



NEW WOMEN
in
NEW CHINA

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Wei Feng-ying (*second right*), model industrial worker, has been elected to the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, and as a vice-chairman of the Liaoning Provincial Revolutionary Committee.

Wu Kuei-hsien shows young textile workers how to join broken ends. She is a member of the C.P.C. Central Committee and a deputy-secretary of the C.P.C. Shensi Provincial Committee.





Communist Party member Chang Pao-feng (*second right*) of the Peking Chemical Works No. 3 studies a work problem with women on the job.



Women of Tungling Red Star Iron Mine, Anhwei Province, consult a technician on new ways to exploit the mine.



An "Iron Girls" team at the Yehniuyen water conservancy worksite in Lingling County, Hunan Province.



Militiawomen on the Fukien coast score well in target practice.



Getting in a good harvest of cotton at the Yangliuhsueh Production Brigade, Pinhsien County, Shantung Province.



People's Liberation Army women develop skill in the field. They belong to the first company, third squad, of a unit under the Tsinan command.



China's women table-
tennis players constant-
ly improve their game.



Hung Hsien Nu, noted Kwangtung opera actress, sings for the dockers at Whampoa Harbour, Kwangchow.

P.L.A. women medical workers on Hainan Island prevent and cure diseases for Miao and Li poor and lower-middle peasants.



Contents

NEW WOMEN IN NEW CHINA — <i>Foreword</i>	1
A LIBERATED WOMAN SPEAKS <i>Lu Yu-lan</i>	6
A SLAVE BEFORE, I NOW HELP RULE MY COUNTRY <i>Pasang</i>	13
THE PARTY KEEPS ME YOUNG <i>Lin Chiao-chih</i>	21
THE "MARCH 8TH" FISHING BOATS <i>Huang Hai</i>	31
WOMEN FLIERS <i>Hsin Kung-yuan</i>	41
WOMEN OIL EXTRACTORS OF TACHING <i>Hsin Hua</i>	48
HOUSEWIVES CAN MAKE ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT <i>Kung Yeh</i>	55
IRON GIRLS TEAM OF TACHAI <i>Hung Nung</i>	62
WOMEN WORK ON LIVE ULTRA-HIGH-TENSION POWER LINES <i>Hsin Ping</i>	63
WOMEN BRIDGE BUILDERS IN FOREST AREAS <i>Lung Chiang</i>	71

New Women in New China

—Foreword

IN China, men and women are equal. The broad masses of working women are politically emancipated and economically independent. There is scarcely a field of work from which women are barred, the only exceptions being those that might injure their health. There are women machine-tool operators, geological prospectors, pilots, navigators, spray-painters, engineers and scientific researchers. Women are playing increasingly important roles in China's socialist revolution and socialist construction.

Women also take direct part in managing state affairs. Communist Party and revolutionary committees at all levels, from the people's commune to the provincial and national bodies, all have women members. Women are elected to the National People's Congress and to membership on the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party.

In New China, equal pay is given for equal work, as well as special protection for women workers. Women workers receive pre- and post-natal care free, and a 56-day maternity leave with full pay. Medical treatment is free of charge for both men and women workers, while their dependents pay half the regular fee. Many women

workers have been sent to schools at various levels for systematic education. The retirement age for women industrial workers is 50, from which time they draw from 50 to 70 per cent of their wages as pension.

None of this would have been conceivable before China's liberation in 1949. The old society gave women the lowest status. In addition to being exploited and oppressed by imperialism and bureaucrat-capitalism, they were subjected to the domination of the feudal systems of political authority, clan authority, religious authority and the authority of the husband.

The establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949 opened broad prospects for China's women to achieve emancipation.

During the long years of armed struggle for nationwide liberation, Chinese women of all nationalities in the revolutionary bases did their share. Some took a direct part in the fighting, others served in the army as couriers or medical workers. Those staying in the rear areas joined the men in production in support of the front, stood sentry, maintained public order, made clothing and shoes for armymen, and sent their sons or husbands to join the army. Many women gave their lives for the revolutionary cause. Among these was the 14-year-old martyr Liu Hu-lan, who was beheaded by the Kuomintang reactionaries.

The nation-wide land reform which followed the liberation was the first step in bringing about economic equality between men and women. Each got a share of the land, irrespective of sex or age, freeing the hundreds of millions of landless and land-poor peasants from feudal landlord oppression. For the first time in history the

women in China's villages had their own names on land title deeds.

After the land reform, the peasants actively responded to Chairman Mao's call to organize mutual-aid teams and, following that, agricultural producer co-operatives. Production rose steadily. More and more women participated in farm work, in some places half of the women joining in collective labour. This raised their social status considerably.

The adoption of the Marriage Law in 1950 emancipated women from a centuries-old feudal system of bondage. The new law stipulated free choice of partner, monogamy, equal rights for both sexes and protection of the legitimate interests of women and children. It has done much to foster the building of a new society in which women are the equal partners of men.

Women's emancipation entered a new historical stage in China during the Great Leap Forward of 1958, when the country's agricultural and industrial production rose to new heights. Tens of millions of housewives stepped out of their homes to join in socialist construction. The forming of rural people's communes with a diversified economy, extensive irrigation projects and industry opened to women much wider fields of work. Women were trained to operate modern farm tools, machines and tractors, and served as technicians in water conservancy, forestry, fishing and meteorology.

In the cities, housewives set up and worked in small factories that were mushrooming everywhere. This was followed by the establishment of public dining-rooms, nurseries, kindergartens and other services by the factories and enterprises or neighbourhood committees to relieve working women of household chores. Children

can stay in the nurseries or kindergartens by the day, or live there throughout the week and be fetched home on Saturday afternoon to spend the weekend with their parents. Many neighbourhood committees run service centres where laundry, tailoring, mending and many other jobs are done for working women.

Engels said: **“The emancipation of women and their equality with men are impossible and must remain so as long as women are excluded from socially productive work and restricted to housework, which is private. The emancipation of women becomes possible only when women are enabled to take part in production on a large, social scale, and when domestic duties require their attention only to a minor degree.”** The experience of Chinese women in 1958 began their understanding of how to emancipate themselves completely.

Chinese women now work, study, rest and take part in political and cultural activities along with the men. Many women have emerged as socialist-minded and professionally expert cadres. Instead of having their vision confined within the four walls of their homes as in the past, they now concern themselves with affairs of state and of the world. Enthusiastic, bold and devoted to the people, they are accomplishing feats China's women could not dream of before.

Chairman Mao says: **“Times have changed, and today men and women are equal. Whatever men comrades can accomplish, women comrades can too.”**

In Kwangchow, a group of young women electricians who had previously worked only on the ground are now doing maintenance work on 220,000-volt ultra-high-tension transmission lines without interruption of power,

nimbly climbing the 30-metre pylons to change porcelain insulators.

The West District No.1 Transistor Equipment Factory in Peking is one of the neighbourhood factories. Its predecessor was a small workshop for repairing scales, formed in 1958 by merging several handicraft co-operatives. Eighty of its 100 workers were housewives. It had no technicians and was set up with only two old machine tools and a table drilling machine. Now, with 300 workers, the factory produces various types of electronic equipment.

A Taching oil extracting team of young women intellectuals, helped by veteran workers, is doing a good job of oilfield management after two years' practice. In Heilungkiang Province, a women's bridge-building team, after a short period of training, completed in 70 days a 110-metre five-arch highway bridge in the depths of the Greater Khingan Mountains forest. Along with the men commune members, the “Iron Girls” team of Tachai Production Brigade in Shansi Province is building a prosperous socialist countryside by transforming a barren hilly region into fertile fields. Under the care of the Party, waifs who in the old society roamed the streets are among China's first generation of women pilots. Former Tibetan slaves have become good women cadres.

All of this reflects the great political and economic change in the status of China's women today.

During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, China's women played a militant role together with the men, and this has brought about a still greater change in their outlook.

*Lu Yu-lan**

A Liberated Woman Speaks

TUNGLIUSHANKU Village in Linhsi County, Hopei Province, where I was born, was liberated in 1945 when I was a child of five, so I have grown up in the new society. I was able, like the boys of the village, to go to school, and completed the sixth grade. Then, resolved that a new, socialist countryside should be built in China, I worked in the farm collective and took part in revolutionary work.

But I am far from being the only ordinary working woman of Linhsi County who has matured and become a leading cadre. Thirty per cent of the county Party and government cadres today are women, many of whom

* Lu Yu-lan has served as chairman of an agricultural producers' co-operative and as Party branch secretary of a people's commune production brigade. She attended the Ninth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 1969, where she was elected a Party Central Committee member. Now, at the age of 32, Comrade Lu is Secretary of the Linhsi County Party Committee and Deputy Secretary of the Hopei Provincial Party Committee.

hold leading positions of responsibility at various levels. Our situation is indicative of the status of women in socialist, new China. Women manage state affairs along with the men; they have been freed politically.

Changing Society and the Family

Women's emancipation is not easy. A current, wrong idea was that women win their freedom simply by seizing control in the family, and this wrong idea led to a

lot of fruitless quarrelling among husband, wife and in-laws. Lack of understanding on the relationship between raising women's position in the family and taking part in class struggle in society at large disrupted family harmony and failed to win public sympathy and achieve its aim.

Then the Party organized the women to study what Chairman Mao says about women's emancipation: **"Genuine equality between man and woman can be realized only in the process of socialist transformation of society**



Lu Yu-lan out with poor and lower-middle peasants to hoe the fields. They go forward along the broad path of socialism.

as a whole.” Women began taking a broader view, to understand that to achieve their own emancipation they must look at things in terms of the entire society, to see the family as a basic social unit, as changing with the transformation of society as a whole. It was realized that after women take their position in society, changes in family relations follow, and men and women can be equal.

I was already active in women’s work in 1955, when I was 15. Chairman Mao called on China’s peasants to organize co-ops, and I went to the poor and lower-middle peasants’ homes to discuss the question. Soon we set up our agricultural producers’ co-operative. I also encouraged women to take part in collective productive labour outside the household, and opposed the old idea still held by a few that “men go to the county town, but women’s place is in the home.” These few people with old thinking did not want women to take their place in society, and they forbade the women in their families to do collective work.

One instance was that of a bride whose parents-in-law insisted on the old ways, and wouldn’t allow her out of the yard. I used to take my sewing basket and visit this young woman in the evenings. While learning needlework from her, I would talk about women’s emancipation. Once I said, “Won’t it be fine when women go out and work, when both men and women are co-op members!” The young woman agreed, and before long she was working along with the others. She worked well, and at the same time had her income in the family. Soon she had won over her husband and his parents, while other young women followed her, also finding their way out of the four walls of their homes.

We women went from there into wider fields. A dozen or so of us organized a “March 8th”^{*} tree-planting team. We had no saplings, as we had not yet a tree nursery, so we would walk for miles in a day collecting tree seeds. In three years we had over 110,000 trees planted on more than 20 hectares of sandy wasteland. By 1971, we women, whose labour force was augmented by that of the poor and lower-middle peasants of our village, had planted more than a million timber and fruit trees, covering 220 hectares of sandy land with green. This checked wind and shifting sand, and we began to have good harvests every year. Our grain yields increased in some cases by as much as 650 per cent. The old view of women’s “place” underwent a change, and people were saying, “The women are really doing their share of the collective work!”

Changing Economic Status

Women with young children used to be tied to the home by household chores. Agricultural collectivization changed these old relations of production. With the consolidation and development of the people’s communes, more welfare and maternal and child health facilities were set up, and these were better run. Busy-season kindergartens, maternal and child health centres, mechanized flour and rice-husking mills, and sewing groups to make clothing for commune members have socialized many household tasks, creating conditions for women to join in collective production.

* International Working Women’s Day, established in 1910.

Women receive the same pay for their work as the men. With their own incomes, women's economic status is changed, bringing about a change in family relations. The Lin family of Sunchuang Brigade in Lipochai Commune has 13 members of four generations. Three women in the family contribute substantially to the family labour force and income and have thus gained a voice in family affairs. Women no longer have to ask their menfolk for the spending money they need, and they have their say in deciding on major family expenditures. The family's daily food and clothing have improved over the past several years. Two young women in the family suggested enlarging the house, and eight new rooms of brick were added when all the members agreed. The family respect their old people, treasure the young, show concern for each other, and so live a harmonious and satisfying life.

Women have learned production skills and become a strong force on the agricultural front. Not only are they driving tractors and operating flour mills, crushers and pumps, they also make their contribution in agricultural scientific experiment. Fifteen women of

A merry chat with other educated young women who have settled down in the countryside.



one brigade formed a scientific experiment group, with a Party branch deputy secretary and a poor peasant's daughter as leaders. Both these young women, still in their late teens, started out with only primary school education, but they have the spirit of the Foolish Old Man who removed the mountains, and with this they have educated themselves and learned while doing. Since they started work in 1967 they have developed more than 30 improved seed strains. Their work has contributed to the state and collective wealth, and won people's respect and support.

Maturing in Struggle

The key to winning women's emancipation is for women to concern themselves with the country's affairs and join in political struggles. Owing to the influence and restriction of old ideas and old traditions, not many women took part in political activities or were firm in waging struggles. Plunging into political struggle to brave storms and face the world, women have acquired a better understanding of revolutionary principles, raised their political consciousness and gained experience in class struggle. Many women activists and cadres have matured in the course of political struggle. On our county Party committee are five women. There is Hei Yueh-ching, 37, of Hui nationality, who encouraged Hui poor and lower-middle peasants to set up people's communes in enthusiastic response to Chairman Mao's call in 1958. The area's farming, forestry, animal husbandry and side occupations all took a big spurt forward, and Hei Yueh-ching has matured into a competent woman cadre. Hsia Hsiu-mei, Yang Ai-lien and Yang Hsiu-chih are just over

20, but in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution all have records of staunch struggle in defence of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line. They fought manifestations of Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary line and exposed and repudiated the criminal efforts of Liu's agents and other bad persons to restore capitalism in the countryside.

In the past ten-some years I too have had some experience of political struggle. In 1959 a former rich peasant, hand in glove with local capitalist-roaders in the Party, felled and sold more than 100,000 young trees which our "March 8th" team had planted. They also slaughtered pigs and sheep that belonged to the collective. I joined the poor and lower-middle peasants in waging sharp class struggle against this serious undermining of the collective economy.

When the brigade Party branch committee was re-organized and I was elected secretary, these class enemies spread rumours and superstition about me. "With a woman at the head the trees won't grow," they said. And, "A woman in the leadership will bring bad luck." They reinforced their rumours by compiling a list of "crimes" I was supposed to have committed, in order to disqualify me from the post.

"**What is work? Work is struggle,**" says Chairman Mao. These words took on a deeper significance for me. All the rumours, slanders and mistrust spread by these class enemies were aimed not only at me personally, but at the path of socialism I was following together with the poor and lower-middle peasants. We stood steadfast and struggled against the rumour-mongers and won.

Facing turbulence has strengthened us. We find the work in the brigade is done better, and I feel that I've been helped in the course of the struggle.

A Slave Before, I Now Help Rule My Country

I was born in a slave's family in Konka County, Tibet. Under reactionary feudal serfdom, I was a slave and lived like a beast of burden for nine years. Chairman Mao and the Communist Party saved me from slavery and brought me up as a Communist and responsible cadre.

Living Hell

For generations my forefathers were slaves ruled by manorial lords—the reactionary Tibetan local governments, the nobility and the monasteries. We had mouths but no right to speak. We had legs but no freedom of movement. When my mother and younger brother died of hunger, the manorial lord took my elder sister away as payment of "death tax" and forced me to become

* Vice-Chairman of the Revolutionary Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region and Secretary of the Tibet Autonomous Region Committee of the Chinese Communist Party.



Pasang and other Tibetan women cadres voicing satisfaction with the results they have got by learning from the advanced experience of Tachai.

his slave. His agent threatened my father: "Pasang is born our slave. If you dare to resist, we'll clap you into prison and drag her away tied to a horsetail."

I was nine when I was taken to the manorial lord's estate. Two years later, they took me to Lhasa, and I became house-slave of his wife Choma and her daughter. I was treated inhumanly, had to perform the most demeaning serv-

ices, and was driven from one estate to another at the will of the manorial lord.

They beat and abused me every day. If the butter-tea I served was too hot the vicious Choma would throw it in my face. If it was cold, she used her whip on me. I was always black and blue, so that I hurt all over when I lay down and tried to sleep. I had only one badly worn Tibetan robe for winter; the rags I used to mop the floor were my only bedding. In winter I shivered all night with the cold.

Choma and her daughter called me "ape" as though I had no name, to debase my personality. When they called me that, I had to answer immediately or they would beat me. Every night while Choma chanted her sutras before

she went to bed, I had to kneel behind her and massage her back. If I didn't do it right, or dozed off, Choma would take her brooch and poke it into my head. Blood would stream down, and my head would swim. Nine years of this enslavement had been almost the death of me.

One day in July 1956 — I was 18 years old — Choma's daughter beat me unconscious because there was no mutton in the market and I couldn't buy her any. Covered with bruises and blood, I groped in the dark. . . . Who could save me? I thought of my People's Liberation Army brothers and sisters. Tibet had been liberated peacefully in 1951, but before Democratic Reform was carried out the manorial lords continued their rule over the serfs. At the thought of the P.L.A. I forgot my pain and looked up at the sky. It was pitch dark, but the sky seemed filled with stars. I made up my mind. That night the masters were having a party and I took advantage of their drinking and carousing to run away. Finally I found the P.L.A. I had longed for day and night.

I Grow Up with Mao Tsetung Thought

My life reached a turning point. I began to see the sunshine and live like a human being. The Armymen treated me as their own sister. At first I became a worker, later I was sent to study in a medical training class, then in a Tibetan cadres school. In the autumn of 1957, I was given the opportunity to study at an inland institute for Tibetans. I studied politics and learned to read and write. I began to understand many things about revolution, and my class consciousness gradually rose. I used to think that it was fate that the manorial lords should own large herds of cattle and sheep, and we slaves nothing. In the

Tibetan institute I studied Chairman Mao's theories on classes and class struggle and understood why we were oppressed and exploited. The reason was that political power was not in our hands, and the root of my suffering in the old society was a class root. When we had a meeting on class education, I took the floor to accuse the serf-owners of their monstrous crimes. I decided to be a Communist and dedicate my life to the struggle for communism.

In May 1959 I had the honour of being admitted into the Communist Party of China. For several days I was so excited I could hardly sleep. I thought of my past life and realized I owed my new-found happiness to Chairman Mao and the Party. I reminded myself that I was no longer an ordinary emancipated slave, but a vanguard fighter of the proletariat. From now on I must redouble my effort to study Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought in the course of struggle, and make revolution all my life by closely following Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line.

I returned to Tibet in summer 1959 to take part in the struggle to put down the rebellion by Tibet's reactionary upper strata ruling clique led by the Dalai Lama, and in the Democratic Reform Movement to overthrow the reactionary system of serfdom. The sharp struggle educated and tempered me as nothing else could.

I became chairman of the Langhsien County women's association and later deputy head of the county. It was not easy for me to step from thralldom into the position of leading cadre, but I studied and acted according to Mao Tsetung Thought and resolved to overcome difficulties.

In autumn 1965, I was asked by the county Party committee to direct the work of 1,500 people in building a

highway. It was shock work. As we neared the last stretch of the highway we hit a precipice. We blasted for two weeks, but progress was slow. It looked like we'd lag behind schedule. I organized the road builders in conscientious study of Chairman Mao's brilliant article *The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains*, and the builders were encouraged. They said that in the manner of the Foolish Old Man who removed the mountains, they, the emancipated serfs, could trample down the thousands of miles of plateau if need be. We organized a shock brigade. With the concerted efforts of the masses, combining muscle with brain, we removed the precipice in four days.

In the rush work of building the highway, we not only successfully fulfilled the task the state had entrusted to us, but also there emerged a good many Tibetan activists in the study of Mao Tsetung Thought, and the study of Chairman Mao's works became a county-wide mass movement. I always try to keep in mind Chairman Mao's teachings, persistently disseminate Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought among the emancipated serfs, and patiently help them, looking forward to the day when they mature.

Paimachiatso was also born into a slave family, suffered as I did in the old society and has a deep class hatred. I met him in 1962 when I was working in Tengmu, and we became fast friends. We studied Chairman Mao's writings together and recalled our past sufferings in contrast with our present happiness. Discussing how to wield power well for the Tibetan people, we talked over a plan for changing Tengmu's backwardness. Now Paimachiatso has become one of the most competent township Party branch secretaries in the county, and

Tengmu is an advanced township. To help in the study of Mao Tsetung Thought, I used my own money to buy Chairman Mao's works and other political books and periodicals, and gave them to the cadres and commune members. Emancipated and educated by Mao Tsetung Thought, I want to propagate Mao Tsetung Thought. The Party has brought me up. I want to tell my own experience to encourage my class brothers and sisters to advance together along the revolutionary road pointed out by Chairman Mao. This is my thinking and what I have tried to do since I became a cadre.

Leadership in the Interest of All of Tibet's Nationalities

In 1968, when the Revolutionary Committee was set up for the Tibet Autonomous Region, I was elected vice-chairman. I became concurrently chairman of the Langhsien County Revolutionary Committee when it was organized in 1970. I often remind myself: Though my position has changed, I must not lose the fine qualities of the working people; I must never waver in my determination to make revolution all my life. Nor must I withdraw from the masses, but act in accordance with what Chairman Mao teaches us: **“Direct reliance on the revolutionary masses is a basic principle of the Communist Party,”** and always keep close ties with the people.

Aunty Chihliehpaichen of Chienhsien People's Commune, Chintung District, was well known in Langhsien County. Over 60, she is an active propagandist of Mao Tsetung Thought. During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, Aunty Chihliehpaichen was elected vice-chairman of the Chienhsien People's Commune Revolu-

tionary Committee. I used to stay at her home when I was in Chintung, and we studied Chairman Mao's works together. We talked about our misery in the old society and the happiness of the new. Once she said to me with tears in her eyes, “Pasang, it would be so nice if you were my daughter!”

I answered immediately, “Aunty, I am more than your daughter!” and Chihliehpaichen smiled. I explained Party policies to her, and together we criticized and denounced the renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi and his agents in Tibet for their crimes. She kept me informed on the situation in the village and made revolutionary suggestions. When she had news or wanted to set me right on something, she would walk miles to see

Pasang discusses with other cadres and commune members new things they have learned from their study of Chairman Mao's works.



me in the county town, or send the message to me in Lhasa. I learned much from this revolutionary aunty and she always encouraged me forward.

In August 1971, at Tibet's First Party Congress, I was elected secretary of the Chinese Communist Party Tibet Autonomous Region Committee. This Party committee wielded power on behalf of the million Tibetan emancipated serfs and broad masses of people. For a former slave, and a woman, to hold such a post was a first ever on the Tibetan plateau!

My 72-year-old father used to say to me earnestly: "Daughter, Chairman Mao is the great emancipator of us Tibetan people, and he is your personal benefactor! You must be loyal to the Party and people whatever happens, and wield power well for the emancipated serfs of Tibet." I will always remember the road I have travelled — from the edge of the grave to a second life, from slave to a master of my country — and never forget Chairman Mao and the Communist Party!

During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution I was most happy to see Chairman Mao five times. He is the great leader of all China's nationalities. National Day of 1966 is the most unforgettable day of my life, for on that day, as a representative of China's minority nationalities, I met Chairman Mao on the Tien An Men rostrum. How happy I was when I shook hands with Chairman Mao! There were so many things I wanted to say to him, but all I could do was to weep tears of grateful happiness and say to myself, "Chairman Mao, I'll never forget the misery we have been delivered from. I must arm myself with your great thinking, and wield power well for the proletariat. I will live up to your expectation."

*Lin Chiao-chih**

The Party Keeps Me Young

LIVING in the excellent situation of China today, and having seen the darkness of the old, thoughts flood my mind: the many changes in New China, the emancipation of her working women, the rapid progress of our country's medical and health work. . . .

But what impresses me most is that, guided by Chairman Mao's revolutionary line and tempered by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the broad masses of China's intellectuals have changed in mental outlook profoundly, and I myself, at 70, feel younger every day. When I recall the road I have travelled, how can I not be overwhelmed with emotion!

No "Ideal" Above Classes Can Be Realized

In my early days I studied in England and the United States. Since returning to China I have practised medi-

* Noted gynecologist and obstetrician, Lin Chiao-chih (Dr. Khati Lim) is currently a member of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, a standing committee member of the Chinese Medical Association, and head of the department of gynecology and obstetrics at Peking's Capital Hospital.

cine for nearly 50 years. One would think I should have learned long ago how to be a doctor. However, this is not so easy if one wishes to be a doctor really serving the people. It involves a thorough change in thinking, feelings, and style of work.

In 1921, when I was 19, I came to Peking from my home in Amoy, Fukien Province, to take the entrance examination to the Union Medical College sponsored by Americans. (The Peking Union Medical College Hospital is now the Capital Hospital.) Why did I choose the medical profession? At that time, our motherland was under semi-feudal, semi-colonial rule, the labouring people were oppressed by imperialism and feudalism and tormented by natural disasters and diseases. Out of sympathy and pity for my fellow-countrymen, and cherishing the ideology of "kindliness and love for all" and "happiness in serving and helping people," which takes no account of classes, I was eager to be a "good person" capable of helping and saving people, to become a doctor with a "conscience." Chinese women were especially oppressed and discriminated against, but I cherished this ideal and buried myself in medical studies day and night for years. Cool and aloof, I occupied myself in a lone struggle, closing my eyes and ears both to the jeers and ridicule I got as a woman breaking into the medical profession, and also to the upheavals and unrest all around me. My efforts, however, could not alleviate the sufferings and hardships of the labouring people in old China. Not only was my ideal of helping and saving people unrealized, but the many horrible, cruel happenings in the hospital educated me negatively.

One of the U.S. imperialist elements in the hospital, Department of Neurology head Lyman, experimenting

with cardiazol to differentiate between genuine and symptomatic epilepsy, injected the drug into 49 men and women patients in the mental ward. The patients were thrown into violent convulsions and suffered agonizing injury. Lyman callously filmed these horror scenes and wrote his thesis on the subject. In doing research work on typhus and relapsing fever, another U.S. imperialist element experimented by fastening boxes of lice on Chinese children. These pitiful, tricked children were subjected to the greatest suffering from lice-bite and fever. And there were many more such experiments with human beings. We never knew how many Chinese people died miserably of the U.S. imperialists' experiments with drugs and bacteria.

Lin Chiao-chih making a pre-natal examination.



Imperialism got material wealth and scientific knowledge out of the Chinese people's sweat, blood and bones. How could it claim "civilization" and "humanity"? It uses medical science as a tool in its policies of war and aggression, and yet it mouths "benevolence" and "friendship." Science, which should bring happiness to mankind, is used by imperialism to brutally slaughter people. . . . I began to realize how naive and laughable my "conscience" to help and save people was! In a society where classes exist, an ideal which takes no class view is only a dream. No matter how industrious I was in my own efforts, how adept I was at my calling, I could only serve the wives and daughters of bureaucrats and overlords, and could do nothing to help or save the labouring people from distress.

One Needs the Spirit of Serving the People

In 1949 our country was liberated, and the sunlight of the Party shone into the hospital. As an old intellectual coming from the old society, I too gained a new lease of life. I saw with my own eyes the Chinese people, led by the Party and Chairman Mao, build a socialist state of initial prosperity on the ruins of the old society.

I was excited and enthusiastic. I went on working hard, thinking I could now contribute my share to China's medical and health work. But I was still shut up all day long in the small ward of the hospital and, as time went by, became more and more out of touch with the broad masses of the people. I was still serving the minority in the city.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution taught me that this situation was due to the interference of the rene-

gade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist line which stresses medical and health work for the cities, leaving the vast countryside in want of doctors and medicine.

With his great concern for the broad masses of the labouring people, the great leader Chairman Mao, in 1965, issued the great call: "**In medical and health work, put the stress on the rural areas.**" This instruction lighted the broad road for the development of medical and health work and pointed out the orientation for China's medical workers. It led me to understand why medical science should serve the majority, and how to do this.

In response to Chairman Mao's call, I went to the countryside for the first time in my life, to do mobile medical work in Hunan Province. I saw for the first time the admirable, hard-working and plain qualities of the poor and lower-middle peasants, and these people began to have a place in my mind.

After liberation, the orientation of my service changed greatly, but the stress was still not placed right. I didn't know the first thing about the broad masses of the poor and lower-middle peasants. When they welcomed us as "the medical team sent by Chairman Mao to the countryside," I felt enthusiastic, but that it was only natural that they should show this respect. I thought that it was creditable for a person over 60 to go to the countryside and said to myself, "I've come to save you from your sufferings."

Once, I was called to help a woman about to give birth. A local girl, who as medical attendant was learning from me, went along. Upon examining the woman in her home, however, we found her time had not yet come, and I was a little impatient. But not the medical attendant. As if

in her own home, she treated the patient like one of her family. Seeing the water vat empty, she went out to fetch water. Then she lighted a fire in the stove and set about washing the woman's clothes, not sitting idle for a minute.

Her warmth and manner deeply moved me. Why was she like this? Why was I so cold towards the poor and lower-middle peasants? Although she was not yet my equal professionally, I being more experienced and her teacher, she was head and shoulders above me in service to the people, and a model for me to learn from.

At this point, I thought of Chairman Mao's instruction: **"If they do not discard the old and replace it by the proletarian world outlook, they will remain different from the workers and peasants in their viewpoint, stand and feelings, and will be like square pegs in round holes."** How far from the poor and lower-middle peasants my thinking and feelings were! How different from me was the medical attendant, whose feelings were closely linked with those of the poor and lower-middle peasants! She considered the patient one of her own, and treated her with such warmth. She often examined patients on her own bed, and covered them with her quilt. Although these were small things, I was unable to do them.

I made friends with this girl medical attendant and looked on her as my teacher, and for years now we have kept up correspondence. Her skill has improved. Now, when I'm lazy or start thinking of personal gains and losses, I think of her serving the people unstintingly and I am roused and spurred on, inspired to be a new-style revolutionary medical worker.

In the wider scope of the rural areas, I kept broadening my views. I was convinced if one does not have the

spirit of serving the people and Dr. Bethune's feelings of utter devotion to others without any thought of self, even if one possesses most superior medical skill one cannot make real use of it.

A Doctor Whom Workers, Peasants and Soldiers Like

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution has greatly revolutionized China's medical and health work. In the short span of a few years, wonders have been achieved in the field of medicine which I had never before seen in all the decades of my medical practice, and my thinking has also undergone profound changes which had not occurred in those years.

Guided by Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, the broad masses of medical workers leave their large hospitals and go to mountainous areas and the countryside, to the grassroots levels, and to border areas to serve the workers, peasants and soldiers unreservedly. Comrades have a significant saying: "When there is illness we send doctors and medicine, when there is not we send our warmth." Our responsibility as medical workers is to relieve the suffering from disease of the broad masses of the people. Above all, we should carry the Party and Chairman Mao's concern for them to their very hearts, so as to unite our people to struggle together in the socialist revolution and socialist construction. This is what the work of a people's doctor means.

One who wants to serve the majority and determines to be conscientious about remoulding one's own world outlook must also take active part in day-to-day struggle.

I had an experience in 1970 that taught me a valuable lesson. A 70-year-old poor peasant woman suffering from a large tumour in her abdomen was admitted to hospital from the countryside in Shantung Province. She told of her misery in the old society and how she suffered from her disease. She could not lie down because of the tumour, and had to sit all night with her back to the wall. We received her warmly, giving her treatment and a single room with spring bed, liquid diet, etc.

But after only a few days she asked to leave the hospital. We were surprised. Were we lacking in warmth or care? I talked with her and learned that she felt lonely in her single room, and the spring bed was very uncomfortable. With her big tumour, she could hardly breathe. And, unused to the liquid diet, she always felt hungry. I still lacked real understanding of the poor and lower-middle peasant.

When we better understood her symptoms as well as her thinking, we learned the fine qualities of this old poor peasant who had gone through long years of suffering. After careful study and detailed analysis, we planned her operation and finally removed the oppressive tumour. It weighed 25 kilogrammes. I gave constant bedside care following the operation, and the other medical workers and nurses did the same. To tempt her to eat we gave her the Shantung-style pancakes which she liked. When I made ward rounds, she always took my hands, warmly calling me "elder sister," and I called her "elder sister" too. After she recovered, she said excitedly, "It's Chairman Mao's good doctor who relieved me of my misery!" In my 50 years of medical work, this was the first time I was referred to in such glowing terms. It was the highest honour that the poor and lower-middle peasants

had paid me, and I was greatly encouraged. Before returning home she went to Tien An Men to have her photograph taken there, to express her gratitude to Chairman Mao. Our department arranged a farewell for her, where she and I shouted together: "Long live Chairman Mao!" I cannot forget this.

After she left the hospital and went home, we often wrote to each other and she sent me a parcel of pancakes and peanuts, specialities of her native Shantung. Her gifts conveyed the deep affection and ties of the poor and lower-middle peasants. Only after liberation, with the education of the Party and Chairman Mao, and through the cleansing flames of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution did I find the real way of serving the workers, peasants and soldiers, and understand what it means to be a people's doctor.

I realize that being a doctor welcomed by the workers, peasants and soldiers means first fostering proletarian feelings and understanding their hopes and needs. Only when we really integrate with and learn from them can we remould our old ideology. It is better to say that I am daily receiving education and help from worker, peasant and soldier patients than that I am daily diagnosing and curing their diseases. I cure their physical ills while they treat my sick thinking.

I Feel Younger Every Day

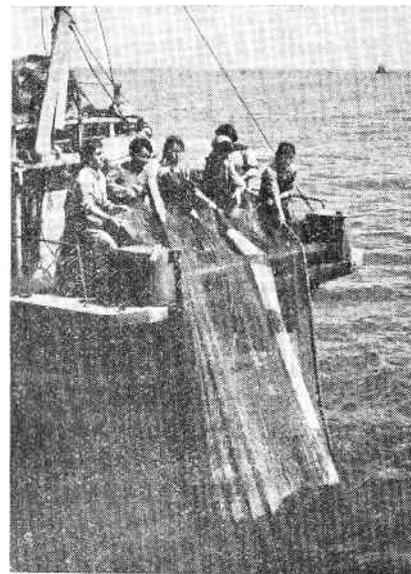
For many years now, especially through the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, I have understood well the care and concern of Chairman Mao and the Chinese Communist Party for the intellectuals, and that they are

particularly concerned and considerate for intellectuals brought up and educated as I was. I have done very little for the Party and the people, who have nevertheless given me so much. The people elected me deputy to the National People's Congress and member of its Standing Committee. Many times I have mounted the Tien An Men rostrum on National Day and seen the great leader Chairman Mao. Comrades have repeatedly recommended me for the post of department head. How could I think of this in the old society where women were looked down upon! It was the Party and Chairman Mao who enabled the broad masses of us women to be emancipated, to become masters and to raise our political status.

Although I am 70, I am still full of vigour. I feel that the road of serving the people becomes broader as I follow it, and that I grow younger every day. It is the Party that has brought spring to my life, the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution that has invigorated my spirit, and it is from the masses that I have drawn strength and wisdom. I feel that I still have much unfinished work to do, tasks given me by my great motherland and the people. I have resolved to study Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, conscientiously to remould my world outlook and serve the Chinese and the world's people still better.

Huang Hai

The "March 8th" Fishing Boats



Letting out the net.

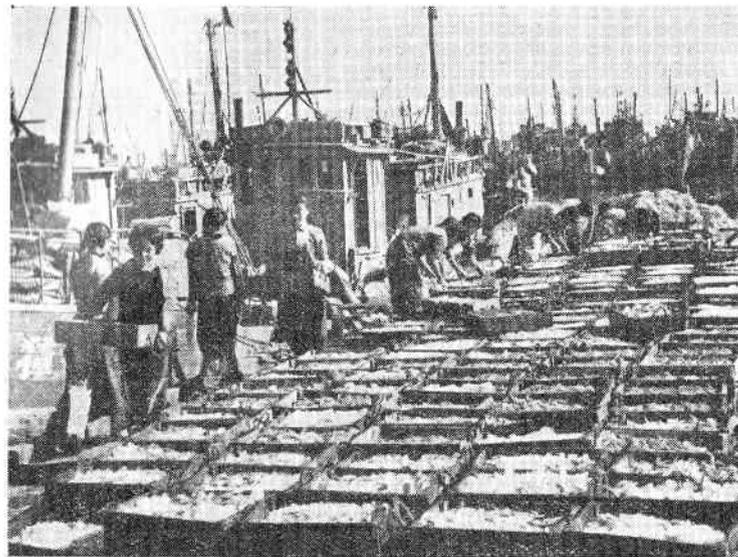
EACH spring, fishing boats shuttle back and forth over the blue expanse of the Pohai and Yellow seas. Among them is a pair of deep-sea motor-driven boats piloted by girls. Aside from a few veteran fishermen along to give them technical guidance, the captain, first and second mates, engineers, winch operators, radio operators and political instructors are women.

These are the "March 8th" fishing boats out of Changtzu Island in Changhai County, Liaoning Province. Dedicating all their energy to the revolutionary cause, their crews have operated for a decade and caught 3,700 tons of fish for the state. The boats are a red banner unit on China's fishing front.

China's Daughters Aim High

Any fishing community knows that going out to sea has always been men's work, while women kept busy at home. In 1958 the Party Central Committee and Chairman Mao called on the Chinese people to **"go all out, aim high and achieve greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism."** Like the rest of the country, Changtzu Island also responded.

Wen Shu-chen, an 18-year-old fisherman's daughter, was anxious to start work. She recalled the suffering of the past: In the old society her family had wandered from place to place trying to make a living. Her parents died of starvation and broken health, leaving her a homeless waif. . . . It was the Chinese Communist Party and Chairman Mao who saved her from this miserable life. She stood up as a master of her own country and had a happy life. Conscious of the change in her life between yesterday and today, she made up her mind to break the bonds of tradition and become a fisherwoman sailing the seas for the revolution like the men. She and three of her girl companions went to the Changtzu Commune Party committee to make their request. The committee considered their proposal, this new thing which showed the daring spirit of New China's women to think and to do, and approved it.



"March 8th" women crate prawns they have caught, ready for shipping.

When the news got around that women were to go out fishing at sea, tongues started wagging. One said, "Who ever heard of women going deep-sea fishing. Impossible!" Another said, "Women want to go to sea to show their strength, do they? Just like a baby chick trying to eat a soybean — it'll choke on it!"

"Don't look down on us!" Wen Shu-chen replied to all this. "As long as we're led by the Party and Chairman Mao, we're not afraid, and we can do anything men can do! Hasn't Chairman Mao said that **'times have changed, and today men and women are equal. Whatever men comrades can accomplish, women comrades can too'**? We women aren't cripples, why can't we go out to sea?"

But the revolutionary course wasn't all plain sailing. Their second day out the four girls ran into a storm. A gale came up, and their boat rolled and pitched on the rough sea. In no time all four were seasick, and they were ordered below. Lying in her bunk, Wen Shu-chen thought how she had expressed her determination to the Party, and what the commune Party committee had told her before they set out. "Stand against the wind and waves, break a new path for island women."

Crawling out of her bunk, she encouraged the other girls. "Seasickness isn't so much. Everything's hard in the beginning. If the Red Army overcame all the difficulties of the Long March, why can't we get over our seasickness?" The girls plucked up and went up on deck. They worked the sculls, hauled in the net and sorted fish. Their seasickness didn't bother them much, and they gradually got used to life on the sea.

Following the example of Wen Shu-chen, another group of girls soon started deep-sea fishing. Changtzu Commune bought a new pair of 60-h.p. motor-driven boats in 1960. To commend Wen Shu-chen and her women's team for their daring, the commune Party organization named the boats the "March 8th" unit. The boats always operate together and Wen Shu-chen became the unit's first captain, to the great joy of the women.

Wen Shu-chen had no formal schooling and did not understand the technical work involved in running a boat, but she learned as she worked. Unable to read the charts, she asked an old seaman to teach her. With warm help from her comrades and getting used to the sea, Wen Shu-chen became the acknowledged leader of the "March 8th" team. In 1962 they caught over 500 tons of fish, a good record for the year. People who had been doubtful

before could not help exclaiming that the women of New China are really capable!

Since Wen Shu-chen became captain of the "March 8th" team, she has always been concerned about the progress of other fisherwomen. Whenever newcomers arrived she joined them in studying Chairman Mao's works and talked with them about her experience in applying Mao Tsetung Thought to fishing. She tells them how the women before them have fought wind and waves on the seas. When she sees the unskilled hands of the newcomers, she shows them how to manage.

During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the masses elected Wen Shu-chen to the new leading groups,

The first captain, Wen Shu-chen (*centre*),
chatting with some veteran fishermen.



and she became vice-chairman of the Luta City and Changhai County revolutionary committees. In April 1969 she attended the Ninth National Congress of the Communist Party of China and was received by Chairman Mao.

The Making of a Captain

The "March 8th" unit gains experience, and a generation of new women matures. In early 1968, the 18-year-old daughter of a fisherman, Chang Chien-hua, went to sea. She had been inspired while in primary school by her teacher's moving story of Wen Shu-chen and the "March 8th" unit, and had made up her mind that when she grew up she would follow Wen Shu-chen to sea.

Her first day on board, Chang Chien-hua was given a lesson on class struggle by the old fisherman Shih Yueh-hsiu, who contrasted the bitter life of the old society with the good life in the new. Wen Shu-chen gave her a notebook and encouraged her to study Chairman Mao's works conscientiously. "Fishing for the revolution is what I want to do," Chang Chien-hua wrote in the notebook. "Fighting wind and waves, I won't fear hardships or difficulties." Everyone said that Chang Chien-hua had the vitality, boldness and drive characteristic of the girls of New China. After half a year of work on board she was admitted to the Communist Party. Before long she became the captain of the "March 8th" unit, succeeding Wen Shu-chen.

It was quite a responsibility. "I haven't been to sea very long," Chang Chien-hua thought. "Can I lead a crew?" Then she realized that paths are made by people walking, and that someone had to carry the heavy load.

One windy day not long after she became captain, Chang Chien-hua was in the wheelhouse directing the hauling of the net. She let the helm slip, and because the boat was not in the right position, the net slipped underneath. Much was at stake. The boat must be promptly brought around and the net pulled out, or it could very quickly foul the propeller. The people on deck shouted to her to bring the boat around. Chang Chien-hua used all her strength but the boat did not budge. What was she to do? Fortunately the old fisherman Shih Yueh-hsiu saw what the trouble was and told her to put the helm hard to port.

That night Chang Chien-hua could not sleep. She went up on deck and studied Chairman Mao's *Serve the People*, *In Memory of Norman Bethune* and *The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains* under the anchor light. She was thinking of the day's events and realized that one reason she had been so nervous was that she did not have the Foolish Old Man's spirit of despising difficulties. Another was her lack of skill at the helm, which showed that she was not constantly perfecting her technique as Dr. Bethune did. She wrote in her notebook what she learned from that day's incident, and after that she studied Chairman Mao's works more conscientiously.

To become familiar with the habits of the fish shoals, Chang Chien-hua asked older fishermen to teach her as they worked. She observed and studied the surface of the sea in different areas, and the movements of other fishing boats. Whenever an experienced hand was at the helm, she would watch in the wheelhouse how he held the wheel, set the course and told the wind direction. She studied the charts and followed the course. Modest and

diligent, she made rapid progress, finally becoming a captain with firm will and technical skill.

One morning as Chang Chien-hua and the others were fishing well out in Pohai Bay, the sky suddenly darkened and a gale blew up. One giant wave after another rolled down on the two boats. Chang Chien-hua ordered the net hauled in at once — a dangerous job with the boats rolling and pitching. After a short, tense battle, they got the net up and headed for the port of Chinwangtao at full speed. The wind got stronger and the waves higher. Suddenly a wave broke right over one of the boats, washing the hold-cover into the sea. Water filled the hold and the boat began to sink. Captain and crew started the pumps and began bailing furiously to beat the storm and save state property. After battling two days and a night, the “March 8th” unit sailed safely into port at Chinwangtao.

Fishing for the Revolution

The girls of the “March 8th” unit say, “We fear neither hardship nor death to fish for the revolution.” This collective keeps training people with wisdom, strength and courage.

Chao Shu-ying joined the crew in 1969. When she got over her first seasickness she was assigned to the engine room where the smell of oil made her sick all over again. But she stuck it out and kept on working. She never complained about getting covered with grease.

Chao Shu-ying was on duty one night after the boats had dropped anchor. When she went into the engine room to inspect, she discovered water in the boat, which almost

covered the clutch. She must start the engine and pump the water out, or the next day’s fishing would not only be affected but the engine would be damaged. Although she had never started the engine by herself, she must try. When her first two attempts failed, she thought of Chairman Mao’s teaching, “**Be brave, firm and cool, and learn in the struggle.**” She calmly analyzed why she had failed, and then started the engine at the third try, and pumped out the water.

Chi Kuei-ying, a graduate of the Luta City Normal School, joined the “March 8th” in 1969 with the desire to learn from the fishermen, temper and remould herself into a person with the thoughts and feelings of the working people. Hardship and difficulty steeled her into a firm, unyielding young woman.

One day as they were hauling in the net a big wind came up, and the waves started to beat the net back into the sea. Instantly Chi Kuei-ying jumped onto the net and held on with both hands, until finally she and others who came to help her fought the wind and waves and hauled the net up.

With the winter snows of 1969, the fish moved south in the Yellow Sea. According to past practice, the time had come for the fishermen’s winter rest. To keep on fishing would mean going to the distant open seas south of the Shantung peninsula where waters were rough and dangerous even in calm weather. Only big boats attempted it. The high seas presented many problems for 60-h.p. boats such as those of the “March 8th.” But the girls wanted to have a try. “We like the wind and waves,” they said. After they had prepared for sailing in a snow-storm, they set out for the deep seas. They caught over

30 tons of fish in less than a month, establishing a precedent for small boats in winter fishing.

With the arrival of the shrimp season in the autumn of 1971 the girls of the "March 8th" unit confidently sailed out and prepared for big hauls. They got good catches and fulfilled their quota. And they continue making new contributions to the building of socialism.

Hsin Kung-yuan

Women Fliers

CHINA'S first squadron of women fliers was formed in 1950. They celebrated Women's Day in 1952 by flying in formation over Tien An Men Square.

P.L.A. women air force pilots exchanging flight experience.



Many women fliers have matured in the 22 years since then. Conscientiously studying and applying Mao Tsetung Thought, they are developing a proletarian ideology and continuously revolutionizing their thinking. With China and the world at heart, they fly for the revolution and the building of socialism.

One of these women is Chu Hui-fen whose family slaved for generations for landlords. In 1939, when she was two years old, the Japanese invaders ravaged Chia-ting, her home town near Shanghai. Foreign aggression on top of class oppression left the family with no way to live. Carrying their few belongings on his shoulder pole, her father took the family and begged their way to Shanghai. He did back-breaking work for the capitalists but the family still went hungry. Then, exhausted and starved, he died, followed very soon by Chu Hui-fen's younger brother, who died of starvation. Her mother went to work as a maidservant in a capitalist family till she too died one raw, snowy day in 1944. Within three years, the vicious society had killed three of the family. The orphaned girl roamed the streets of Shanghai alone, keeping herself alive with discarded melon rinds and rotten vegetable leaves. Hatred for the exploiting classes and the aggressors of her motherland burned in her like a hot coal.

Then Chairman Mao and the Communist Party led the people to freedom. Shanghai was liberated in 1949, and Chu Hui-fen was rescued from her misery and sent to school. In 1956 she came to the air force. She stood before a portrait of Chairman Mao in her new uniform, and tears welled in her eyes. There was so much she wanted to say, but she put it all in the words, "Chairman Mao, I owe everything to you!"

Her first difficulty in training was not having enough strength. Learning to fly a twin-engined plane with only one engine running, when she had to put both feet on the rudder, she would perspire profusely and get exhausted, her feet aching for a long time after each practice. The squadron's Party branch helped her compare the present good life of the working people with the exploitation and oppression they suffered in the old society. Chu Hui-fen's simple class feeling rose to a higher political awareness of class struggle and the struggle between the two lines. She drew strength from Chairman Mao's teaching, "**In times of difficulty we must not lose sight of our achievements, must see the bright future and must pluck up our courage.**" She persisted in daily physical training, running and working out on the athletic wheel with the men fliers. As she developed her strength, she redoubled her study of Chairman Mao's works and became a competent flier. On June 1, 1962, she was admitted to the Chinese Communist Party. Today she is a deputy group commander.

Chu Hui-fen and her comrades-in-arms were once assigned the urgent task of rescuing a Red Guard who had been wounded while on duty. They took off that night in face of a strong wind and after a whole day's workout.

Hui-fen said: "Chairman Mao has taught us: '**Our duty is to hold ourselves responsible to the people.**' The Red Guards have made great contributions in the Cultural Revolution. We must discharge our duty without delay."

They quickly got their plane ready and, at the order to take off, soared into the sky. The flight was of several hours' duration. Then they landed, and Chu Hui-fen helped carry the Red Guard onto the plane. The attending doctors and nurses went aboard and they took off again.

The flight back was through clouds and it was rough, but Chu Hui-fen kept firm hold on the control lever. Then she thought: "Before the liberation, I went about with a begging bowl in my hand. Now I hold the control lever of a plane for my motherland. The Party trusts me. I must faithfully serve the Party and the people." With this thought she climbed higher, out of the clouds, so the wounded Red Guard would have a smoother journey.

The temperature in the plane fell at the high altitude and the crew again thought of the Red Guard. Was he warm enough? They offered to cover him with their clothes, though none of them had worn their heavy suits. Chu Hui-fen and her comrades-in-arms relaxed only after their wounded passenger was safely in hospital.

Communist Party member Yueh Hsi-tsui was already a fine flier when she had just turned 20. She constantly keeps in mind Chairman Mao's injunction to **"build a powerful people's air force to defend the motherland."** By studying hard she finished the theoretical courses in aeronautics in a short time. But just before she started flight training, she felt a numbness in her joints. The doctor diagnosed it as arthritis and advised against training for a while. Yueh Hsi-tsui was very disturbed. Would this mean that she might never fly? Urged by the leadership and the doctors, however, she finally agreed to undergo treatment.

In the hospital she studied Chairman Mao's teaching on daring to struggle and to win, and felt more confident that she could overcome her illness. She kept up her study of Chairman Mao's works and spent hours outdoors every day doing physical exercises, even in mid-winter. She practised sweeping off the hospital skating rink at rest intervals. When the treatment and exercise had im-

proved her condition, she requested to return to flight training.

Back in her unit, having fallen far behind the others, she practised running three kilometres every day.

The leadership soon decided she could resume her flight training. How happy she was as she climbed into the cockpit! But she had trouble in landing, bringing the plane in either too high or too low. Even with her instructor's help she failed to make the grade.

Yueh Hsi-tsui turned to Chairman Mao's teaching: **"Will the Chinese cower before difficulties when they are not afraid even of death?"** She decided she must train her eyes rigorously, and would do this wherever she was.

On the bus back from the airfield she would fix her eyes on an object ahead and practise estimating distance,

Discussing their study of Chairman Mao's works.



as she had to when landing the plane. Tired when she got back to the barracks, she would still practise with the transparent plastic map case, holding it like a cockpit windshield in front of her eyes and, taking the floor below as her runway, running up and down the stairs to train her eyes. She conquered her difficulty and took to the skies.

Communist Party member Yu Fu-lan is another staunch woman member of the squadron.

Once, when heavy rains and rising waters threatened to breach a reservoir and sandbags were urgently needed to save nearby factories and towns, the leadership decided to air-drop them. Yu Fu-lan and her comrades were given the task.

Their plane took off in the storm. The reservoir lay among hills 100 metres high and shrouded in low-hanging clouds. Getting below the clouds and into position for the drop involved the danger of a crash, but Yu Fu-lan and her comrades did not hesitate to take the plane down to 200, 100, then 80 metres. Still they saw nothing but clouds. Command then ordered them back to base to consider another plan.

On the way back, Yu Fu-lan looked at the pile of gunny bags on the plane and thought of the poor and lower-middle peasants who were waiting for them in their fight against the flood. At the base she reported to command and, backed by the whole crew, asked for permission to try again. "The people are waiting for the bags," she said. "We must deliver them!" After serious consideration, the leadership agreed. Yu Fu-lan and her comrades summed up their experience on the first flight and discussed how to cope with the problems a second time. Then they took off again.

A bold and careful navigator, Yu Fu-lan plotted the plane's course. At 80 metres there was still the blanket of dense cloud. They were already flying lower than some of the hilltops. "Drop another 20 metres," Yu Fu-lan told the pilot. They broke through the clouds and suddenly saw the reservoir in plain sight. The flood-fighters were waving their hands. Dodging the hills, the women fliers circled low over the reservoir and dropped the bundles of bags precisely on target.

Hsin Hua

Women Oil Extractors of Taching

ONE morning in September 1970, as glorious rays of the sun reddened the expanse of sky over Taching Oilfield, about a hundred young women oil extractors, led by the political instructor Chao Ching-chih and three veteran workers, went to the spot where "Iron Man" Wang Chin-hsi dug Taching's first oil well 10 years ago. They went there to learn the spirit of "Iron Man" Wang and Taching's admirable tradition of the battle for China's oil production. This was Taching's first all-women oil extracting team, formed not long ago. Its members' average age was 21. All had been brave Red Guards at the early stage of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and most had been to Peking for review by Chairman Mao at Tien An Men Square. Acting on Chairman Mao's teaching to become one with the workers and peasants, they had come to Taching from various parts of the country.

Today, guided by Mao Tsetung Thought and inspired by the spirit of Wang Chin-hsi, the women oil extractors are playing their part in the work at the Taching Oilfield.



Women oil extractors of Taching Oilfield.

They have successfully managed dozens of oil wells and are praised as an "Iron Girls" oil extracting team.

Braving Difficulties

From the day of its formation, the young women's oil extracting team faced up to difficulties. Just before October 1 of 1970, China's National Day, the team determined to put a new oil well into production earlier than planned, regarding this as a gift at the celebration of China's 21st birthday. But the difficulties were many. Electricity was still not laid on, and at night they couldn't see their hands before their faces. The water-jacket heater for the oil pipeline needed water, and the water-tank truck had not arrived. The dewaxing equipment

weighing several hundred kilogrammes was a mile away. What should they do — wait, or create the conditions? The girls talked this over and decided to be like “Iron Man” Wang Chin-hsi. “We’ll beat the difficulties and see that a new oil well is producing ahead of time!” they said.

The struggle for the new oil well began. The girls soon had the electric line up. In rain and mud they carried water, bucket by bucket, from a pond hundreds of metres away to fill the water-jacket heater, which held a ton of water. After that they moved the heavy dewaxing equipment to the well. The girls were soaked through with rain and sweat; their shoulders were swollen from carrying loads. Their legs and faces were raw and sore. But no one complained. They said proudly: “We missed the opportunity to do the pioneering work in the hard battle to open the oilfield. Neither have we experienced the test of war flames as our elder comrades did in the early days of the revolution, when they had only mouthfuls of parched flour between mouthfuls of snow to eat while fighting. Why shouldn’t we stand a little hardship today, if it means more oil to support China’s socialist construction and the world revolution!” After several days’ intense work, the girls had their first success. At half past eleven on the night of September 30, their new oil well went into production. The sound of crude oil gushing forth and streaming into the conveyer pipe was music to the girls’ ears, and they were all smiles.

Struggling against the severe cold and blizzards of their first winter, the women’s team overcame more difficulties and kept the oil flowing.

Chang Tsai-feng, one on the team, was born in a poor peasant family which suffered bitterly in the old society

and she had deep class feeling. Her parents died toiling for a landlord. Chairman Mao had rescued the girl from the abominable old society and trained her as an oil worker. At the oilfield, the team became like her own family. She took pride in doing hard jobs, and did her work carefully, devoting her energy to developing China’s petroleum industry. One day in the winter of 1970, when the temperature suddenly dropped, she noticed a water-jacket heater not working smoothly. There was danger of the heater freezing, and the oil well to stop functioning. Braving the biting cold, she opened the outlet valve, drew out buckets of water, and returned them into the circulation system. But the well cover was crusted with ice, and there was no place to put the bucket. So she held it in her arms and was splashed all over by the steam and hot water when they spurting out. Her clothes froze stiff in the driving wind. She set her jaw and kept on working until the heater started functioning properly and the oil gushing smoothly.

Chiao Ching-lien, another of the women oil extractors, came to Taching with a strong will to be re-educated by the working class and to temper herself in difficult circumstances. She displayed the revolutionary spirit of fearing neither hardship nor death in whatever she did. Once, on an inspection tour, she noticed burning oil vapours leaking out of a separator valve. They had been set afire by a gas burner for water-jacket heating. Chiao Ching-lien ran for a fire extinguisher and rushed to the spot to protect the wells, disregarding her own safety. Her eyebrows and hair were singed, but she did not retreat half a step till she had closed the separator, preventing escape of the oil vapours and saving state property.

Scientific Management

The underground strata of the several dozen oil and water wells the team worked on were mostly under low pressure. The movements of oil, water and pressure below the earth's surface were variable and unsteady, and could mean uncertain oil production. This was a new problem on their way of continuing the work — how to manage such oil wells so as to produce more and better oil for the state. One was most difficult to manage. It had much wax, and often failed to function. The girls studied Chairman Mao's teaching: **“Practice, knowledge, again practice, and again knowledge,”** and first noted and experimented with the laws of movement of underground oil, water and pressure. Then they studied in relation to the difficult problems that arose in managing the well, while referring to veteran workers' experience in managing unruly oil wells. Thus they worked out methods and solved the problem of a well with much wax.

The women's team had not repaired oil wells or measured well pressure, both jobs being done by special teams. With improvement of their skill in managing oil wells, the girls volunteered for the jobs. To provide equipment for repairing oil wells and measuring pressure, deputy team leaders Liu Kuang-yuan and Li Chi-chih pushed carts to collect discarded used materials from the Taching grassland, from which they made a hydraulic apparatus in their spare time and used it for well repairing. Measuring well pressure is hard work and means getting up before dawn and going to bed at midnight. It involves lowering a very heavy pressure gauge to the bottom of the well, several thousand metres. It used to be done only by men workers. But the “Iron Girls” said,

“If the men can measure well pressure, so can we women.” With the help of veteran workers, and with practice, the girls soon learned how.

Knowing how to measure well pressure helped the girls understand better the laws of variation in the underground oil-bearing strata. They used the apparatus they had made with their own hands and measured the underground strata of every oil well to collect first-hand data, which they then studied and analysed. Now they can measure the pressure of all the team's oil and water wells by themselves. Once a heavy rain came after midnight. It was time to collect the needed data for two of the wells. Teng Yen-hsia, a Communist Youth League member, said firmly: “A delay in measuring the well means less data from which to judge the stratum. With Mao Tsetung Thought as guide and “Iron Man” Wang Chin-hsi as example, we'll certainly get the data we want.” Bringing with them the pressure-measuring tools, the girls set out in the storm and succeeded in collecting the data on the two wells. The women oil extractors worked in all kinds of weather and with sustained effort to learn to know the oilfield's variation below the earth's surface. They have now measured each of their oil wells 230 times and accumulated about 10,000 data from them, providing a large amount of first-hand information needed for the scientific management of oil wells.

* * *

Nurtured by Mao Tsetung Thought and tempered in the class struggle, struggle for production and scientific experiment, the women oil extracting team has matured steadily in the past year and more. Many of them have been admitted to the Chinese Communist Party or to the

Chinese Communist Youth League. Some have become cadres of the women's team or elected members of the Taching Oilfield Party committee. Known among the team members as "Little Iron Woman," Chang Tsai-feng has studied Chairman Mao's works conscientiously since joining the team and has been trained into an advanced woman oil worker in a little over a year. By carrying forward the revolutionary spirit of Taching, the young women oil extracting team has made its contribution to the development of China's petroleum industry. As team representative, Lu Tseng-hua has come to Peking and had the joy of seeing our great leader Chairman Mao, which has greatly inspired the whole team. Now, these young women are determined to live up to Chairman Mao's hopes and make still greater contributions to the development of China's petroleum industry.

Kung Yeh

Housewives Can Make Electronic Equipment

THE West District No. 1 Transistor Equipment Factory in Peking used to be a neighbourhood workshop where steelyards were made and scales repaired. Most of the workers had been housewives and had little formal education, but in just five years they have succeeded in turning out various electronic products which fill needs in hundreds of factories throughout the country. Some of these products have had favourable comments by friends from abroad at the Chinese Export Commodities Fair in Kwangchow.

It may be wondered how these women, who were housewives, are able now to make this modern equipment.

The Women Dare to Do

In 1965 the workshop was asked to trial-produce a diffusion furnace with automatic temperature control which had been designed by the revolutionary students and teachers of Tsinghua University as a project in



Women workers assembling high-precision automatic temperature-control diffusion furnaces.

their scientific research plan. Hearing that it was an important item for the electronics industry and had been on the list of the imperialists' embargo against China for a long time, the women workers determined to take on this task for their motherland, though none of them was an electrician, let alone a technician or engineer.

When a skeptic scoffed that it was nonsense for housewives even to think of making a diffusion furnace, the women

were adamant "Why can't we women add a brick to socialist construction?" they argued back. "Men and women are equals in the new society." And, backed by the Party branch, they decided to try. Li Hua, Wang Chin-tsai, Sung Chin-lan and some other women workers and a few newcomers who had just completed secondary school were put in charge.

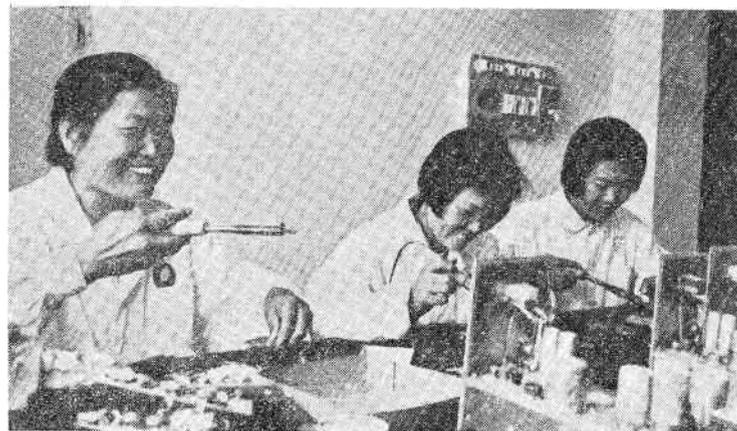
The Party branch secretary, Ti Jung-hsueh, called them together to study Chairman Mao's inspiring essay, *The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains*. "The Foolish Old Man could remove mountains," he said.

"What if we haven't a higher education? We're people of the new era with the spirit of the Foolish Old Man." Li Hua, a child bride in the old society, whom the Party rescued from her sadness after the liberation, was impressed. She said with conviction, "With Mao Tsetung Thought to guide us, we can overcome our difficulties and make that furnace!"

Relying on their own efforts, they started out in cramped quarters—a reed and clay cabin with asphalt felt roof, ten square metres in area.

The first step in making a diffusion furnace is to solder a device with almost a thousand components. This initial technique requires ability to read the circuit diagram. It looked to the women that they would not be able to make the first step. They went to Tsinghua University for advice. To Li Hua, who had never been to school at all, the diagram was just a maze of spider webs. With the

Li Hua (*left*) and many other workers at the factory who, like her, were housewives before, now make modern electronic industrial equipment.



warm and patient help of the university students, however, they soon learned to read the diagram, and they began to work. Soldering is a simple job, but when Li Hua took up the small, light soldering iron, her hand trembled, for she was used to handling 20-kilogramme weights. Following Chairman Mao's teaching: **"What really counts in the world is conscientiousness, and the Communist Party is most particular about being conscientious,"** she practised with great care. She first cut the soldering metal into very small pieces and soldered them one by one over the lead holes, finally becoming quite skilled at it.

Wang Chin-tsai, mother of three children, went to the university to learn soldering in the daytime; then in the evening she returned to the workshop where she practised what she had learned and exchanged experience with others. Thus this housewife, who had only two years' schooling, became one of the skilled technicians in this line.

Learning While Doing

Having finished their study at the university in a month, the women returned to the workshop where they were warmly welcomed by their fellow-workers. Trial-production of the diffusion furnace was to begin.

Li Hua and the other women workers had learned to make the furnace controls, but none of them knew how to make the furnace body. They studied the problem; and also sent several workers to other plants which were equipped with diffusion furnaces. They were told that it was impossible for people who knew nothing about thermodynamics to make a diffusion furnace. So they

invited an expert from a research institute to teach them about that. The expert was enthusiastic about helping them, telling them many basic principles so that they learned a lot. But how to apply the principles and make a furnace?

"Let's learn while doing," they said. "Chairman Mao teaches us: **'Our chief method is to learn warfare through warfare.'**"

"That's it," they agreed. "As the saying goes, 'To see something once is better than hearing about it a hundred times, but to do a thing once is better than seeing it a hundred times.'"

They tried again and again, and finally worked out methods and made many parts of the furnace. Still they couldn't set up a constant-temperature zone without which there could be no diffusion furnace. The women worked

on it day and night, but failed to solve the problem.

They reported the trouble to the Party branch comrades, who called a meeting of all the workers to put their heads together. Woman worker Kuo Ching - chih outlined for the assembled workers their progress and their difficulties, and asked for advice. There were many suggestions. When some-

Wang Chin-tsai checking an automatic temperature-control unit.



one mentioned the long tube in the furnace and how a furnace was not like an ordinary cooking stove, Kuo suddenly got an idea. It was true, the two were different in structure, but the principles of the furnace and of the cooking stove were the same. It was easier to maintain constant temperature in the stove because the stove had no cold air in it, while in the furnace, it was hot in the middle and cooler at both ends.

Someone added, "If we change the winding of the heating elements so that there're more coils at the ends and less in the middle, that might stabilize the temperature."

This method was tried and did in fact lessen the difference in temperature inside the furnace. After over 30 experiments, they worked out a rational winding of the heating elements and produced a constant temperature zone. Thus, after more than a hundred failures and setbacks and seven months' hard work, these former housewives, who could only make steelyards, made the first high-precision automatic temperature-control diffusion furnace of advanced type.

On to Further Achievement

After crossing the threshold of the electronics industry, the women did not stop. The furnace they had made used electronic tubes. During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, they proposed to the Party branch and the revolutionary committee that they try to make a transistorized diffusion furnace. The leaders supported the proposal.

They studied the diagram carefully in the light of their experience, broke through old restrictions and introduced bold innovations, overcoming one difficulty after another.

The result was their first transistorized diffusion furnace, simple but of advanced level and with special features. After tests by various departments, the diagram was selected as a standard pattern in China. Tsinghua University included it in its textbooks.

The news that this small factory has produced modern diffusion furnaces, and furthermore that housewives have become electronic technicians, spread throughout the country. People have come from factories in other parts of the country to study its experience. Foreign friends have also been welcome visitors here.

Hung Nung

Iron Girls Team of Tachai

ENERGETIC young women throughout China's countryside have formed shock forces which have become known among the people as Iron Girls teams. Guided by Mao Tsetung Thought, they take an active part in class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experiment. These young women, with their hearts and minds set on farming for the revolution and not afraid of hard work, play an important role in building China's socialist new countryside.

The first Iron Girls team was formed in the Tachai Production Brigade of Hsiyang County in Shansi Province. The county now has 457 of these groups, with 5,200 young women members.

The team was formed in a hard battle against nature. In August 1963, heavy rains fell steadily for a week, raging through Tachai in the middle section of the Taihang Mountain Range. Most of the houses and cave-dwellings collapsed, while field embankments, and even some stone dams, were swept away. It was the most serious disaster in a century. The poor and lower-middle peasants of Tachai did not accept the consequences of this calamity, however, but rose heroically in the

emergency. Led by the brigade Party branch, they studied Chairman Mao's teaching: **"Of all things in the world, people are the most precious. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, as long as there are people, every kind of miracle can be performed."** They refused the relief funds, grain and other aid offered by the state, having resolved to rely on their own efforts to overcome the destruction caused by the flood — to rebuild their village into a new Tachai.

The task at hand was gigantic. They had to build new homes, salvage the crops, repair the washed-out terraces

"Iron Girls" of Tachai defy the elements and every difficulty to cut rock and build new terraced farmland for the revolution.



and rebuild the dams. It was in face of these formidable tasks that 23 young women formed the first shock team. These girls, who ranged in age from 14 to 18, with basic school education, were led by a poor peasant's daughter named Chao Su-lan first of all to reset the battered plants on dozens of hectares of muddy fields. Not stopping even when the hot August sun was directly overhead at midday, they raised each plant by hand. Not one of the girls thought of complaining about her aching back or sore muscles!

The crop was gathered that autumn, but the repair of the terraces remained for the winter. These young women kept up their iron spirit, and they joined the men commune members working in snow, or at temperatures as low as 20 degrees below zero centigrade. The Party branch comrades became concerned for these girls and urged them to leave such hard work to the men, but they would not. "We should learn from our elders. The older generation didn't get tired when they built Tachai, and we won't get tired either till we've built it anew." The commune members said these girls were made of iron, and the name stuck.

That was nine years ago. Since then, the team's leadership has changed three times and new members have succeeded the old, but these groups have remained a young and vital force in the continued development of Tachai's agriculture. The girls plunge into any job that needs to be done — sowing, hoeing, harvesting — and also jobs that were formerly considered as requiring people with special skills.

The Iron Girls tackle the hardest jobs. One year, aside from the field work, they went into the mountains to

gather grass for compost. It was hard work, out early and back late, and the girls' hands were cut and bleeding; still they never complained. In ten days they cut 55 tons of grass.

Last year, fostering their elders' revolutionary spirit of self-reliance and hard struggle, the Tachai Iron Girls team joined in the work of levelling the land into smooth fields. In order to remove a hill, the Party branch decided to break a path on it for bulldozers to get into position for pushing earth down from the top. Who was to do the job? It was the Iron Girls team that took it on.

Wielding picks amidst flying sand, they went about filling in gullies. Kuo Ai-lien seemed always to be where the work was hardest. At the end of a deep gully where a slope was so steep she couldn't even stand there, she thought that as a Communist she must not lose heart. She dug a toe-hold with her pick and steadied herself against a rock, and a dozen girls were able to follow her. Once, they wanted to pull down a dam and move the stone to another place, and the long, steep slope would not take wheelbarrows. But they said proudly, "If wheelbarrows can't make it, we can carry the stone on our shoulders!" With that, the team of girls with the heavy loads slung from shoulder poles moved all the stone and built the path for the bulldozers.

But to describe these girls only as shock workers in production would give a one-sided picture. They are also a good propaganda team of Mao Tsetung Thought. Taking time to visit the homes of poor and lower-middle peasants, they hear and popularize accounts of class struggle. This helped raise their class consciousness and that of the commune members. At the same time they

help old folks who cannot read to study Chairman Mao's works. They also compose short songs and dances telling about outstanding people in the mass movement for the study of Mao Tsetung Thought and in the struggle to remake nature, and give performances for the commune members.

In the storm of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, the Iron Girls affirm the great victories of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line with their songs and dances, which are also a weapon against the revisionist line of the renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi and his agents in the brigade, who tried to restore capitalism there.

The Tachai Iron Girls are brought up with Mao Tsetung

Home with the millet harvest.



Thought. The brigade Party branch often explains to them the class struggle and the struggle between the two lines of socialism and capitalism in their locality and in the country as a whole, in the past as well as at present. The Party branch also educates them in Mao Tsetung Thought, fostering in them a selfless devotion to the revolution and to the people. In the past few years, four of the team have become Party members.

One of these is Kuo Feng-lien, second in succession as leader of the Iron Girls team and now deputy secretary of the brigade Party branch. When she finished school and went to work in Tachai Brigade in 1962, Party branch secretary Chen Yung-kuei told her of his own suffering in the old society and of the struggle that has continued since the liberation between the two lines of socialism and capitalism. He gave her a copy of *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tsetung* and encouraged her to study it, and also Chairman Mao's other works, to overcome bourgeois ideas with Mao Tsetung Thought. Chen Yung-kuei said, "Chairman Mao tells you young people: **'The world is yours, as well as ours, but in the last analysis, it is yours.'** In order to keep firm hold of the proletarian power the older generation has seized back from the class enemy, you young people must arm yourselves with Mao Tsetung Thought and be able to stand the test of class struggle." Chen Yung-kuei's words were a profound education. She has persisted in studying Chairman Mao's works and striven to steel herself into a successor to the revolutionary cause of the proletariat. When Tachai was flooded again in 1968, Kuo Feng-lien was the first to jump into the rushing flood water to save livestock that belonged to the collective. She set a good example for others to follow.

Remaining modest, with their feet planted firmly on the ground, the girls learn from the poor and lower-middle peasants and from other Iron Girls teams, never wanting to lag behind the most advanced of any of them. They keep on raising their level of ideological revolutionization and continue the victorious advance along Chairman Mao's revolutionary line.

Hsin Ping

Women Work on Live Ultra-High-Tension Power Lines

A "March 8th" team of young women maintains the high-tension electric network in an area of several hundred square kilometres in the beautiful, fertile Pearl River delta in south China. Displaying the revolutionary spirit of daring to think, act and to break through, they work high in the air on 220,000-volt ultra-high-tension transmission lines without interrupting the current.

During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, revolutionary workers and technicians of the Anshan Electric Power Administration in northeast China set a record for free operation on live ultra-high-tension lines. The new technique is used by the Kwangchow Electric Power Company. The idea of free live-line operation attracted some of the women workers after they saw the men workers doing it as an everyday matter. They saw this technique as a service to socialist construction, and they determined to learn it too.

"Times have changed, and today men and women are

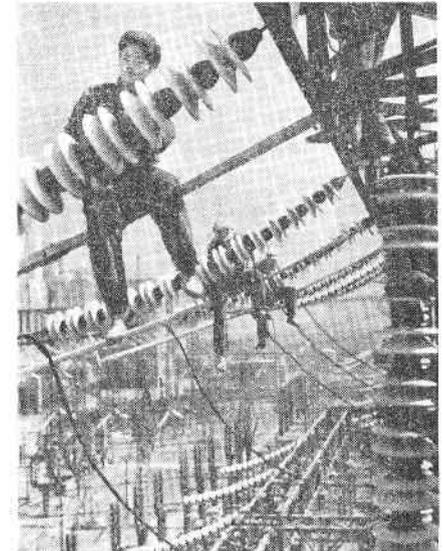
equal. Whatever men comrades can accomplish, women comrades can too."

Greatly encouraged by this teaching of Chairman Mao and warmly supported by the company revolutionary committee, they organized their "March 8th" team in October 1970, and started to work.

The new technique calls for strict adherence to work procedures. The women workers, who were

used only to working on the ground, had to overcome difficulties. But they were confident and said that no matter how great the problems their determination to make revolution was greater, that as women of New China they would tackle and defeat any difficulty. They practised climbing rope ladders, walking on frames high above the ground, and scurrying up and down the pylons. At first they had some trouble with dizziness and their legs going soft, but they persisted. After two weeks of training under experienced workers, they were working on 30-metre pylons, walking freely on the narrow beams.

Then they began trying live-line operation on 110,000-volt transmission lines at the same potential. When they



Women electricians of the Fuhsin Electric Power Station, Liaoning Province, on free live-line operation.

saw the blue flashes of electric discharges from the conducting lines and heard them crackle, they were both excited and a little anxious. But the thought that they were blazing a trail for China's women in the field of electrical work gave them courage, and they began vying with one another to be the first up the pylon. The woman chosen was Teng Tsui-chiung, who did not hesitate but, brave and calm, started up the ladder, saying as she went: "I must be firm, never waver, and make a success of this." She entered the electrical field, heard the crackle of electricity, then grasped the conducting line with both hands. When she was charged with the 110,000 volts, the comrades below called out, "How does it feel?"

They could see her smile as she answered, "Just fine!" She had conquered the 110,000-volt electrical field. The women then tried working on live 220,000-volt transmission lines at the same potential. The electrical field was larger, and the crackle of the electricity stronger. But they persisted as before and won another victory.

After summing up their experience, the women electricians practised free operation on 220,000-volt ultra-high-tension transmission lines with the current on. The team's Lin Yu-ming was proud to be assigned the first to try. The line and porcelain insulators swayed in the wind, but Lin Yu-ming was not swayed and was soon up the pylon. As she approached the electrical field every step gave a crackling sound around her legs, but she went right ahead into the field and changed the porcelain insulators. The people below cheered when Lin Yu-ming fixed the "March 8th" red banner on the conducting line.

Lung Chiang

Women Bridge Builders in Forest Areas

THE Greater Khingan Mountains in northeast China are a centre of the lumber industry. Extending for hundreds of kilometres, they are covered with larch, Mongolian red pine, Asian white birch and other valuable trees. In the last few years, large numbers of school graduates from all over the country have settled here, enthusiastically contributing to socialist construction. Almost half of these new settlers are girls.

Thinking of their physical limitations, the leadership at first assigned the girls only to auxiliary jobs. But they asked to do more. Then in November 1969, the leadership set up a bridge-building team of girls from Shanghai, Kiamusze, Harbin and other cities. The leadership also sent a workers' propaganda team and a P.L.A. propaganda team to teach them politics and skill. Over two years of storm and stress in revolutionary struggle, and experience in construction, have given the girls valuable training, and they have developed in ideology, physical fitness and skill. With the help of veteran

workers, they have built a five-arch reinforced concrete bridge 110 metres long, for a logging road.

Revolutionary Women Bridge Builders

There are altogether 103 girls between the ages of 17 and 24 in the women's bridge-building team. Most of them are graduates of junior or senior middle school. When the team was set up, some of them had misgivings. Born and raised in big cities, they didn't know if they could get used to life in the frozen mountain forest and were afraid they couldn't stand such heavy work. Some of them thought that an all-women's team might not be able to build a bridge and people would make fun of them.

Acting on Chairman Mao's teaching: **"Ideological education is the key link to be grasped in uniting the whole Party for great political struggles,"** the workers and P.L.A. men ran a Mao Tsetung Thought study class to resolve the girls' doubts.

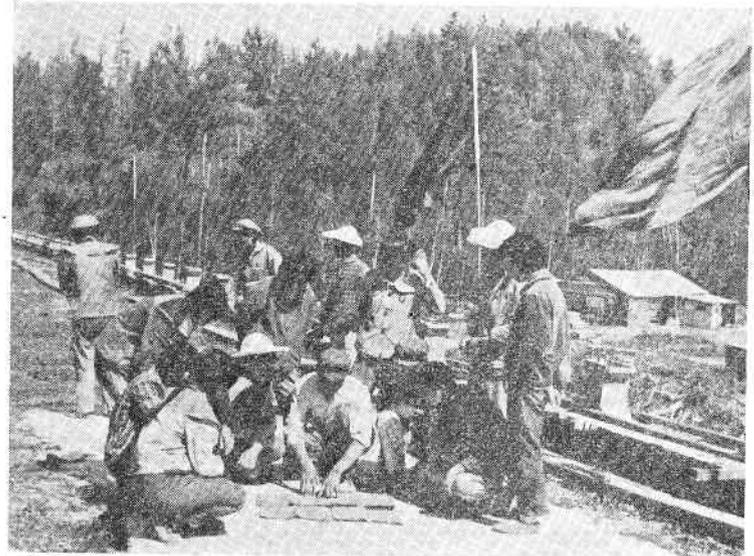
The class studied Chairman Mao's works and repeatedly discussed the following passage: **"We must help all our young people to understand that ours is still a very poor country, that we cannot change this situation radically in a short time, and that only through the united efforts of our younger generation and all our people, working with their own hands, can China be made strong and prosperous within a period of several decades."** They also heard veteran workers tell about the class and national oppression they suffered in the old society, and visited an exhibition on class exploitation and oppression. They held a discussion of their reactions to all this.

These activities raised the girls' class consciousness. They realized that if they were to build a bridge, they had to overcome old superstitions, dare to blaze new paths and be good at struggling against hardships.

Take team leader Tien Li-jung for example. She came from Kiamusze with a desire to help develop the forest area and build up the frontier. When she saw the sea of trees covering the mountain range, she fell in love with the place.

"Without an understanding of class bitterness," she said after the study class, "you can't understand how to make revolution. What does it matter if life is hard in this northern forest? Chairman Mao teaches us that **'a good**

A veteran bridge builder helps the women solve problems that arise.



comrade is one who is more eager to go where the difficulties are greater.' We are girls of the Mao Tsetung era. We should trample difficulties underfoot and open the way for women to build bridges."

The girls made up their minds to take root in the frontier, be revolutionary bridge builders and devote their youth to the socialist construction of the forest area.

Led by the veteran workers, they looked for hard jobs to build their strength, their will and their ideology. In winter the snow on the mountains is knee deep, temperatures usually between 40 and 50 degrees below zero and the wind piercing cold. Every morning they rose before dawn and did exercises in the valley. Some of them pulled sleds up the mountains to fell trees, others hewed rock. Gradually they mastered skills and built up their strength, at the same time tempering their spirit of fearing neither hardship nor death.

Overcoming Obstacles

On April 18, 1970 the girls' team received their first assignment. It was to build a 110-metre bridge. The worksite was a steep gorge between high mountains deep in the forest. Building a bridge under these conditions presented many difficulties to girls fresh from the big cities. But hardship does not frighten girls armed with Mao Tsetung Thought.

In May when it starts to thaw, water rushes down the mountains and the rivers and streams swell rapidly. When the project reached the stage of pouring concrete for the third pier, the river had covered the foundation pit and dumped a lot of silt into it. Until the water and

silt were bailed out, the concrete could not be poured. Was the whole project to be delayed?

When the girls were warned not to wade into the icy water, they replied with Chairman Mao's teaching that **"times have changed, and today men and women are equal. Whatever men comrades can accomplish, women comrades can too."** "Chairman Mao supports us," they said, "and we will be a credit to him!"

Shouldering sandbags, they waded waist-deep into the stinging cold water and built a cofferdam around the third pit. Then they jumped into it and started to bail out the water with buckets. But water seeped in again so fast that their bailing was for nothing. After studying the problem, they swiftly built a wall around the cofferdam. This stopped the seepage, but underground water still welled up inside. It was impossible to work in the pit.

That night they set up a pump to take care of the water, and the P.L.A. men, workers and girls cleared the silt from the pit with buckets. Their hands got numb and their legs cramped with the cold, but they just rubbed and massaged their pains away and kept on removing



At the bridge construction site.

silt without complaining. When the pit was finally cleared, they started pouring the third pier the same night. By midnight everyone was busy at the worksite, with the mixer going and people hurrying back and forth carrying concrete. After five days and nights like this, the pier stood firm in the seething water.

Now they faced another challenging task — putting the fourth span above the main channel of the river. In order to place the 100-ton beam over the river, they had first to sink 35 wooden piles in two metres of water.

The pile-driver was in place at midstream. The north wind whisked white clouds across the sky as the river rushed eastward. Liu Wen-chin, an 18-year-old girl from Shanghai, jumped onto the shaking pile-driver and climbed up. Perched high on the machine, she worked the control lever with one hand and held onto a rope with the other. Every time the 400-kilogramme hammer banged down, the whole frame shook and her heart beat fast. Looking down at the surging river below was a little unnerving, but then the thought that she was driving piles for the revolution stiffened her, and she brought the hammer down hard.

Driving piles is a tough and dangerous job. The cold morning breeze made her shiver even in her heavy winter clothing. The noonday sun burned her face. In the evening insects bit her hands and face. But none of these got her down. "Rain is like sweat," she said proudly, "and the wind is my fan. Night or day, we make revolution!"

The battle to build the bridge produced many outstanding girls like Liu Wen-chin who learned to fear neither

hardship nor death for the revolution. The 17-year-old electric welder Chen Pao-mei is one of them.

In July, the heat at noon was stifling. Chen Pao-mei had the task of welding 72 main reinforcing rods together for each span of the bridge. It would take fast work not to hold up the project. As soon as she finished lunch she put on her mask and went back to work. The heat of the electric welding arc made her sweat. Sparks got into her shoes and burned her feet. But she went on welding, finding that working for the revolution brought fulfilment and happiness to her life.

Mao Tsetung Thought Makes New Women

The women's team finished the work on the eve of National Day 1970. Standing by their first bridge, the girls were very moved as they recalled the struggles of the past year. Their militant collective had made speedy progress in integrating themselves with the workers and peasants, as Chairman Mao says one should. In the course of socialist revolution and construction, they are rapidly growing into a new generation of women armed with Mao Tsetung Thought. Five of them have been accepted into the Chinese Communist Party and twelve have joined the Communist Youth League. Five have become pace-setters, while 55 are rated as advanced workers. A group of skilled women workers is taking shape — carpenters, welders, forgers, cement workers, electricians, machine operators. With the guidance of veteran workers, they can now work from blueprints on their own.

From their own experience these girls know that Mao Tsetung Thought is the guide directing them forward. It gives them the wisdom, ability and strength to perform unprecedented deeds.

今日中国妇女

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