn for themselves, take their own decisions and carry out their own industrial revolution than to drag them (as the Russians attempted to do) in one leap from the medieval sickle up to the combine harvester . . .

What about living conditions in the Communes? On each visit I was able to select a village for inspection . . . every village I visited was equipped with a creche, a kindergarten, a primary school and canteens—with the result that women were out at work and the labour force had been doubled. Of course, a foreigner who knows no Chinese must be wary on this subject, but I saw no signs that family life was being destroyed. Families were sleeping, as usual, in one bed; and I do not believe that communal feeding will destroy a relation with children as tenacious and affectionate as any I have seen. In each of the three Communes I visited there were literally hundreds of canteens of various kinds. In one village I found only rice was cooked communally, each family supplying its own meat and vegetables. In another, on the other hand, feeding had been completely communized and all payment had been abolished . . .

I am inclined to conclude . . . that the movement for the People's Communes did indeed come not from a remote official stratosphere but from that hard puritan elite of Peasant Communists . . . If I am right, this episode confirms that Chinese Communism still remains a dynamic mass movement and that its leaders still respond to pressures from below. 23

M. René Dumont, Professor of Comparative Agriculture in Paris whose report on Chinese agriculture I have already quoted, says this in connection with the problem of coercion: (the italics are mine)

Without the *active and voluntary participation of the majority*, the mountains would not have been terraced nor would the terraces have been held in place by gravel, nor would the gravel have been humped, basket by basket, from the river beds. It is my impression that the Chinese Party has succeeded in marrying its authority to the peasant's consent after due deliberation, a consent obtained by protracted explanations. 24

Mr. Edward B. Jolliffe, a Canadian lawyer who is now leader of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation in Ontario, was born in China and attended school there as a child and young man. In 1958 he returned to China for a visit and here are quotations from his report:

In Russia the consumer may be the forgotten man: not so in China. In fact the regime has made sure that a rising standard of living coincides with industrial expansion, that prices remain stable and shops well stocked. At Wuhan I saw a new fully integrated steel mill under construction, much larger than any in Canada. There are fifty thousand workers on this job. They and their families do not live in hovels like the ones most of them came from. They live in eleven hundred apartment houses built in only two years, a city in itself. The apartments are not up to Canadian standards, but they are well built and bear not the slightest resemblance to the squalor of old China . . . it is incomparably better than anything they ever knew before and their mood appears to be one of elation and pride . . .

And the peasants? Their lot, too, has radically changed. All but a few are in co-operatives, farming by team work and sharing the proceeds . . . Having visited such communities this year—and having entered many a peasant home forty years ago—I am amused by the story, zealously spread by certain writers from their posts in Hong Kong and Formosa, that the peasants (five hundred million of them) are kept in the co-ops by coercion and terror. My impression is that Chinese farmers—unlike their stubborn Russian counterparts—

take to the co-ops as ducks take to water. They have boosted production to a fantastic degree, which they celebrate with old fashioned parades to town, complete with gongs and fire-crackers. 25

And finally here is a quotation from a report prepared for his shareholders by Mr. James Muir, President of the Royal Bank of Canada, who went to China in 1958. He was there shortly before the development of the People's Communes and these were his general impressions:

The growth in industry, the change in living standards, the modernization of everything and anything, the feats of human effort and the colossal impact of human labor are not within our power to describe and still give a worthwhile picture of the scene. All I can say is that it must be seen to be believed. It is truly stupendous . . . We think the vast majority of the people of China have a government they want, a government which is improving their lot, a government in which they have confidence, a government which stands no chance whatever of being supplanted. 26

### THE "MATHEMATICS OF SUFFERING"

Nothing that has been written in this pamphlet should lead readers to conclude that all the people in China are content. There must be many who are not. And especially among the scholars and intellectuals there must be those who—while giving full credit for all the material benefits that the revolution has brought to the masses of the Chinese people—must nevertheless wonder how long real scholarship and free intellectual enquiry can survive in a society whose every facet is guided and controlled by the Communist Party. I have seen in other countries what fear can do to blight the existence of ordinary people and how life is made hideous when human trust is lost and when even former friends can no longer talk freely to each other. *That* kind of fear I did not see anywhere in China. I was amazed

—as other travellers have been—how cheerful and *unfrightened* the prevailing atmosphere is. Even in the scientific, medical and historical circles among which he moved Dr. Joseph Needham found much less strain than he had been led to expect, and it is probable that we have greatly exaggerated the crack-down on the "rightists" that took place after the "100 flowers" episode in 1957. And of course the Government has, from the start, had to rely on the services of the intellectual. The colossal advances in education, medicine and industry would have been impossible if the Communists had not succeeded in winning the willing allegiance of the vast majority of China's educated people. That may one day be seen as Mao Tse-tung's most impressive achievement. But when all this has been said, some fear there must be; there must exist below the outward appearances of intellectual conformity, tensions which a visitor like myself would never see. There must be many tragically frustrated lives among the minority who find it impossible to adjust themselves to the demands of the New China. But, making full allowance for this, I believe we have exaggerated and over-emphasized the extent of intellectual coercion exerted by the regime.

It is curiously difficult for us in the West to shed ourselves of the belief that Communism in China was imposed by force by a small band of ruthless men upon an unwilling and resentful population; we find it almost impossible to believe that millions of people, including vast numbers from the cultured and educated classes, could have embraced Communism of their own free will. In his book "Revolution in China" (which the London *Times* described as "the most important contribution that has so far appeared on the nature and behaviour of the Chinese People's Republic") Professor C. P. Fitzgerald addresses himself to this point:

It is . . . difficult for the West to believe that the Chinese people can have voluntarily accepted Communism. It is hard to

credit the free support given to a regime which denies freedom to some and only hands out a very qualified freedom to others. And yet there is no real doubt that the new system has obtained the support of the people, has satisfied the aspirations of the literates, and has won to itself the devotion of the men of religious temperament.

The military success of the Communists would have been in itself insufficient to secure the new regime had it not been accompanied by a conversion which has aligned the great majority of intellectuals behind the communist movement. 27

It is only possible, I think, to understand how this has been possible, if we remember China's past. Professor Keith M. Buchanan of the University of Wellington, New Zealand, gives Westerners a timely reminder after his recent visit to China:

. . . deep in the heart of China the stagnation of centuries is coming to an end . . . And if we want to understand the almost feverish energy and the dedication with which the people of China are throwing themselves into this gigantic task of economic development, we must keep in our minds a picture of old China—not the China of exquisite jade carvings and golden-roofed pagados and elegant scholarship, but a country of poverty and exploitation. A country where children with swollen bellies died by the wayside and the peasants ate roots and grass; a country where the collapse of the 1911 Revolution left the peasant and factory worker at the mercy of a rapacious ruling class . . .

It is fashionable among those who deplore revolution . . . to condemn the violence and suffering which were the birth pangs of the new society in China. It is fashionable to contrast the supposed lack of freedom in China with the freedom we enjoy; safely above the eroding tide of poverty, it is easy for us to do this. We rarely concern ourselves with "the mathematics of suffering" in pre-Liberation China—"the sum of millions hungered, of countless beings scratching the earth's surface for a pittance, of children prematurely dead, of men and women prematurely aged and minds acquiescant and fettered by superstition" Yet until we do so we can have no understanding of the processes of change in China. 28

And Richard Hughes, the Hong Kong correspondent of the

London *Sunday Times*, gives us the same reminder of the past in his articles written in 1957 after his second visit to Communist China:

I knew Shanghai in 1940 when it was the gayest city in the Far East—gay, that is, if you were a foreigner or a Chinese millionaire. But there were corpses in the street every night—20,000 died a year from hunger, cold and exposure. And there were swarms of beggars. And the childish street walkers. And the sweating rickshaw coolies, with a professional life expectancy of eight years if they didn't smoke too much opium.

And in contrast, this experienced foreign correspondent describes today's absence of beggars, how China has become "incomparably the most honest country in Asia".

No one now goes hungry in Shanghai. There are still hideous slums, but they are being steadily replaced by red-tiled, lattice windowed housing units . . .

So arises the dilemma. Who can strike the balance between freedom from starvation for the majority against freedom of thought for the minority? The comparison, one must keep repeating, is not the China of today with the Western world of today, but the China of today with the China of yesterday. 29

## THE AMERICAN PRESS AND CHINA

A most revealing inquiry could be made of our current press reports about China, some of which I have quoted above. Many news stories originate either in Hong Kong or Formosa, both most dubious sources for objective information. Some reports are open to question on other grounds. Thus *Life Magazine* (Jan. 5th, 1959) relies for its story about the Communes, not on an experienced reporter from some neutral country whose citizens are allowed by their Government to visit China, but on a young refugee. Similarly, the *Saturday Evening Post* (Feb. 21st, 1959) runs an article by a reporter who had been expelled from China.

Ugly and brutal things happen, alas, in all human communities, and China undoubtedly is no exception. But what a monstrously distorted image of American life would be given to readers in another country if the *only* news they ever heard about America was of its crime, its juvenile gangs, its insanity statistics and its Little Rocks! Or if the only first-hand reports available were provided by those who have left America because they found life here hateful; or by reporters (and there have been some) who have made themselves objectionable and have been asked to go back to their own countries. From their choice of writers it appears that the American press today is less interested in giving us factual information about China than in finding support for an already established attitude.

The present phase of reporting about China is strongly reminiscent of what happened after the Russian revolution in 1917. For the first four years after the revolution there were no competent and fair minded American correspondents in Moscow or anywhere else in the USSR. Nearly all Russian news came from violently anti-Russian sources at Riga (then not under Russian control). The result was a mass of material very similar to what we are getting today about China from Hong Kong. Families in Russia also were reported as being deliberately "broken up"; Lenin and Trotsky had quarrelled; Lenin had shot Trotsky; Trotsky had shot Lenin; both had killed themselves in a suicide pact; women had been nationalized (which meant that all women were public prostitutes operating without fees) etc., etc. The public believed these stories because they had nothing else to go on. In 1920 Charles Merz and Walter Lippmann wrote a famous supplement to *The New Republic* analyzing the many false reports. Adolph Ochs, owner of the *New York Times*, read this, was deeply impressed, and sent Walter Duranty to Moscow in 1921, the first competent

correspondent there for any American paper. His intelligent and accurate reporting created a tremendous change in the American climate of opinion.

The remedy today is the same. The newspapers, wire services and radio companies have available many highly qualified and trustworthy reporters—the most competent news gathering corps in the world. They should now be in China sending us solid day by day reports of developments.

In midsummer 1956 the Chinese Government invited eighteen American newsmen to visit China. The United States Government refused to sanction the arrangement. Under pressure from the press and radio companies Mr. Dulles in August 1957 agreed to sanction 7-month visas for China for 24 correspondents but *refused in advance* to grant reciprocal rights to any Chinese correspondents—which he must have known would make the plan unacceptable to the Chinese (or any other) Government. That this strategem was not more strenuously challenged by the press and radio companies will remain as one of the sadder episodes of this period. Whatever changes in Government policy may be made in the future it is distressing that during crucial years this country, and not China, was responsible for the news-blockade.

As was said earlier in this report no democracy should be frightened to face facts; no sensible foreign policy can be devised unless it is based on knowledge. Nor must we feel surprised if an increasing number of people feel that there is something inherently suspect in a national policy that can only be sustained by keeping the public in ignorance.

## WHAT POSSIBILITIES OF INTERNAL REVOLT?

The American Secretary of State has frequently suggested that there is a likelihood of internal revolt against the Chinese Communist regime and that American policy is based upon this expectation.

To anyone who has been to China, or has followed the mass of reports from competent Western observers, it seems almost unbelievable that as recently as last summer the State Department could issue in an official memorandum to American diplomatic missions the following reason for the non-recognition of the Chinese government: "The United States holds the view that Communism's rule in China is not permanent and that one day it will pass. By withholding diplomatic recognition from Peiping it seeks to hasten that passing."<sup>30</sup> The policy of the United States, in other words, is based on the premise that the present regime is insecure.

I found no support for this view anywhere in China. My own observations convince me (and the quotations I have given from reports of other observers indicate that they would agree) that the regime enjoys the support of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people. One writer, after visiting China, suggests that the present Chinese government is probably the only Communist regime in existence that would be returned to power in a genuinely free election.<sup>31</sup> No member of any Western embassy in Peking visited by me would support the view that the present regime is likely to be overthrown in any foreseeable future. The general view of experienced Western experts in China is that the Chinese government today (whatever violence may have been used in the early stages of the revolution) is attempting to make social changes with a minimum of social stress; and that the number who have suffered materially as

a result of the Chinese revolution is infinitesimal compared to the vast numbers who have derived benefit from it.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES OF CHINA'S GROWTH

If, in the light of the unexpected rapidity of China's advance, some change in U.S. policy is required, the following are some of the more obvious points which should be considered:

- a. The emergence of China as a large *food exporting* country has some far-reaching implications for the United States not yet fully realized. The London *Times* in an editorial on November 12, 1958, raises some of these implications: "Lately the United States has made up the balance of India's urgent food needs. Will China now aspire to compete as Asia's universal provider? With the production of half a ton *per capita* there will be plenty to spare. The use that is made of it may mean more to Asia than anything else that China can say or do."<sup>11</sup>
- b. The Russian-Chinese alliance is potentially one of the most powerful military alliances ever known and may soon be unbeatable.
- c. Even if we should wish to do so there is no conceivable way in which we can retard China's industrial advance. If our embargo was intended to achieve this, it has failed spectacularly.
- d. If we are counting on a Russian-Chinese falling out, we are building our security on a very dubious basis.
- e. Any policies which would allow China some alternatives to her present peculiarly close relationship with Russia would be intrinsically highly desirable for the U.S.

## IMPROVEMENT IN U.S. - CHINA RELATIONS ESSENTIAL

I believe that the facts as outlined thus far point to certain inescapable conclusions.

*Firstly*, that our present posture of implacable hostility toward China is based largely on an erroneous understanding of what is happening there. It is inconceivable that the American people would not welcome and support the vast improvements in the health and life of the ordinary Chinese people, especially if they understood that the present government, though not freely elected such as our own, nevertheless had the overwhelming support of the Chinese masses.

*Secondly*, even if we leave aside the question of ordinary admiration for a nation that is attempting so strenuously to improve its lot, the continuation of our present China policy will eventually bring us face to face with a combination of nations of vastly superior military power to our own.

Thus for both human and sheer self-survival considerations our present policy is positively and increasingly harmful to our interests.

The most strenuous arguments have been marshalled and put before the American people against any change in our China policy. The main burden of this argument is that an improvement in our relations with China would have a most damaging effect upon other Asian countries in their fight against Communism. As recently as December 4, 1958, the Secretary of State confirmed this view. It would mean, he said, "almost certain success for Communism's subversive efforts in the far East". This view was not shared by the Canadian Minister of External Affairs. Speaking to the Press in Seattle on November 13, 1958, during the Colombo Plan Conference, Mr. Smith said that he had found no feeling among the Asian delegates that their country would

be harmed by recognizing the existence of a great and powerful force. He said the Canadian government would welcome the presence of Mao Tse-tung at a meeting of heads of governments as a possible means of breaking the East-West deadlock.

The Secretary of State has never, to my knowledge, identified the Asian nations which would be harmed by an improvement in U.S.—China relations. Certainly he could not mean India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Burma, Cambodia, Pakistan, Afghanistan or Ceylon—all of which countries *already recognize China*; nor could he mean Japan, who would probably not hesitate to recognize China if she felt it would not jeopardize her own relations with the United States.

As far as our Allies are concerned, a more realistic U.S. policy towards China would be universally welcomed. America's intransigent and largely self-damaging policy is a source of constant bewilderment and aggravation even to our closest Allies. Thirty countries (including 26 members of the U.N.) now recognize China. Many more nations would do so if they were not politically or financially dependent on the United States.

## U.S. PUBLIC OPINION IS READY FOR A CHANGE OF POLICY

As almost no other American resident has been permitted by the State Department to travel to Communist China, I find myself virtually the only speaker who is discussing the China problem on the basis of personal experience of that country. I have, during the past year, been engaged in an extensive speaking tour through many of the middle and far western states. In the course of this tour, I have addressed universities and colleges, public forums, Town Halls, business organizations, women's clubs and civic so-

cities in upwards of fifty cities. Many of the audiences were large, running into several thousands. All these lectures were on developments in Communist China. In the light of my experience on this tour, I am unhesitatingly of the opinion that the American people are more than ready for a change of policy and are awaiting leadership. There remains in America, in spite of everything, a large measure of good will towards China. Many people are anxious to renew their contact with that country. Memories of our long and friendly association with the Chinese people have not died. People doubt the wisdom of a policy that keeps reporters from entering that country and they resent the general lack of direct information.

That the American people are ready to accept a change in our China policy is further indicated by newspaper editorial opinion, and by public polls, such as that undertaken by the *San Francisco Chronicle* in which 85% of the readers taking part indicated their support for recognition of China. The Fifth World Order Study Conference, convened in November 1958 by the National Council of Churches unanimously supported the statement calling for the seating of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations and its recognition by the United States government.<sup>32</sup>

#### FORMOSA—THE MAIN BLOCK TO IMPROVED U.S.—CHINA RELATIONS

Of all the issues dividing the United States and China, Formosa remains by far the largest, most complicated and most formidable. Other issues such as the unification of Korea, the four remaining U.S. prisoners in China, etc., would yield to adjustment if the Formosan problem could

be resolved. In this issue, both sides have taken and reaffirmed policies which seem irreconcilable; both are emotionally and deeply committed. I must frankly state that in my view it would be in the long-term interests of the United States, and provide the only lasting solution, if this country were to detach itself from her commitment to hold Formosa. What at first might appear as a psychological "defeat" would, I believe, in the course of time be seen as a prudent and realistic step from which considerable benefits would be derived. Such a policy, if handled with frankness and courage, might at one step break the barriers which are dividing us from Asia, improve our relations with our Allies, and open up new and unsuspected avenues to a lessening of tensions throughout the world.

It appears to me that an increasing number of people in the United States are hoping that a solution of the Formosa problem might be found in the permanent separation of the island from the mainland and the establishment of Formosa as an independent nation perhaps under U.N. trusteeship. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that we would be deluding ourselves if we believe that this offers a solution to our dilemma. Discussions in London with those who have recently returned from China and are in a position to judge have convinced me that the present Chinese government is *never likely to relax what it considers its legal claim on Formosa as being part of China*; nor would recognition by the U.S. or a seat on the United Nations be considered sufficiently valuable to relinquish this claim in exchange.

M. Edgar Faure, former Prime Minister of France, and the first Western statesman of standing to have visited China, reached the same conclusion after discussing the Formosan issue with Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai.



For China, the main question, or to be more exact the key question, is Formosa.

The main headache of the Chinese leaders is to avoid a "second China," to reject every claim, to frustrate every maneuver intended to perpetuate the existence of "two Chinas," the China of Peking and the China of Taipei.

The Chinese suppose, rightly or wrongly, that the Americans are preparing some withdrawal tactic which would take this form. . .

The People's China cannot conceive being put on a similar footing with Formosa; she cannot consider recognition concurrently with Formosa. She will never agree to take part in a parallel system, to share plenipotentiaries or accept credentials drawn up for both Chinas. . .

Rather than find herself "paired" with Taipei in some sort of diplomatic mesh, Peking much prefers the *status quo* from which, after all, she in no way suffers. . . They know that by sticking to it, they will one day get everything. . .

Settlement of Formosa, diplomatic recognition, return to the United Nations, the Security Council, "the Big Five", international prestige, Asiatic leadership—all these interlock. The whole mechanism must work smoothly and accurately. The essential point is that one alone should set in action all the others. The whole operation must work without a hitch. Care must be taken lest the least grain of sand get into the works. . . Above all, there must not be, there must not be even a hint of, a second China! . . .

The Chinese are sure of their aims and are firmly convinced of them. . . Mr. Chou En-lai made use on several occasions of the phrases: "We can wait", "The Chinese know how to wait".<sup>33</sup>

I know of no statement that puts the Chinese position so clearly.

The cold fact remains that our position on Formosa is politically untenable. It would be wiser, and the loss of prestige would be minimized, if we were to face this fact now and leave in an orderly fashion at a moment chosen by ourselves.

There is a current widespread belief that Formosa's historical connection with the Mainland is somehow in

doubt and that this would justify the sponsorship of an independent status for the island. It must not be forgotten that the United States itself has, in the past, stated that she considers Formosa geographically, historically, politically and strategically a part of the Mainland. We may wish to forget that we once subscribed to such a view, but others are unlikely to forget. The following, for instance, are excerpts from a State Department Policy Information Paper, written in 1949 and presented to Senate Committee hearings in 1951:

(There exists a) mistaken popular conception of its (Formosa's) strategic importance to United States defense in the Pacific. Formosa, politically, geographically and strategically is Formosa, politically, geographically and strategically is part of China in no way especially distinguished or important. Although ruled by the Japanese (as "Taiwan") for 50 years, historically it has been Chinese. Politically and militarily it is a strictly Chinese responsibility.

. . . the Cairo agreement and Potsdam declaration and the surrender terms of September 2, 1945, looked to its return to China.

All material should be used best to counter the false impressions that: . . . The United States has a special interest in . . . the island . . . (That) its loss would seriously damage the interests of either the United States or of other countries opposing communism.

Formosa has no special military significance: It is only approximately 100 miles off the China coast . . . China has never been a sea power and the island is of no special strategic advantage to the Communist armed forces.

In areas of insistent demand for United States action . . . we should occasionally make clear that seeking United States bases on Formosa, sending in troops, supplying arms, dispatching naval units, or taking similar action would:

- a. Accomplish no material good for China or its Nationalist regime;
- b. Involve the United States in a long-term venture pro-

ducing at best a new area of bristling stalemate, and at worst possible involvement in open warfare;

- c. Subject the United States to a violent propaganda barrage and to reaction against our "militarism, imperialism, and interference" even from friendly peoples, and particularly from Chinese, who would be turned against us anew;
- d. Eminently suit the purposes of the U.S.S.R. which would like to see us "substantiate" its propaganda, dissipate our energies and weaken effectiveness of our policies generally by such action.<sup>34</sup>

The more one ponders this remarkable State Department document, the more astonishing it becomes; not only because our actual policy has so consistently moved in the very *opposite* direction outlined in this "Policy Information Paper" and that all the disadvantages to the United States from doing so have been most abundantly fulfilled; but because it makes absurd the current suggestions that the historical status of Formosa is "in doubt"; that perhaps the island did not, after all, belong to the Mainland; that there would be justification for establishing Formosa as an independent nation.

In the light of official statements such as these it would be difficult to justify the sponsorship of a permanent "Second China". If we attempt to do so we can succeed only to the extent to which we make the island militarily impregnable and retain a permanent garrison (at enormous cost) and at the same time win the allegiance of the Formosan population (which is highly unlikely.) Sponsorship of an independent Formosa, under any form, will continue to exacerbate our relations with China and no lasting relaxation of tensions in the Far East would be possible.

Finally, it is unlikely that our position would be upheld if it came before the United Nations or was adjudicated by the World Court.

## HOW FREE IS "FREE CHINA?"

What is deeply damaging to our reputation in Asia and elsewhere is the pretense that we are defending the Chiang Kai-shek regime because it represents "Free China". We are at present identified with a leader who is discredited everywhere but in our own country. From an article in *Foreign Affairs* we can learn something of the political conditions on Formosa. *Foreign Affairs* is perhaps the most authoritative periodical published in the United States dealing with international affairs. It has a most distinguished Editorial Advisory Board which included (at the time this article was published) such men as Allen W. Dulles (head of the Central Intelligence Agency), Alfred W. Gruenther, George F. Kennan and John J. McCloy. Here are excerpts from this article:

Chiang Kai-shek maintains government control through two major instruments: the Nationalist Party and the secret police. The Nationalist Party is financed . . . from the government treasury . . . The Party in turn is controlled by Chiang Kai-shek . . . The Party and consequently the government is Chiang's personal instrument . . . it tends to be more authoritarian than ever.

(The government) is almost exclusively under the control of the mainland Chinese. The extent of this domination is illustrated by the fact that there are only 18 Formosans in the National Assembly of more than 1500 members . . . in a country of 8,000,000 Formosans and approximately 1,500,000 mainland Chinese.

There are no independent Formosan newspapers, no recognized Formosan political organizations. Practically all active Formosans are forced to enter the Nationalist Party.

Chiang maintains 800 Generals and Admirals on full pay waiting for commands. . .

The Nationalist government is employing 25,000 "political commissars" in the Army alone . . . The secret police has its own agents (answerable only to their chief) established in

all police forces, schools and public and private business organizations. It has complete power to arrest and detain suspects.

The fearful feature of this situation is, of course, the lack of legal protection for the ordinary citizen. He can be arrested at night by a squad of secret police, tried by a military court martial and sentenced with little opportunity for appeal. Once taken into custody, the ordinary citizen is, in effect, at the mercy of the garrison headquarters. A person may be arrested because he actually is subversive; he can also be picked up because someone who wants his job or property has denounced him as a Communist . . . Behind the mask of ritualized loyalty there lies a seething undercurrent of pent-up frustrations and discontent.

Some strong supporters of the Nationalist regime have maintained that the existence of "Free China" is essential to keep alive aspirations for freedom among the Chinese on the mainland and to attract the loyalty of the 12,000,000 Chinese in Southeast Asia. But "Free China" is not free and Chiang has very little credit on the mainland or among overseas Chinese.<sup>35</sup>

### THE CHOICES BEFORE US

It appears, then, that we are faced with a certain, quite limited, range of choices.

We can continue our present policy, ignoring the all-too-obvious fact that China has become a world power whose participation in international discussions has become a necessity. We can continue to base our policy (against the most weighty evidence to the contrary) on the hypothesis that the present Chinese government will not last and that to seat the representatives of the People's Republic in the U.N. (in the words of an official State Department's pronouncement) "would vitiate, if not destroy, the United Nations as an instrument for the maintenance of international peace".

But other countries do not agree. Thirty nations already recognize Peking. In the U.N. the trend is unmistakable. In 1958 only three delegates rose to speak in favor of the American position of refusing even to discuss Chinese representation. It is quite probable that by 1960 Peking will gain China's seat. And America's effort to maintain the *status quo* will have failed.

We must not forget nor underestimate the monolithic unity of the Chinese. Once the potent figure of Chiang Kai-shek is removed from the scene by death or retirement there may well be a Chinese settlement of the Formosa problem negotiated between Taipeh and Peking, which will altogether leave the U.S. out of the picture. This would be infinitely more damaging to our prestige than a voluntary withdrawal at a time of our own choosing.

With moral on Formosa declining; with Chiang finding it necessary to maintain a secret police force of 25,000 in his army for fear of defection; with existing Formosan hostility to Chiang's forces—what likelihood is there for the United States being able to maintain the island as a secure military base indefinitely?

If, indeed, these are the realities that confront us, it would appear that the only sensible course is for the U.S. to seek ways by which it can eventually withdraw its forces and its guardianship of Chiang Kai-shek with the minimum loss of prestige. We should announce at an appropriate time that our long-term policy is not to hold Formosa indefinitely, but only until conditions make it possible for us to give the Formosans an opportunity to *determine their own future*. "Self determination" for the Formosans by plebiscite might provide a gracious way out of our present position which is both legally and politically untenable, provided that it is made clear that U.S. forces would under no conditions be any longer available to garrison the island. Such a policy

would leave many issues unsettled—the future status or method of retirement of Chiang Kai-shek, the return of any of his troops who wished to go to the mainland and so on. But the general line would be clear; it would extricate us from our present hopelessly unreal position and would enable us to begin negotiations, if we so wished, for a general settlement of our differences with China.

We started our Foreword with the statement that our China policy has reached a dead end. This view is held not by a mere few on the fringes of our society, in the ranks of the left-wing and the fellow travellers. It is supported by an impressive number of concerned and competent conservative writers. Thus C. R. Sulzberger, foreign affairs expert of the *New York Times*, writes in his recent book:

. . . we have wondered lonely in a cloud of self-deception and wishful thinking. Contrary to our own diplomatic traditions and to all good sense we have refused to recognize the Peiping regime . . . We imposed an embargo and an economic blockade . . . The only consequence of this was to force the Chinese more closely into Moscow's arms.<sup>36</sup>

Mr. Walter Lippmann of the *New York Herald Tribune* has written repeatedly against a China policy based on the "untruth that the real government of China is in Formosa." He has described U.S. relations with Chiang as a "classic example—the most far reaching in our history—of an entangling alliance. Far from its being, as the official apologists say, indispensable to our prestige and influence, this entangling alliance is an enormous liability which, if it does not entangle us in war, is losing us surely and steadily the respect and confidence of our friends."

Mr. O. E. Clubb served for twenty years as an officer in the U.S. Foreign Service in China and elsewhere in Asia and was Consul General in Peking from 1947 - 1950. He returned to become head of the Office of Chinese Affairs in

the State Department, retiring in 1952. Here are some brief extracts from a thoughtful article recently written by this highly experienced public servant:

The United States' political position on "the China question" is crumbling, for it was built on sand . . . We allied ourselves to Chiang Kai-shek's beaten political faction and thereby became committed to a lost cause under adverse conditions.

Disengagement from our present difficulty would patently require abandonment of the pretense that Chiang Kai-shek's regime is "the Republic of China", and dissociation of ourselves from the Nationalists' hostility towards the Communists in favor of a detente in our relations with China.

We have as yet provided ourselves with no strategic alternative to the policy of military opposition, political non-intercourse, and economic boycott towards a nation of 660,000,000 Asians. Through the instrumentality of our own policy, we have been entrapped and isolated on the China coast.

Never before in our history have we joined our vital interests to so barren and ill-omened a cause as that of Nationalist Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. Our China policy has poisoned our Asian relations for years; now we discover that it has brought us to a position *vis-a-vis* China from which we can neither advance nor retreat with profit.<sup>37</sup>

Complex, confused and dangerous as our position has become, *some* thought must be now given to the question: What can we do about it?

#### WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT? SOME POSSIBLE FIRST STEPS

While I believe that eventually recognition of China by the United States is inevitable and would be to the interests of the United States and of world peace, I realize this is a step that may be politically difficult to take immediately. Certain preliminary and less dramatic changes of policy, however, could be taken with less political risk,

and these might prepare the way for full recognition at a later date. The following are some suggested steps which look to an eventual improvement of U.S. relations with China:

#### A CHANGE OF ATTITUDE.

Mr. Chou En-lai, in a remarkable speech to the delegates of the Asian-African Conference in Bandung, stated categorically that he hoped for improved relations with the West and in particular with the United States. Whether we think he spoke in good faith or merely for propaganda effect we must not appear before the world as being a nation reluctant to reach agreement with China. We must be prepared to say "We also want a lessening of tensions". Our present posture of *automatic hostility* to whatever might be proposed by China is no longer appropriate, is losing us friends and should be ended. Constant vituperation of Chinese leaders by our Secretary of State has made our friends as well as our enemies doubt whether we do in fact wish to see an improvement in the relations between the two countries.

#### A NATIONAL PLANNING BOARD

The U.S. economy today (and in turn our high standard of living) is sustained by vast expenditures for military defense. More than half of our national expenditure is for defense purposes. The present international rivalry—the cold war—provides the excuse for such expenditures. If world tensions are reduced these huge expenditures could no longer be justified. We must frankly face the fact that a substantial reduction in military expenditure would probably have the most serious repercussions on our economy and might well lead to a disastrous depression. This is known and recognized by other nations and even our allies must wonder sometimes whether it is possible for us to work whole-heartedly for the reduction of inter-

national tensions if this can only result in a damaging decline in our economy.

Both the world and many of our own people need some reassurance as to our general desire for lessening world tensions. Other nations would be reassured if they knew that we had ideas and plans ready for absorbing our surplus productive capacity if a reduction in military expenditure becomes desirable. Similarly, industrialists who at present are wholly dependent on defense contracts, need to feel that their companies would not suddenly be left with no work.

It is suggested that a National Planning Board be established to make preparations for the conversion of industry from military to peacetime production and to seek methods by which our nation's surplus productive capacity can best be used for the benefit of the less developed areas of the world. If this is conceived of in sufficiently bold and imaginative terms it would not only indicate to other peoples that we do indeed look for an ending of tensions and are ready to make the necessary economic adjustments, but it might regain for us an international initiative which we have lost by concentrating too exclusively on the narrow front of military security. Helping them with hospitals and tractors might gain us far more support among the people of the world than equipping them with jet fighters.

*Unless the whole problem of our surplus productive capacity, which at present is largely absorbed in military expenditure, is realistically tackled at the highest political level, all attempts to devise a national foreign policy leading to a lessening of world tensions will be defeated, and our good intentions will continue to be doubted.*

#### OPENING OF COMMUNICATIONS

The present lack of intercourse between the U. S. and China is preventing an adequate awareness, both on the official and public levels, of the dynamic forces that are

now stirring in the Far East. We cannot hope to base our national policies on realities while the public is kept ignorant of the facts.

One of the first essential steps, if our intention is to establish better relations with China, is to *open communications on all possible levels*. There should be an exchange of newspaper reporters; fact-finding missions (such as the British and others have sent) should bring us information about Chinese industry, agriculture, social conditions, education, medicine, religion. There should be an exchange of medical teams and medical information; invitations should be extended to Chinese artists to visit the U. S. The State Department should no longer prohibit those who wish to visit China from travelling there.

It is important that this opening of lines of communication should be reciprocal. China will, quite understandably, continue to refuse any plan that is not on a basis of strict reciprocity, and it is in our interests to make it so. China is as much out of touch with us as we are with her and it would be to our benefit as well as to hers to open our doors to her so she may learn the realities of American life.

The Secretary of State has sometimes suggested that the opening of communications between the two countries is not possible until after China has been granted recognition. This is not so. Countries such as Canada, New Zealand, Japan, West Germany, etc., have allowed their correspondents, their business men, and members of the public to travel to China though none of these countries yet recognizes China. The United States sent her newspaper correspondents to Russia, allowed citizens to travel there and encouraged business men to visit Russia long before the Soviet Union was recognized.

For us to continue to refuse our newspapers access to

China is repugnant to our traditions of freedom. *No democracy is harmed by hearing facts. And no sensible policy can be devised in a vacuum.*

#### REDUCTION OF COMMERCIAL BARRIERS

Another step which can be taken to reduce tensions between the United States and China is the gradual elimination of commercial barriers. This could be done quietly and experimentally and could be reversed at any time. Even if commercial trading would not at once show great development, the mere fact of abolishing our total embargo policy would do something towards lessening the ill-feeling between the two countries. It would seem just ordinary common sense to begin to apply to China the same rules that we now impose on our trading with Russia.

#### TOWARDS RECOGNITION

China has always taken the view that recognition is something to be *negotiated*, not merely extended.

As soon as the other preliminary steps suggested above have improved the atmosphere sufficiently, the U. S. should invite China to negotiate mutual recognition and to suggest ways in which this might be done.

This step should only be taken if we are ready to discuss and adjust all outstanding issues with her including, of course, Formosa. If, as I believe, recognition would be in the best interests of the United States, such issues which now prevent the normalization of relations would be found to be susceptible to negotiation if undertaken in good faith by both parties. To *negotiate* recognition would not imply recognition; it is a step that would not commit us; that could be reversed; that would begin to prepare public opinion for the *possibility* of recognition; that would tell us how genuine China is in her declarations for reduction of world tensions—and would indicate to her how sincere we are.

If, indeed, such negotiations eventually led to our resuming more sensible and friendly relations with the greatest of the Asian peoples, though it would not by any means solve everything, it would substantially enhance the prospects of peace in the world.

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*Revolution in China*

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(See also the articles from which quotations have been used in this pamphlet, listed in the "Notes.")

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