

SOME BASIC FACTS ABOUT CHINA

Ten Questions and Answers

China Reconstructs Supplement January 1974

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NOTE

"How do the people's communes work? How did they come into being?"

"What position do national minorities have in Chinese society?"

"What do children study in primary schools? How long is their school day?"

"Are women really equal in China?"

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Many questions like this come to us from our readers. Since our January 1972 issue we have carried a series of articles in the form of questions and answers to try to answer them with facts and policies on China's politics, economy, society, women, culture, education, etc.

As a supplement to the January 1974 issue of China Reconstructs, here are answers to ten of the most frequently asked questions, together with several reports and articles.

— Editors

THE PEOPLE'S COMMUNES

How did the rural people's commune come into being?

Rural people's communes in China were set up widely in the autumn of 1958. They were the inevitable result of the political and economic developments in China.

Soon after liberation China's peasants carried out land reform, led by Chairman Mao and the Communist Party. Then, in line with the principle of voluntariness and benefit for all, they went on to build a new countryside following the Party's basic line for agricultural development: the first step, collectivization; the second step, mechanization and electrification.

Between the land reform and 1957, the organization of agricultural production in China developed from the mutual-aid team to the semi-socialist elementary producers' cooperative and the fully-socialist advanced cooperative. In 1958 came the further change to the people's commune.

The mutual-aid team had the rudiments of socialism. It consisted of a few to a dozen households. The means of production such as land, draft animals and farm tools were still privately owned. Members helped each other in production, exchanging work for work.

The elementary co-op was bigger than the mutual-aid team. Members pooled their land and other principal means of production, which were used and managed by the co-op. The owners received a certain amount of compensation according to how much they had pooled. Earnings from their collective work were distributed according to the socialist principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work".

An advanced co-op generally had around 200 households. Land and other principal means of production were owned collectively, and used and managed under the co-op's unified leadership. Earnings were distributed according to the socialist principle "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work". The co-op was bigger and the level of collectivization higher than before. By taking part in collective labor, the peasants gradually overcame the sense of private ownership which individual farming fosters and developed a growing desire to build the collective. Collectivization greatly promoted production. In 1957 harvests of grain, cotton and other industrial crops were the highest in history.

In 1957 the Party carried out a socialist education movement which deepened the peasants' socialist consciousness. In 1958, with the excellent domestic political and economic situation as a base, Chairman Mao formulated the General Line which called for "going all out, aiming high and achieving greater, faster, better and more economical results in building

socialism". This increased the peasants' enthusiasm for building socialism which expressed itself in a burst of energy aimed at speedily changing the backwardness of the countryside.

From the winter of 1957 to the summer of 1958, extensive basic improvements were made on farm land, centered around building water conservation projects. Much was done to develop agriculture-oriented industry, transport and communications, commerce, culture, education, health and the local militia. The advanced cooperative, organized chiefly for farming, became increasingly inadequate for large-scale production. In many places the smaller cooperatives amalgamated themselves into big ones or formed federations of co-ops. Since such a co-op or federation of co-ops often embraced the households of an entire township — a total of several thousand — its managing group was combined with the township government so that the result was a unit of both political and economic organization. This was the prototype of the people's commune.

Chairman Mao promptly summed up the significance of this new creation by the masses and their experience and declared, "People's communes are fine." The Party Central Committee issued a resolution outlining steps and methods for the formation of communes. People's communes were organized by the tens of thousands.

What are the characteristics of the people's commune? How is it different from the agricultural producers' cooperative?

(1) While the agricultural producers' cooperative engaged chiefly in farming, the people's commune both organizes the economy and does the work of the local government. It is a basic unit of China's socialist society and of proletarian political power in the countryside. The commune members' representative assembly functions as the township people's congress.

The commune not only has agriculture, but industry and trade. It leads education, health and the militia. Its Party and administrative cadres lead and organize both political-ideological work and production. In short, the people's commune is a brand-new social organization unifying leadership of politics, economy, military affairs and culture.

(2) The people's commune is a large collective owned by all its members. With more land, more hands and more funds than a cooperative, it can do a better job of large-scale basic improvement of land, experimenting with scientific farming and fighting natural disasters. Its far greater economic strength makes possible faster progress in water conservation, mechanization, electrification and the use of chemical fertilizers and insecticides. It strengthens the rural collective economy, speeds up the building of socialism in the countryside and raises the peasants' standard of living more quickly.

(3) The people's commune can carry out the policy "**take grain as the key link and ensure an all-round development**" better; that is, develop a diversified economy of farming, forestry, stock raising, fishery and sidelines, and set up industry, repair shops and transport to serve agriculture.

(4) The agricultural producers' co-op had two levels of organization, the co-op and the production teams under it. There was ownership on the co-op level only. The people's commune has three levels of organization: the commune, a number of production brigades under it, and a number of production teams under each brigade. There is collective ownership on each of these three levels, with the production team as the basic accounting unit. The land, draft animals, small farm machinery owned by a production team are managed by it, and it organizes the labor power of its members. It handles its income and distribution independently, bears its losses itself and keeps most of the profit.

Economic undertakings run by the production brigades are those which the production teams are unable to manage by themselves or which can be managed better by the brigades. These include small reservoirs and other water conservation projects benefiting the teams under the brigade, shops processing farm and sideline products, orchards, schools and health stations. Some brigades own tractors and other farm machinery.

Economic undertakings run by the communes are those which the brigades are unable to manage or which can be managed better by the communes. Serving the entire commune, these include tractor stations, hydro-electric power installations, irrigation and drainage works, farm machinery manufacture and repair shops, forest farms, stud farms, experimental farms, middle schools and hospitals. At present, the assets of undertakings run by the production teams account for the biggest proportion of the total assets of the commune and its teams and brigades. While enterprises run by the communes and brigades are relatively fewer, they play a big role in consolidating and developing rural socialist collective economy.

This can be illustrated in the October production brigade of the Wang-cheng commune in Hsishui county, Hupeh province. The brigade owns 20 tractors of various types, 34 electric motors and 60 machines for processing farm and sideline products. This equipment provides mechanization for all the irrigation, drainage, cultivation, transport and processing of grain, cotton and fodder done by the production teams under the brigade. In 1970 the brigade harvested an average of 12.75 tons of grain per hectare. It overfulfilled all state purchasing targets for grain, cotton and oil. It has 700,000 yuan in public funds and nearly 485 tons of reserve grain. Collective income has risen markedly.

As time goes on, the dictatorship of the proletariat will become more consolidated, commune members' socialist consciousness will continue to rise, the collective economy will

become still stronger. The relatively poor production teams will also gradually reach the economic level of the better-off teams, and farming will become more and more mechanized. With these prerequisites, in time the production brigade, and eventually the commune, will become the basic accounting unit. The system of collective ownership will eventually be replaced by ownership by the entire people (represented by the state).

How is income distributed in the people's commune?

Distribution in the people's communes is done according to the policy set forth by Chairman Mao which pays attention to three things — the interests of the state, the collective and the individual.

The main distribution is done in the production team, at present the basic accounting unit.

After production and management costs have been deducted from the team's annual income, a small part is paid to the state as tax, a small sum is set aside in the public accumulation fund, and the greater part is distributed among the members. The state tax and the team's accumulation are kept low so that increased production gives the members increased income.

To achieve the above, the state policy in the rural areas is not to raise taxes even when production increases. The amount of agricultural tax for the production teams has remained the same, even though better harvests are produced. Thus, for teams in which production goes up every year, the agricultural tax takes up an ever-diminishing proportion of the total income. At present it stands at 5, 6 or 7 percent. As production continues to increase, the actual rate of the agricultural tax will become still smaller.

Under China's socialist planning, farm production is carried out in a planned way according to the needs of the national economy. When there is a surplus above the state targets, the state purchases it at the same or even higher prices. Thus, in times of bumper harvest, the teams need not worry about finding a market for their surplus, or selling it at a loss. Instead, the production team adds to its income and public accumulation fund, and improves the standard of living of its members. This policy of the state keeps prices stable and facilitates adding to the national reserves, which are the basis of a constant supply.

The production team's accumulation fund consists of its reserve and welfare funds. The reserve fund is used to buy small or medium-size farm machinery, for basic construction and reproduction. The welfare fund covers expenses for culture and education, and for aid to members who are ill, retired or unable to work. It subsidizes, for example, the rural cooperative medical system under which the members pay only about one yuan a year for full medical care.

It also covers subsidies given to members who have financial difficulties, especially families of revolutionary martyrs, dependents of enlisted men, aged people with no families, orphans and disabled or sick members.

Distribution is based on the socialist principle “from each according to his ability, to each according to his work, more income for those who work more”. At the end of the year members receive amounts based on the number of workpoints (units of payment for labor) they earn. After thorough discussions by the members, these are awarded according to the amount and type of job, the quality of labor and the members’ attitude toward collective production.

Cadres at all levels of the people's communes must, according to a state regulation, take an active part in collective productive labor. This prevents cadres from becoming divorced from actual production and reality, ensures that they maintain constant and close ties with the masses and thus avoid becoming subjective and bureaucratic in their work. This is a fundamental measure in preventing the restoration of capitalism and consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Cadres at the commune level must join in production for not less than 60 days a year. Brigade and team cadres work and earn workpoints in the same way as ordinary commune members. For the time a cadre has to spend at public duties, he is given workpoints or a subsidy set through discussions by the members he leads. These methods of distribution provide funds for both the state and collective economy and for the gradual improvement of the life of commune members. The Hsichia brigade of the Tsungtsun commune in Chiangtu county, Kiangsu province illustrates this. Between 1962 and 1970 the average grain yield of the brigade rose from 2.25 to 7.5 tons per hectare. In 1970 it sold the state three times as much grain above the quota as in 1962 and its collective income was also close to three times the 1962 figure. While members' total income rose by 95 percent, the brigade's public accumulation fund reached the very substantial total of 240,000 yuan.

What about democratic life in a people's commune?

The people's commune is run on the principle of democratic centralism. The representative assemblies of the production team, the production brigade and the commune are the organs of power at these levels. Representatives are elected after thorough discussions by the members. Every member has the right to vote and be elected. Between sessions of the representative assemblies, work is carried out by a permanent body. (In the production team it is called a leading group and, in the brigade, and commune, a revolutionary committee.) These permanent leading bodies are also elected by the members.

Before the start of every production year, these leading groups at each level draw up production plans based on the targets set by the state, the actual conditions in each unit and

the members' needs. Unified planning gives due consideration to each of these at each level. The drafts are given to the members for full discussion, then revised according to suggestions and finalized. The figures on expenditures and distribution are made public each year. To join in discussions, approve plans and other matters, and criticize and supervise the way they are carried out, are the rights of all commune members. These rights are protected by law.

In addition to these democratic rights in the political and economic spheres, every commune member has the right to work, rest and education and to share in social welfare.

Every member able to work has the right to take part in productive labor. Men and women get the same pay for the same work. When work is assigned, the special physical problems of women are given due consideration.

Time for work and rest are arranged according to local farming customs and vary with the seasons. Proper rest is guaranteed. Commune members give their first attention to fulfilling collective targets. In their spare time they can work at the small private plots allotted to them by the production team, raise a little poultry or a few head of stock, or do handicrafts. Members can do what they like with products from this labor.

An important democratic right for every person is the opportunity to study Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and receive education in socialism. A certain amount of time each week is set aside for political study. Party organizations at the different levels are responsible not only for carrying out the Party's principles and policies but for leading and organizing cadres and the masses in political study. They give help whenever necessary so that the members will deepen their understanding of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought, constantly raise their socialist consciousness and develop the proletarian thinking of serving the people wholeheartedly.

It was the spiritual power of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought translated into material energy that has enabled China's millions of commune members to self-reliantly fight natural disasters, conquer difficulties and reap bumper harvests for ten years in a row.

(From China Reconstructs January 1972)

Chiaoli Village Takes the Collective Road

Staff Reporters

If Chairman Mao hadn't shown us the collective road, where would we be today?"

This is what Tsai Ah-shui of Chiaoli Village says when she recalls the changes in her village in the last two decades.

Chiaoli Village outside the county town of Taching in Chekiang province is the home of 55 peasant families. This part of the country, with its good soil and abundant produce, has always been called the "land of fish and rice". But before liberation its peasants lived in deep misery under the oppression and exploitation of the landlords. The land yielded no more than 1.5 tons of rice per hectare and 60 percent of the crop had to go to the landlords as rent. Left with little to keep them alive, the peasants had to borrow grain from landlords or rich peasants at 100 percent interest — for one peck of grain they had to pay back two pecks the following year. Chiaoli was liberated in 1949 by the People's Liberation Army led by the Communist Party. During the land reform in the following year, the poor peasants burned the land deeds and receipts for loans from the landlords and rich peasants, and received land. They elected a young man, Pan Ah-mao, as their village head. Like his father and grandfather before him, 25-year-old Pan Ah-mao was a hired hand. Though small and bony, the young man had a will of iron.

In the first two years after liberation peasants still farmed individually and life was hard. Get organized, Chairman Mao had said, and take the collective road to common prosperity. Pan Ah-mao was determined to do just that. On the day following the Spring Festival in 1952 he got 18 poor families together to organize a mutual-aid team to help each other with the farm work. They collected 15 kilograms of rice to serve as a fund for buying tools and some seed.

That was 20 years ago. Early this year we met Pan Ah-mao, now 47, in the county town, where he had come to attend a meeting. He took up the story from there and told us that in its first year their mutual-aid team reaped the best harvest the village had ever had. Heartened by their example, more peasants formed mutual-aid teams. Later the teams joined together in an elementary producers' cooperative which soon developed into a fully socialist one. In 1958 the advanced co-op amalgamated with other co-ops to become a people's commune.

Today Chiaoli Village is a production team under the Bright Star production brigade of the Chengkuan People's Commune. Pan Ah-mao, now secretary of the Communist Party branch of the brigade, lives in his old home at Chiaoli Village and works on the land alongside his neighbors.

The Village Today

The next day we followed Pan Ah-mao to Chiaoli. The river that runs through the village is a tributary of the Tiaohsi River. Before liberation, Pan told us, the Tiaohsi flooded every year and its tributaries spilled over and deluged the crops. In the past dozen years, as part of a unified plan to control the Tiaohsi, the people along its banks have built a reservoir on the upper reaches, reinforced the dykes on the lower reaches and dug canals to divert the water into nearby Taihu Lake.

Today the Chiaoli production team's 26.6 hectares of fields along the river give good harvests in spite of dry spells or rain. Now levelled fields are served by the brigade's electric irrigation and drainage station and plowed by tractors from the brigade's tractor station. The team built a house for rearing silkworms beside its mulberry grove. And set up a pig farm near its fodder processing shop. Last year the team gathered bumper crops of grain and silkworm cocoons. The yield per hectare was 10.8 tons, over seven times that of the days of individual farming and more than twice that of the days just after the commune was formed.

The expansion of collective production brought improved living for the commune members. When farming individually, the poorer peasants did not get enough to guarantee their own food grain, to say nothing of any other income. Last year the average income in the Chiaoli production team was close to 400 kg. of food grain and 198 yuan in cash per capita. These figures do not include income from home sideline production. Each family raises an average of three pigs, and most also raise sheep and chickens. Two-story tiled-roof buildings of brick and wood have replaced the old thatched-roof huts, and electric lighting has replaced the dim oil lamps. Every household has a loudspeaker through which it can hear radio programs.

Pan Ah-mao asked us into his home. There we found a teacher standing at a blackboard on the wall of the front room, giving a lesson to a dozen peasants seated at a long table. Pan Ah-mao had offered the use of the room for classes of the team's night school. A large rice bin full to the brim occupied one corner of the room, and the loft was piled with firewood, which is allotted to each household by the production team.

The rooms on either side of the front room were the bedrooms of Pan and his wife and their four children. In the kitchen in the back, a spotless stove told us that Pan's wife is a diligent housekeeper. When Ah-mao was a hired hand, their daily fare was thin gruel or rice husks and wild roots. Today even a thrifty budget includes fluffy rice at every meal.

In the old society no one in the Pan family had ever gone to school. Pan Ah-mao learned to read and write in night school only after liberation. But his 19-year-old eldest son has had a primary school education, his second son is in junior middle school, and the two daughters are in primary school — the first generation of educated peasants in the Pan family.

It was the time of preparation for spring plowing. The commune members were up before six to the first loudspeaker broadcast of the day, and off to the fields soon after breakfast. Some were busy bringing manure from the pigsties, mixing it with silt dredged up from the streams and carrying it to the fields. Others were looking after the seed beds to maintain the right temperature and water level. Still others were busy disinfecting the earthen floor and silkworm trays, and building an earthen stove needed to keep the silkworm rooms warm.

At noon, when the commune members come back for lunch and two or three hours for rest or to look after household affairs, we visited the home of Tsai Ah-shui. Hers was one of the 18 families who formed the first mutual-aid team. We found her helping her mother-in-law feed the four pigs and five sheep in the barn at the back of the house, where there was also a flock of chicks following a big hen about.

Tsai Ah-shui's husband, Teng Fu-shan, who is in charge of the team's plant protection work, had gone out visiting. Our hostess asked us to sit down and told us about herself.

Thirty-seven-year-old Tsai Ah-shui is an open and straightforward person. Like many of her generation she had a bitter childhood. When she was six years old, her father, a hired hand, could not stand the inhuman treatment he was getting from the landlord and quarreled with him. He was beaten by the landlord's flunkies and died from the injuries. Shocked and grieved, her mother died the same year. A neighbor, also a poor family, took the orphan girl in.

Tsai Ah-shui grew up in cold and hunger, going about barefoot even in winter. She married Teng Fu-shan when the village's first mutual-aid team was being formed. For her wedding she at last got on a pair of cloth shoes, but still had to borrow socks to hide her feet, swollen from years of frostbite. She also had to borrow a jacket to cover her own ragged padded one.

Now the family lives in a two-story house they built themselves. They have no worries for food or clothing. Among their proud possessions is a sewing machine. "Thirteen others of those first 18 families have bought sewing machines," she told us, and added that most of the team's 55 families have savings in the bank.

Tsai Ah-shui spoke especially enthusiastically on how the collective economy has liberated the women for productive labor. Without collectivization, she said, she would never have been able to leave the house but would be busy from morning to night hulling rice, cutting fodder for the pigs, or going into the hills to collect firewood. She would also have to sew and mend the clothes of the whole family. Now machines owned by the brigade process their grain, fodder and rapeseed. For a small fee the brigade sewing group takes care of mending clothes, socks and shoes. The primary school which her three children attend is close by and it's a five-

minute walk to the brigade clinic. With such daily chores and other worries taken care of, she can devote herself to collective work. Lunch break over, the commune members go back to work and generally come home as the sun goes down. With the children also back from school, everyone sits down to supper together and listens to the broadcasts.

Chiaoli Village is very quiet in the evening, except for the home of Pan Ah-mao—still affectionately known as “Old Village Head”—where a stream of people come and go. At least three or four evenings a week the commune members gather to discuss problems of work or for night school classes, which include political study, reading and writing and technical knowledge for production.

We were in the village at the time of the Chingming Festival early in April. It is a big holiday that falls just before spring plowing. On that day the young people usually go visiting in other villages while the older people stay home and make sweet rice cakes and tsungtzu — three-cornered dumplings of glutinous rice with date filling — to treat their guests. The team members have a day off every ten days. Once a month the county film projection team comes to show a feature film and the latest newsreels.

Rocky Road

When we were there the production team's granary was a quiet place in the warm spring sun. But twice a year, after the summer and autumn harvests, the open ground before it is a bustling scene as commune members gather to receive their share of the collective crop. The event often brings forth reminiscences from the older people.

Every one of the 18 families that started Chiaoli on the collective road with the mutual-aid team has a story written in blood and tears. In Pan Ah-mao's grandfather's time there were seven in that family, farming half a hectare of poor land. The crop they got was never enough to feed them, and warm clothing was unknown to them. To keep things going, the grandfather had borrowed thirty silver yuan from landlord Yao Shih-fu. In those days when a poor peasant incurred a debt it was like “wearing a coir fiber cape in the rain — the longer one wears it, the heavier it becomes”. Hoping to pay back the debt as soon as possible, the grandfather hired himself out to the landlord. But at the time of his death, he had not even paid back the interest in full.

Ah-mao's father inherited the debt which by then had snowballed to 170 silver yuan. At the end of his rope, he sold the half-hectare land to the landlord but it still did not cover the payment. He, too, became the landlord's hired hand. But he could not pay back the old debt, and even had to incur a new one by further borrowing. For Pan Ah-mao, with the debts of two generations on his back, there was nothing to do but become a hired hand too. If not for the liberation, he would have gone the same way of his father and grandfather.

Pan Ah-mao and his wife often tell this bitter story to their children to make them realize that the warm quilts they sleep under and the new nets that keep out the mosquitoes were not easily come by. For three generations the family used one mosquito net, patched so often, first with cloth, then with paper as the family got poorer, that by the time Ah-mao was using it, it weighed five kilograms!

“If we don’t tell the children about these things,” Pan Ah-mao said to us, “they won’t know that our family used a mosquito net for more than 60 years. We older people feel that it’s very important to educate our young with these stories of class struggle.

“The good society we have today was not easily won,” he went on, “and our path in the 20 years since liberation has not been smooth either. The enemies of the working people hate to see us stand on our own two feet. They are always trying to drag us back down the old road.”

Class struggle has never ceased in the 20 years on the collective road, he said. When the mutual-aid teams first came into being, the handful of people headed by Liu Shao-chi who were trying to restore capitalism in China complained that it was too early, and that “such rashness must be stopped”.

Then when the peasants organized themselves into cooperatives, this handful again declared that co-ops must be “resolutely contracted”. They used their power to dissolve cooperatives in great numbers. In Chekiang province alone, 15,000 out of 53,000 were dissolved at one swoop. A small number of unreformed landlords and rich peasants seized their chance to sow dissatisfaction. Duped by them, some co-op members came to Pan Ah-mao, who was then leader of the co-op, and said they were pulling out. Some even declared that the co-op’s collective fund ought to be distributed among the members to be used as each wanted.

Pan Ah-mao stood out against this like a rock. All those peasants who had known poverty in the old society were firm in staying in. Instead of collapsing, their co-op expanded. Pan Ah-mao named his newborn son Ying-sheh, meaning “welcome the co-op” in tribute to the collective organization.

When the peasants amalgamated the co-ops into people’s communes in 1958, Liu Shao-chi and his group were both resentful and afraid. In the three years that followed, when the countryside suffered from serious natural disasters, they urged the commune members to go back to individual farming, hoping this would break up the communes. The Chiaoli production team was among those that kept on with collective production and distribution, thus preserving itself as a basic unit of the collective economy. The perverse trend, however, did influence some of the commune members, who cooled toward the collective and spent most of their time working at their own sidelines and selling the products at high prices on the free market. This distressed Pan Ah-mao.

Chairman Mao understood what was in the hearts of the working people. His warning in 1962, "Never forget class struggle", pointed up the nature of what was going on. Soon a mass movement for education in socialism checked this trend towards capitalism.

In 1966 Chairman Mao started the proletarian cultural revolution and led the people in it. In this nationwide movement, Liu Shao-chi's schemes to restore capitalism in China were thoroughly exposed, criticized and repudiated. At the Chiaoli production team, people met again and again to denounce Liu Shao-chi for trying to wreck the people's communes.

"We had thought that once we poor people were liberated and became our own masters, our life would naturally become better and better and there would be no more trouble ahead," says Chu Ahchang, daughter of a poor peasant. "But now we know that sharp class struggle will continue all through the building of socialism."

Greeting Another Spring

Growing more class-conscious in the storm of the cultural revolution, the Chiaoli people went on building socialism more energetically than ever. They take the Tachai production brigade of Shansi province as their example in continuing the revolution. When Chairman Mao called on the peasants to learn from Tachai in 1964, the Chiaoli people responded, but then they had thought of Tachai as just an example of getting high yields from hard work. Their experience in the cultural revolution, however, helped them realize that the first thing was to learn how the Tachai people educated themselves with Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought so that they were able to keep on the socialist road and not lose their direction.

For the past three or four years, the commune members at Chiaoli Village have been studying Chairman Mao's writings in earnest. They do this during work breaks in the fields or in the evenings at Pan Ah-mao's home. Pan Hsing-mao, who leads the production team's political study, explains Chairman Mao's writings on class struggle and philosophy. Since Chairman Mao's revolutionary theories have been created through the summing up of practical experience, the peasants find them easy to understand once they apply them to the realities of class struggle in the countryside.

Some commune members, for example, had thought that since they are all for socialism, there was no need to remold their thinking. After studying Chairman Mao's philosophical explanation of how "**one divides into two**", they saw that they should have a dialectical view of their own thinking in the course of class struggle: Having suffered oppression in the past, they naturally have great love for socialism and are eager to make revolution and this is the principal side of their thinking. On the other hand, peasants are still deeply influenced by the idea of private ownership, the heritage of thousands of years of the small-proprietor economy. This deep-seated influence can only be eliminated in the course of collectivization and long-term

remolding of thinking. If they do not get rid of this private ownership ideology, the class enemy can easily make use of them.

This was just what Liu Shao-chi tried to do, and drag the peasants back to the old road. They now understand better what Chairman Mao meant when he said at the time of liberation, **"The serious problem is the education of the peasantry."** They discuss how the road taken by the hundreds of millions of peasants is related to the direction taken by China as a whole. The more they discuss, the more they feel that their destiny is linked with the destiny of the whole country.

The year before last the team members studied Chairman Mao's May 20, 1970 Statement and saw that they ought to link the Chinese revolution with the revolutionary struggle of the people of the world. Their vision broadening, they understood better why the people of Tachai have been able to make such outstanding achievements: "Though they live and work in a mountain village, they have the whole world in their hearts and therefore look upon their work as an important part of the revolution."

This understanding also helped some commune members realize how wrong it is to think that because their own life is improving, they don't need to work for more progress in revolution and production. They now see that there is a lot more they can contribute to socialism. "If the people of Tachai can get 7.5 tons per hectare in the cold mountains of the north through self-reliance and hard work," they say, "surely we ought to get still higher yields from our rich soil here in the south and grow more grain for socialism. "When the Chiaoli peasants were farming individually they raised one crop of rice a year. As the collective economy expanded, they began getting in two crops a year. Inspired by the Tachai spirit, in the past few years they have been growing three crops—barley, early rice and late rice. The work is heavier, especially in May when there is the threefold task of harvesting barley, transplanting early rice and putting up bushes for the spring silkworms to spin cocoons on, but the members tackle it with greater drive too.

In May last year, the young men of Chiaoli formed a shock group under Pan Hsing-mao to work through the night to get the barley harvested and the rice transplanted. Not to be outdone, the women took over the job of transporting the cut crop and threshing it. The older people, too, set examples. Though plagued by gastric trouble, Pan Ah-mao joined the young men in cutting and transplanting. Sixty-one-year-old Pan Fa-chun, who has been in charge of silkworm rearing ever since the first mutual-aid team, often visited the silkworm rooms during the night to see that everything was all right. Although his duties lay only with the silkworm rooms of his own production team, he made the rounds of the rooms of the other nearby production teams before going home.

Then came summer, the season for harvesting the early rice and transplanting the late rice. When the women responsible for threshing heard that the neighboring Red Star brigade did not have enough threshers, they worked nights to finish their own threshing and then carried the heavy thresher over to the Red Star brigade. When the rush was over, Pan Ah-mao insisted that everybody take a day off. But Tsai Ah-shui and five other women went on the sly to the rice paddies to fill in the blank spots with seedlings.

Last year the Chiaoli production team reaped its biggest harvest in history. The members selected the best rice to pay their agricultural tax and sold 110 tons of commodity grain to the state — 2 tons per family. They also supplied their own province and neighboring Kiangsu with 50 tons of fine seed rice and 1 ton of soybean seed.

At Chiaoli we heard many stories revealing the commune members' devotion to the state and the collective.

“But life always has its contradictions,” said Pan Ah-mao. He told us about his eldest son. The young man, eager to do more for the collective, had learned to drive a tractor and treat animal diseases. Naturally he was much in demand and he began to grumble that he hardly had any time to himself. His father reminded him how the poor peasants had to toil in the old society, pulling the plows themselves because they had no oxen and certainly no tractor. “If a liberated peasant does not serve his own class brothers, who should he serve?” the father asked him. “It's a joy and a privilege to do more for the collective.” The young man's spirits rose again.

“There are always contradictions in our thinking,” Pan Ah-mao observed to us, “but now when self-interest gets the upper hand, we know we should weigh it against the interests of the revolution, and usually we can find the right answer.”

When we left Chiaoli, the hills were carpeted with red azaleas, the peach and pear trees were in full bloom and the mulberry trees were putting out new leaves. Fields of golden rape in flower stretched away to the foothills and the barley heads were heavy. Young men were driving their tractors into the paddies, plowing green manure into the soil. When the rapeseed and barley were harvested, spring plowing would be in full swing.

(From China Reconstructs August 1972)

How Chiaoli Production Team Distributes Its Income

Staff Reporters

The Chiaoli production team has 55 member-families with a total of 253 people, and farms 26.6 hectares of land. At present, the production team is the lowest level of organization in the people's commune and the place where the basic accounting is done.

The Chiaoli production team's income has grown continually through ten years of excellent harvests, meaning that there has been an ever-broader base for distribution. In 1971 it harvested 288.5 tons of grain and 6 tons of silkworm cocoons. With income from other farm and sideline products added, total value of production came close to 88,000 yuan.

How does a team like Chiaoli divide up its income?

There are three kinds of interests we must take into account, explains vice-team leader Pan Hsing-mao, the interests of the state, the collective and the individual. "By maintaining the correct relationship between them in distributing our income, we can consolidate the collective (in this case our team's) economy, make our contribution to socialist construction on a countrywide scale and also increase the commune members' enthusiasm for production." He showed us the 1971 plan for distribution of grain and total income.

Distribution of Grain

Table 1: Distribution of Grain

Category	Amount (kg)
Total production	288,530
Agricultural tax and quota sold to state	126,595
Reserved for use of team	60,835
Distributed to members	101,100

Table 2: Distribution of Income (including that from grain)

Category	Amount (yuan)
Total income	87,978
Agricultural tax	3,386
Production and management costs	21,427
Public accumulation fund	13,068
Distributed as members' income	50,097

Pan Hsing-mao explained how his team arrived at these figures. First its management committee and representatives of the poor and lower-middle peasants² studied the matter. Guided by the principle of three-way attention to the interests of the state, the collective and the individual, they drafted a plan. Then all team members discussed it and offered opinions. Last year some were for selling more grain to the state. "Every family already has surplus in its bins," they pointed out. Others suggested a bigger increase for the team's public accumulation fund and buying more farm machinery. Still others said that it was important to improve the commune members' standard of living faster and that a larger portion of cash and grain should be distributed among them. The management committee listened carefully to all reasonable opinions and revised the plan accordingly. Finally, a more detailed plan was worked out by the accountant.

Low Tax

Part of each production team's income goes to the state as agricultural tax. This was set by the people's government at 5 to 7 percent of each team's gross income. But the policy is not to change the amount of tax when production rises. Thus, though the actual sum paid has stayed the same, the rate has dropped. Since Chiaoli has been getting one good harvest after another for the past ten years, tax payments have been taking an ever-smaller proportion of its income. The 1971 tax was actually only 3.85 percent of its total income.

Teams with plenty of grain pay their taxes in grain. In addition, the government buys a quota of grain from them, fixed according to the area a team has sown to grain, its yield per unit of area and the amount it needs for its own use and reserves. In a bad year the government reduces the tax and the commodity grain quota, and sometimes exempts a team from both. Last year Chiaoli had no problem paying its tax and fulfilling its grain quota.

The peasants of new China view satisfying these demands of the government as an honorable task. "The commune members understand clearly that the aim of their work is to

² The term poor and lower-middle peasants refers to the original class status, not present economic position.

increase the wealth of our socialist motherland,” Pan Ah-mao, who is secretary of the Communist Party branch, told us. “We always choose the best of our crop for sale to the state. Sometimes individual families also sell the state a portion of the grain distributed to them for their own use.”

Such devotion' to the interests of the state is commendable, but the Communist Party leadership constantly reminds the local cadres that it is important to leave sufficient grain with the team (the collective) and the commune members (the individual). The state should not in any way overbuy grain from the teams. After delivering 126 tons to the state in tax and commodity grain last year, Chiaoli still had nearly 162 tons for apportionment to the collective and individual.

“Our contribution to the state is still very small,” said Pan Yu-shan, a commune member. “The state has given us tremendous help, for instance, loans when we needed them, and aid on the project to bring the Tiaohsi River under permanent control. Farm machinery, chemical fertilizer and insecticides are sold to commune production teams at reduced prices. Last year we were able to save 700 yuan on the fertilizer and insecticides we bought.

“Under the Bright Star brigade are a health station and four grade schools, one of which has been extended to take in middle school classes. Last year the government gave us a subsidy to help maintain them and 1,200 yuan towards wages for the teachers. By thus lightening our burden, the state actually increases the income we have for distribution.

“We get a lot of help in scientific farming, too. The agricultural departments send out technical groups which advise us on prevention and treatment of rice and wheat pests, show us how to rear silkworms more scientifically and train technicians for us.”

Still other government measures encourage production and, of course, also result in increased income for the commune members. For example, last year after the team sold 5.5 tons of silkworm cocoons to the state, it received priority for buying 5 tons of chemical fertilizer much needed for promoting growth of its mulberry trees. The sale of 166 pigs gave it priority for buying close to 3.5 tons of fodder-grain for the expansion of pig-raising.

The countryside, on the other hand, is making greater contributions to the state economy, both because of such help and as a result of the teams' own efforts as they move ahead in the spirit of self-reliance and hard work as exemplified by Tachai, a model production brigade in Shansi province. Chiaoli is a good example. In 1955 it was still buying its food grain from the state, but by 1965, the year before the cultural revolution, it was able to sell 60 tons of grain to the state. The figure rose to 75 tons in 1970 and 110 tons in 1971.

Public Fund Increases Gradually

That the collective economy of the entire Chengkuan commune is thriving can be seen in other aspects of its economy. The commune operates more than a dozen enterprises, including a plant for manufacturing and repairing farm machinery, a brickyard, a lime kiln, a nursery for mulberry saplings and a veterinary station. The brigades under the commune also have their own small and medium-sized enterprises. The Bright Star brigade to which Chiaoli belongs operates four electric irrigation and drainage stations, a shop for processing farm and sideline produce, a cultivation station equipped with three tractors and eight cable-operated plows, and a forest farm.

Each of the three levels — commune, brigade and team — manages and distributes its own income and enjoys the profit or bears the losses itself. While economic undertakings run by the commune and brigades are relatively few at present, these contribute much to developing the economy of the teams and improving the life of the commune members. Like the other production teams, Chiaoli manages its own land, livestock and the use of its small and medium farm tools in a unified way for collective production. The members' main source of income is from the team.

The team has its own public accumulation fund which is used to cover expenditures that benefit its members collectively. They have, therefore, a direct interest in the proportion set aside for this fund. The importance of the public accumulation fund was demonstrated to the people of Chiaoli in 1954, 61-year-old Pan Fa-chun told us. That year a hundred-day downpour caused the Tiaohsi River to spill over into the fields. Chiaoli, which was then an elementary cooperative, had a small fund and could spare only enough to install 21 foot-powered waterwheels for draining its fields, so the crop was a poor one.

In the past decade Chiaoli's steadily-rising accumulation fund has put it in a much better position to fight the effects of natural disasters. From 20,000 yuan in 1965 the fund rose to 70,000 yuan in 1971, including 12,037 yuan added to it that year earmarked for expenditures related to production and 1,031 yuan for welfare. Out of the accumulation fund, over the years the team has been able to build new storehouses and silkworm rooms, buy threshers and pumps, and undertake more water conservation projects. All its fields, levelled to facilitate irrigation, drainage and mechanized cultivation, now yield good crops and do not suffer from either drought or waterlogging.

“While the team’s public accumulation fund must be built up,” Party secretary Pan Ah-mao explained, “it can’t be done all at one time. Increasing it must not be allowed to cut into a rise in personal income for the team members in every normal year. There is a government regulation to this effect.” The Chiaoli team’s accumulation fund has been rising year by year and its average

per capita income has also risen. This now stands at 198 yuan. The same principle is followed in the distribution of grain. Last year at Chiaoli, the grain set aside for seed and fodder and for the collective reserve supply added up to 60 tons. Though this was a substantial amount it was still only 21.1 percent of the year's total production.

“Money earmarked for production must be spent strictly for such purposes, like buying tools and machinery, and not for non-productive expenses,” Pan Ah-mao said. “Every member has the right to look into the team's accounts and see that they are in order.”

The welfare fund is used for education, medical care and other sorts of public welfare. Last year the team allocated 1,031 yuan for schools, medicine and recreation. This paid for free treatment of common illnesses, and for installation of a radio-relay service available through a loudspeaker in every home.

“The welfare funds also cover the subsidies to large families with few able-bodied workers, dependents of enlisted men and elderly people who can no longer work and have no family to support them,” Pan went on. “There are three such elderly women in our team. We provide their grain, cooking oil, firewood and medical care and give each three yuan of pocket money per month.”

Big River Fills Small Streams

For 1971, after deducting from its total income the taxes, production and management costs and additions to the public accumulation fund, the Chiaoli team had 50,097 yuan — 56.93 percent of its total — to be distributed among its members.

How is this handled? Under the principle for distribution under socialism, “from each according to his ability, to each according to his work”, members receive amounts based on the number of workpoints (units of payment for labor) they earn. These are awarded according to the type of job and the amount and quality of labor each does. Payment is made in cash, grain and cooking oil. Those who work more naturally get more. But if everyone works to expand production there is more income to be divided up.

Distribution is made three times a year. The two preliminary ones come in May after the wheat and spring-cocoon harvest and in August after the harvest of early rice and summer cocoons. The final distribution is made after the autumn harvest. Both grain and cash as well as other forms of income are paid directly to the recipient.

Looking through the distribution files over the years, we noted that the members' income showed a gradual rise. The average per capita distribution of grain was 314.5 kg. for 1960 and 399.7 kg. for 1971. For cash it was 71 yuan in 1958, the year the commune was

formed, 132 yuan in 1965, the year before the cultural revolution, and 198 yuan in 1971. These figures do not include income from family sidelines.

Today about 70 percent of Chiaoli's families have savings in the bank and the majority have surplus grain at home. Seventeen of the poorest families in the old society now own sewing machines. Quite a few peasants are wearing wrist watches. "When there's water in the big river, the small streams will be full too," the members say. "When the state and the production team become better off, our life also improves."

Before leaving we visited 54-year-old Pan Yun-chu at his home. As he poured tea for us, he said, "You know how fast bamboo shoots push up after a rain, that's the way our life is improving these days. In my family of six, my son, my daughter-in-law and I are working in the team. My wife takes care of the house and my two grandsons go to school. Last year we got an income of 1,100 yuan — 650 yuan in cash, 2,600 kg. of grain, and also oil, silk batting for our padded clothes and other produce. From our family sidelines, we got more than 200 yuan for selling three fat pigs to the state. We had new clothes made for everyone and bought some furniture. My son purchased a 17-jewel Shanghai brand wrist watch. We have our own sewing machine, radio and quilts of silk batting." He sipped his tea and said thoughtfully, "Before liberation I farmed one-third of a hectare of land and had to borrow at exorbitant rates of interest to tide the family over the winters. We owe everything to the Chinese Communist Party and Chairman Mao."

(From China Reconstructs September 1972)

OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

There are thousands of streets and lanes in Peking. How are they administered? What role do the people play in local government? How do they live? Below are the answers from an interview with Hsu Chung-chi, head of the Fengsheng Neighborhood Revolutionary Committee, followed by five articles.

– Editor

What is the neighborhood revolutionary committee?

It is the basic-level organ of people's political power, the lowest level of government administration in the city. Peking is divided into nine districts, five city and four rural. Fengsheng is one of nine neighborhoods in the West City District, its administration is called the Fengsheng Neighborhood Revolutionary Committee.

How big is the area under your committee and how many people live in it?

Our neighborhood covers 1.5 square kilometers. It contains two main streets and 132 lanes. There are 14,136 households with 52,978 people. Of these, 22,808 are workers in industry, commerce and service trades or government cadres, teachers, doctors and theater people. We have 16,262 primary, middle school and college students, 6,146 pre-school children and 7,762 of what we call “neighborhood people” — retired people, old people and housewives who stay at home because they have many children to look after.

When was your neighborhood revolutionary committee set up? How is it organized?

It was formed in March 1968 during the cultural revolution. Its 27 members were elected after many meetings and consultations by the “neighborhood people” and those who work in neighborhood-run factories and units. Ten are government workers who were assigned to the locality and later elected to the committee. The rest are workers in neighborhood-run factories, teachers in the local schools, workers in the clinics and “neighborhood people”. They participate in government as representatives of the local people. Those who have jobs in neighborhood-run factories or other units continue in them, so they are in a good position to know the opinions and demands of the people and pass them on to the committee. In this way they help the people exercise their revolutionary supervision over this basic-level organ of government.

Among the committee members are some who have been doing community work for years as well as young people who became activists during the cultural revolution. Thus, it has elderly, middle-aged and young people. More than half of the members (16) are women.

What is a residents' committee?

Our neighborhood is divided into 25 residential areas. Each takes in from one to eight lanes with 400 to 800 households, about 2,000 people. Every such area has a residents' committee which works under the neighborhood revolutionary committee. The residents' committee is a self-governing people's organization, not a unit of government. It does the actual day-to-day work of serving the people in the locality, as assigned by the neighborhood revolutionary committee. This residents' committee serves all the people who live in its area, but those most active in it are those who work in neighborhood-run enterprises and the "neighborhood people". For the latter, the residents' committee serves as the center for collective life in the same way that the place of work does for people employed in non-neighborhood enterprises. The "neighborhood people" elect from among themselves the 15 to 25-member residents' committee which serves without pay. Most of the members were once workers or cadres and are now retired, or members of their families who have been active in service to the people.

Every resident's committee has three to six subdivisions of about 120 households each which serve as a basis for groups of 40 to 50 "neighborhood people" for study and other matters.

What do the neighborhood revolutionary committees do?

These are the main tasks of the neighborhood revolutionary committees: They organize workers, teachers, students and cadres in neighborhood-run units as well as the "neighborhood people" to study works by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and by Chairman Mao, to discuss national and international affairs and to carry out the policies of the Communist Party and the people's government. They set up such small factories and other production units as fit into the state plan. They operate nurseries and kindergartens to supplement those run by the city and large places of work, as well as dining rooms and household-service shops. They administer the cultural, educational and health affairs of the neighborhood and safeguard the people's lives and property.

Under our Fengsheng revolutionary committee there are seven factories, a household-service shop with eight branches, four nursery-kindergartens and a neighborhood hospital. All of these were set up by the local people in 1958 and are collectively owned by the revolutionary committee. We also administer 10 primary schools set up by the government in our area before 1958.

How does the neighborhood revolutionary committee do its work?

We try to carry out the principle of simple administration with as few people as possible. A chairman and three vice-chairmen divide the work and lead collectively. Important questions are decided in general meetings of the committee. Leaders and staff members must not sit in offices. They join the local study group, go into the streets and lanes and talk with the residents to find out about local conditions.

One of the tasks of the members of the neighborhood revolutionary committee is to pass the opinions and demands of the masses on to the committee and to convey to the people the decisions of the committee and directions from higher organs. Those who work full time for the committee spend one day a week working in some neighborhood factory or other unit to keep in close touch with the people.

The residents' committees are an important link between the neighborhood revolutionary committee and the people. The residents' committees take on the job of making known to every household the policies of the Party and government and tasks assigned by higher organizations. They hold discussions among the people on how to carry these out locally. Their aim is to see that every man, woman and child understands the reasons for the policies and tasks in relation to both the country and the individual. This understanding leads to everyone thinking up ideas and methods, and to conscious individual and collective effort for reaching the objective.

Most of the affairs of the neighborhood which we handle concern the interests of the people themselves. Since they participate in and control the management of their own neighborhood, the revolutionary committee has almost total support in whatever tasks need to be carried out.

Serving the People

WEI FENG-YUN, Fengsheng Neighborhood Revolutionary Committee member

I am an ordinary housewife with five children. My husband drives a three-wheeled motorcab. In 1949 the Chinese Communist Party and Chairman Mao liberated the working people and of course my family. My husband began to have a steady wage and the family did not have to worry about food and clothing anymore. From then on, after I finished my housework, I began to go out to do community service.

When our neighborhood set up its revolutionary committee in 1968, the people elected me to represent them on it. Thus, I began to take part in the management of our neighborhood. I thought: I am what I am today because of the political understanding the Party has given me. Because the people trust me so much, I will work all the harder to serve them wholeheartedly.

Each of us in the revolutionary committee is responsible for certain areas. I am in charge of contacting three residents' committees in Mengtuan, Wuting and Shuncheng lanes which have 1,433 households — 5,417 people. Right after every meeting of the revolutionary committee, I go to the leaders of these three residents' committees, tell them the decisions and discuss with them how to accomplish the tasks assigned.

The people elect the neighborhood revolutionary committee, trust it and have a great interest in its work. They constantly give us suggestions for improving our work. I take criticisms and demands raised by the people to the neighborhood revolutionary committee which studies them and tries to solve the problems as quickly as possible.

Let me give some examples. Residents in old-style houses in Shuncheng Lane had to go down the lane to fetch water for cooking, washing clothes and baths, and there were no nearby drains to empty dirty water. The problem was quite serious in the summer when they used more water. We told the public utilities bureau about it and they installed more taps and dug more drains in the lane.

The grocery store in the lane was too small and there was no public telephone. People had to walk some distance to another store for even such small items as needles, thread and buttons. We wrote to the municipal trade bureau and asked that the local store be expanded to include other items and that a public telephone be installed. Very soon we saw men setting up telephone poles, and a telephone appeared. Now the local grocery store handles more items, more varieties of vegetables and other non-staple foods, and they are fresher.

The cultural revolution brought new ideological awareness to the “neighborhood people”. They show a high degree of initiative in doing their part in building socialism. At the request of the local people, production groups and health stations were organized in all 25 residents’ areas in the Fengsheng neighborhood. All the women in the neighborhood who can work are employed.

My children are no longer small and there is not so much housework now. I want to do more for the people, but it is hard for someone without much education to do this work well. Last spring the neighborhood revolutionary committee set up a night school where housewives who are leaders of the residents' committees can study politics and improve their general education.

I joined the classes at once and never missed if I could help it. We never dared to dream of such a thing in the old society. My memory is not what it should be — I am 50 already — so it's pretty hard to learn and my hand doesn't want to obey me when I try to write. But I'm stubborn — because I want to do more for our neighborhood.

Our Neighborhood—2

Study Brings a Broader View

LIU JU-CHIN, vice-head of the Brick Tower Lane Residents' Committee

On the mornings when our study groups get together, the members start coming after breakfast carrying their little stools. There are white-haired retired people, mothers carrying babies and grandmothers pushing tots in carriages. They sit in a circle, laughing and chatting, until the group leader declares the class in session. The “neighborhood people” are divided into four groups according to where they live along our lane. Each group chooses its own leader and guide, usually people who have retired. We meet for study 2 hours 3 times a week, usually from 8 to 10 in the morning. Since families are especially busy over the holidays such as the Spring Festival or National Day, the study stops for a week or so.

Our studies are along the lines of the general program followed throughout the country by groups like ours. We read and discuss articles from the newspapers or Red Flag magazine, or works by Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and by Chairman Mao. The guide explains difficult points. Sometimes the period is used for transmitting Party and government policies and directives or to organize activities in our lane.

In the current movement to criticize revisionism and rectify the style of work, every group has held at least two or three meetings to criticize and repudiate the revisionist line of

the Lin Piao anti-Party clique. Scathing denunciations are illustrated with facts from the members' own experience.

In the past, when we housewives in the lane ran into one another at the market or on the street, we usually talked only about everyday matters such as food, fuel and kids. But now we often discuss questions that come out of our studies or national and international problems. When we can't come to a session because of sickness or other business, we feel we've missed something.

We try to relate our studies to our lives and put what we learn into practice. Grandmothers now say, "It's not enough just to see to it that our children eat properly and dress neatly. They've got to be taught to love their studies, love labor, have concern for the collective and fight against bad people and bad actions. Otherwise, there's going to be revisionism and we working people will suffer again."

Such study broadens the vision of the members. More and more people are showing concern for others and the collective. One day after study, Chi Yen-yun of group 4 thought, "Chairman Mao urges unity but the two families in our yard aren't getting along just because of a quarrel between their children. They have no conflict of basic interests, why can't their differences be solved?" When she brought the question up with the other members of her study group, they urged her to help unite the two families. With much patient effort she finally brought the families together to talk it over. Each said that they bore part of the responsibility and the misunderstanding was cleared up.

Sun Fu-lun, living at No. 27 in a courtyard of six families, doesn't go out to work because she has a number of children to take care of. All the husbands and wives in the other five families go out to work, and when their children come home from school there is usually no one home. So, Sun Fu-lun keeps boiled water on hand for the children to drink and helps them to do things like prepare meals and buy groceries. Her grateful neighbors do all they can after work to help her with her household chores, and knit sweaters for her children in spare moments. Coming from different places and working at different jobs, the six families did not know each other before, but now they feel very close to each other. Since Sun Fu-lun is always at home, the other families leave their keys with her and she has become the yard's "housekeeper".

Our Neighborhood—3

How Our Clinic Works

YEN CHIU-HUA, medical worker

Our clinic was set up by our Brick Tower Lane Residents' Committee in 1969, along with similar ones in other areas in Fengsheng. This was in accordance with the principles of putting prevention first and integrating public health work with mass movements. We got a lot of help from the area's residents and the big People's Hospital nearby. Three months of preliminary training at the People's Hospital gave us housewives an initial knowledge of acupuncture, injections, and the prevention and treatment of common illnesses.

We are located in a sunny room in the same courtyard as the office of the Brick Tower Lane Residents' Committee. We have two beds which serve as examination and treatment tables. Our big glass cabinet is filled with medicines and medical equipment. The two of us in charge are doctor, nurse and pharmacist at the same time.

One day a couple with a year-old baby were passing through our lane when the child suddenly went into convulsions. His eyes rolled up and he stopped breathing. We rushed out, examined the child and gave him acupuncture treatment. When he finally began to cry, we knew he would be all right again.

Since our clinic started, people no longer have to go out of the area to get treatment for such common illnesses as headaches, colds and coughs. Residents who get their free medical care through their place of work and are resting at home due to illness can get prescriptions filled, injections, dressings changed, blood pressure tested, etc. at our clinic for five fen (cents).

In the citywide health care network, we belong to the section covered by the People's Hospital, and its doctors often visit the area to give treatment and to guide us and help solve our technical problems.

If someone is seriously ill and we cannot diagnose it or handle it ourselves, we immediately arrange for him to be sent to a hospital. To help invalids, old people, babies and others who are being treated at the People's Hospital or the Children's Hospital but cannot get there easily, we make home calls or deliver medicine. In advance of the seasons when common and epidemic diseases occur, we publicize preventive measures among the residents and in street factories, nurseries and primary schools. We help the People's Hospital with their preventive work by giving vaccinations and inoculations and also do education on birth control.

Through several years of practice our ability in prevention and treatment has improved. The people constantly encourage us and this spurs us on to do all we can to serve them better.

Our Neighborhood — 4

Our Lane Has Changed

TUNG HSIU-CHING, an old resident

I'm seventy years old this year and have been living in Nanyutai Lane for 33 years. What great changes I've seen!

Before liberation, our lane had three “manys” — many poor people, many slum houses and many children. People made their living by selling their labor — pedaling pedicabs, doing odd jobs, running small stalls. None of them had a fixed job. Many families did not know where their next meal would come from. The houses they lived in were in a terrible state, with the wind whistling through the cracks in the winter and the rain leaking through the roof in the summer. But in those days who cared about us? With liberation in 1949, we working people stood up and became masters of the new society. As soon as the People's Liberation Army men entered the city, they provided us with food, money and clothes. They got us together and explained the revolution to us. The people's government began solving the problem of unemployment and we all got steady jobs. Some went into factories and others joined producers' co-ops. With stable monthly wages, our life improved steadily.

Take my old neighbor Sun Meng-hsueh, for example. He was a pedicab man, trying to feed his mother, a wife and four children. The seven of them huddled in a room about to fall down. Every day the family had to wait for him to come back with money before they could buy the day's food. If he had no luck, they would go hungry. To try and help, the three daughters picked over the cinders in rubbish heaps for unburned pieces of coal.

But now Sun is the dispatcher at a three-wheeled motorcab station and earns 60 yuan a month. They live in two nice rooms facing the south. His four older children are married and the two younger are in junior middle school. His wife, who suffered from asthma for many years, is now receiving good treatment at the People's Hospital. The whole family leads a happy life.

Our people's government thinks of everything for us. More than 100 families in our lane have moved into new apartments or houses. The homes of the others have been well repaired. The street's housing management office always asks for the opinions of the neighborhood representatives before they distribute or renovate housing. If anything goes wrong with the electricity, water or drains, we just tell the office and it sends repairmen right away.

Before liberation the rent collectors hounded us like baying dogs. They yelled and shouted whenever they stepped through the door. You had to pay the rent first, even if your stomach was empty. But today the rent we pay doesn't even cover the cost of maintenance and repairs! What a striking contrast with the old society!

Children of the poor in our lane used to run about naked or half naked. But now they are all well-clothed and healthy. When it is time for inoculations, the People's Hospital and the neighborhood clinic arrange everything. When children reach school age, the teachers go from house to house to enroll them. Before liberation the husband of Chang Chun-ching, vice-head at

the lane residents' committee, a worker, was so poor he couldn't afford to send his children to school. But in the new society three of his children have graduated from university and the fourth from a secondary technical school. My husband died when I was 31 and we had no children. Though I'm getting on in years, I enjoy a happy life. The people's government always shows concern for me, members of the neighborhood revolutionary committee come to see me often and my neighbors take good care of me. The world has changed and so has our lane.

Our Neighborhood — 5

Street Factories

Staff Reporter

"We want to build socialism!" These were the words of Cheng Hsiulan, 15 years ago a housewife who could neither read nor write. Today she is vice-chairwoman of the revolutionary committee of the Fengsheng Spring Factory. Her words reflect the feelings of the neighborhood's housewives.

Under the Fengsheng Neighborhood Revolutionary Committee are six other factories for insulating materials, rubber products, adult and children's clothing, powder metallurgy and cardboard boxes. They all have some common features: a mixture of unimpressive buildings old and new; both modern machinery and equipment they made themselves; and over 80 (in some, 90) percent of the workers and staff made up of women, most of whom live less than a 15-minute walk away.

Each year these women produce millions of yuan worth of products for the domestic and foreign markets, complementing large plants. They have become an indispensable part of the national economy.

It is hard to believe that in 1958 these plants were just groups of women who had organized to make simple products such as loudspeaker cones, sheet mica, children's toys and cardboard boxes. "Capital investment" came from three or four-yuan donations by the members, and only the simplest tools.

Starting from Scratch

In 1958 housewives in the neighborhood were inspired by the Communist Party's general line for building socialism. "The whole country is taking a big leap forward," one of them said in a discussion about it, "can't we do anything but bend over our stoves all day? We want to do our part to build socialism too!"

When they heard there was an urgent demand for springs, Cheng Hsiu-lan and 20 other women organized a production group and started making small ones for mouse traps and eyeglass cases. They made their first batch by turning them on hand winders and heating them in a kitchen stove.

They have not forgotten their second year. The Great Hall of the People was being built in Peking for China's tenth National Day. They were given the job of making 250,000 sofa springs for its furniture. Now 68 women, they sent representatives to learn the technique from large plants and studied hard. In spite of their primitive conditions, they delivered high-quality springs 14 days ahead of schedule.

When the hall was finished, the women were invited to tour it. Entering the splendid main hall and sitting on the sofas, these mothers were as happy as children. "Our work went into these!"

"For the first time," Cheng Hsiu-lan said, "we really realized that money can't buy the happiness that comes from taking part in helping our country."

"Build socialism!" is the slogan that keeps them advancing. After 15 years of hard struggle, they have automated or semi-automated most of the production process. They have built new shops and they now number 270 workers. Using wire from 0.2 mm. to 8 mm. in diameter, they produce over 1,100 specifications of springs for dozens of models of automobiles.

Now 39, Cheng Hsiu-lan is a member of the Communist Party. She learned how to read and write in a night class shortly after the factory was started. Though she had never touched a machine in her life, she is now an experienced manager responsible for the factory's production. She reads blueprints and makes innovations.

When the Fengsheng Neighborhood Revolutionary Committee was set up during the cultural revolution, Cheng Hsiu-lan was elected to its standing committee.

Advance or Retreat?

The other factories in the Fengsheng neighborhood developed in much the same way. Like Cheng Hsiu-lan, other housewives found their horizons broadening after they came out of their homes to join in building socialism.

Everyone praises Liu Ying-pin, who is in charge of the insulating materials factory. She is the daughter of a poor peasant. Before liberation she got tuberculosis of the bone and because she could not afford treatment her left leg had to be amputated below the knee. Today she wears an artificial limb. In 1958 she and other housewives set up a small shop to make insulating material. Then, around 1960, China ran into temporary economic difficulties. A

handful of revisionists headed by Liu Shao-chi thought that street factories with their "slim resources and inferior technique" were not of much use to the national economy. They said that "factories with orders should work and those without orders should close".

Liu Ying-pin did not agree. "Chairman Mao liberated us housewives and gave us a role in building up the country," she went around telling everyone. "We can't retreat to our homes and live off others."

Their small factory was not operating at capacity, so she and the others went to a construction site to wash clothing for the workers, even taking their sewing machines along for the mending. "We'll do anything," they said, "as long as it supports socialist construction. But we refuse to disband."

Resisting the revisionists' demand that they quit, they kept their factory going with their own hard work. Slowly they enlarged their factory until today it produces over 36 types of low-cost, high-quality insulating material in a variety of specifications. In 1965, before the cultural revolution, they turned out 556,000-yuan worth of material. In 1972 it was 4,300,000 yuan.

Last year Liu Ying-pin attended a national meeting in Shanghai at which orders were placed. The products of this small factory are sold throughout the country and have their place in the state's production plan.

These factories are collectively owned. The neighborhood revolutionary committee gives them unified leadership in political and ideological work and the realization of their production plans and provides a unified accounting system. Their profits are used to cover the cost of benefits for the workers and are invested in new buildings and equipment for the expansion of local production.

The development of production has improved the workers' situation. An adjustment of the wages of neighborhood factory workers last year brought them basically in line with those in state enterprises. Women who started to work at the same time as Cheng Hsiu-lan earn about 40 yuan a month.

They receive free medical treatment. A woman can send her child to a neighborhood nursery from the time her 56-day maternity leave ends until her child begins primary school. Her factory pays half the cost of care. Neighborhood household-service shops do washing, mending and other repairs. This helps liberate the women from time-consuming chores.

Everyone Can Do Her Bit

About 30 percent of the local women work in the neighborhood's factories. Fengsheng neighborhood has an embroidery workshop and has also organized older women who have difficulty in going out to work to do embroidery in their homes.

In its spacious rooms in Tacheng Lane one can see its beautifully embroidered bedspreads, tablecloths and aprons made for export. Group leader Chang Kuei-chen learned to do embroidery as a child in the countryside. The group, she told us, gets jobs from an embroidery plant and distributes the work to some 300 women in their homes.

Visiting the women regularly to see how the work is going, Chang Kuei-chen frequently comes upon the energetic bespectacled grandmothers busy over their embroidery while their grandchildren do their homework. She mentioned Tuan Hsiang-yun, in her sixties, her children all working and her family's income a very adequate 400 yuan a month. Afraid she would overtire herself; her children advised her to drop the embroidery work. "My eyes are still good," she retorted. "I can still do my bit for our country."

Fengsheng's neighborhood factories complement state-run plants and there are various residents' committee production groups which process things for these factories. Some production is concentrated, some dispersed. Through these channels all the housewives in the neighborhood who can work have a chance to make their contribution to building socialism. Through political study in the factories, learning techniques as they work, increasing their general knowledge in night school classes, the women of the Fengsheng neighborhood have developed into an energetic corps for building socialism.

(From China Reconstructs August 1973)

THE GENERAL LINE FOR SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION

Your articles often mention the General Line for Socialist Construction. What does this mean?

The General Line for Socialist Construction is expressed in the words, “go all out, aim high and achieve greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism”.

The call “Go all out and aim high” is to arouse the revolutionary spirit of China’s hundreds of millions of people and bring their enthusiasm and resourcefulness into full play. These are the wellsprings of the power by which any greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism will be achieved, because it is the masses who are the real heroes. The Party’s fundamental starting point in any undertaking is its firm faith in the majority of the people — primarily in the majority of the workers and peasants, who constitute the basic masses. At the same time its policy is to give cadres and revolutionary intellectuals full opportunity to play an important role. It is through truly relying on the masses, maintaining independence and keeping the initiative in our own hands, persisting in self-reliance and hard struggle and doing everything diligently and thriftily that China’s socialist construction will be moved forward at a faster pace.

The words “greater, faster, better and more economical results” expressed in the General Line define a many-sided requirement for socialist construction. In any endeavor in this field, all of these must be considered. Stress only on quality and lower cost would make inroads on quantity and speed. And in the long run better quality and lower cost could not really be achieved. On the other hand, if emphasis were laid only on quantity and speed, quality and cost would be affected and even the aims of achieving quantity and speed could not be met. The four aspects are interrelated, they promote and supplement one another, they are inseparable parts of a whole. This reflects the objective laws governing the building of socialism.

How was the General Line for Socialist Construction drawn up?

The new China came into existence in 1949 with a backward economy and a poor material base for development. The enemies of the working people were not reconciled to their defeat: the imperialists enforced a blockade on China; inside the country the landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries and other bad elements hoped for a restoration of capitalism. In such circumstances, it was imperative to end China's poverty and backwardness by developing a socialist economy at a high speed.

In the first few years after liberation the Communist Party led the people to carry out land reform and rehabilitate the national economy. From the year 1953 on, under the guidance

of the Party, the socialist transformation of all sectors of the economy took place step by step. (Peasants and handicraft producers organized themselves into farm and handicraft cooperatives. Industrial and commercial concerns owned by national capitalists became jointly owned by both the state and private capital.) It was fundamentally completed in 1956 and socialist public ownership became the economic basis of our country.

The socialist consciousness of the people all over the land rose to a new high. They were eager for the rapid development of the national economy in order to build the country as quickly as possible into a strong socialist one with modern industry, modern agriculture and modern science and culture. It was in these circumstances that in 1958 Chairman Mao summed up China's experience in building socialism and formulated the General Line for Socialist Construction. It expressed the desires of the Party and people and was drawn up to benefit them in the broadest possible way.

The promulgation of the General Line for Socialist Construction has stimulated a vigorous development in all fields of construction.

(From China Reconstructs April 1973)

THE POLICY FOR NATIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

How has China gone about developing her national economy?

What is the general policy?

China takes agriculture as the foundation and industry as the leading factor in developing her national economy. This general policy was laid down in order to carry out the General Line for Socialist Construction — “go all out, aim high and achieve greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism”.

Why must agriculture be the foundation?

Taking agriculture as the foundation means putting the development of agriculture in first place. It is the main branch of the economy for feeding and clothing China's several hundred million people. Without first solving this problem she can neither develop the economy as a whole nor carry forward with socialist construction. But how? Being a socialist country, China cannot depend on grain and textiles imported from abroad, but must produce them herself. Therefore, all her economic development must rest on this foundation — agriculture.

Before liberation, under imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism China's economy was poor and very backward. In addition to the problem of feeding and clothing her people, the new China was faced with the need to change a backward agricultural country into an advanced industrial one as quickly as possible. But where were the raw materials, funds, market and labor power needed to develop industry to come from?

As a socialist state, China must rely on funds accumulated by her socialist economy and on the creativity of the people. With the initiative in her own hands, she must take her own road independently.

China is a large agricultural country. Over 80 percent of her population lives in the rural areas. Farm production is, generally speaking, still not high. The level of mechanization is quite low and agriculture does not yet have the full ability to withstand natural disasters. Grain and raw materials provided by the countryside are still insufficient to support the growth of light and heavy industry. Therefore, for greater and faster results in building industry, there must first be vigorous advances in agriculture.

As agriculture develops it will provide more funds for industry; it will enable the countryside, as industry's biggest market, to buy more industrial goods; it will free more labor power for industry. It will also provide more and better raw materials for light industry, which

gets about 70 percent of these from agriculture. The growth of light industry, in its turn, will promote the growth of heavy industry.

What does it mean to say that industry must be the leading factor?

Agriculture's important position in the economy does not mean emphasis only on it and not on industry, nor does this mean completely solving the problem of agriculture before starting on industry. The two must grow together, but industry should play the leading role. Industry exerts this leading role through stimulating scientific progress and providing the technology and machinery, electricity, chemical fertilizers, insecticides and other means of production needed for agriculture and its changeover from backward manual labor to mechanization.

Industry also plays this role in supplying every other branch of the economy with up-to-date materials, equipment and technology, and it is the means for building a strong modern national defense. In China the development of industry is based on agriculture; the advance of agriculture and rise of its labor productivity cannot be separated from industry's leading role. The two are interdependent and promote each other.

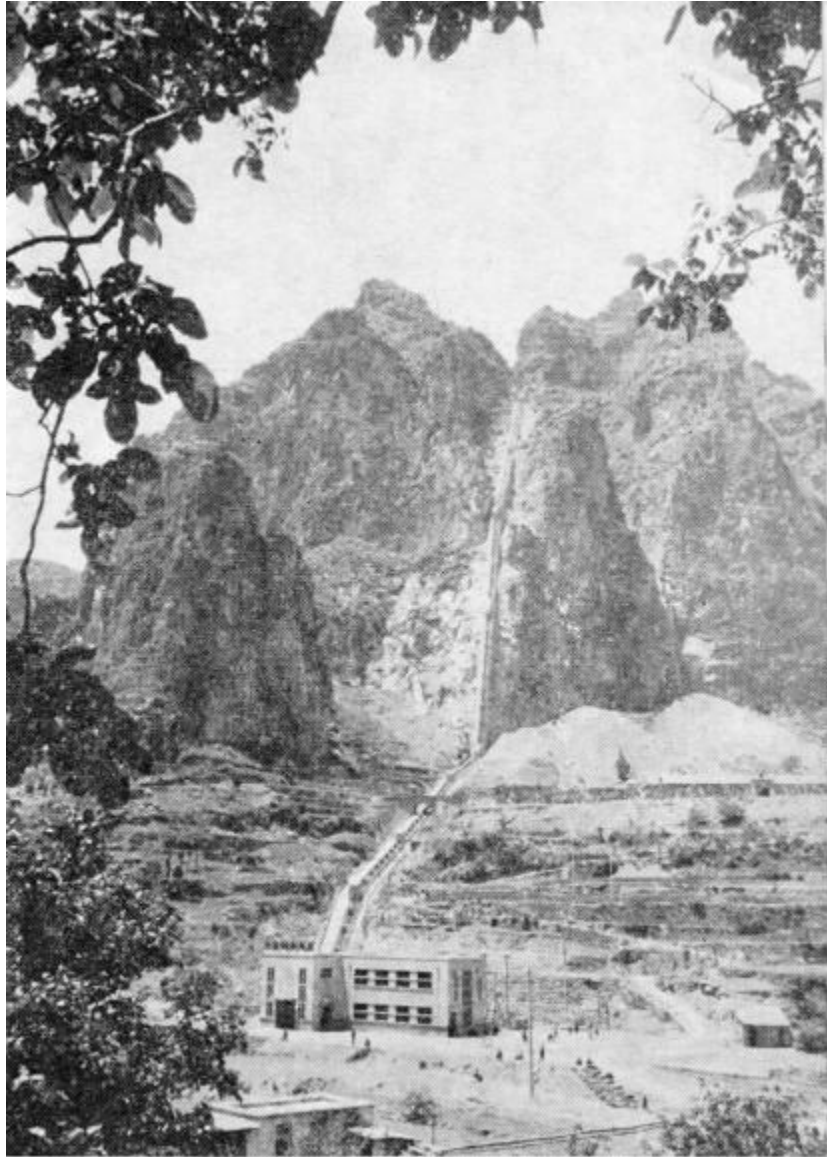
(From China Reconstructs July 1973)



Commune members of the Tachai brigade in Shansi province transform their scattered, tiny fields into levelled stretches of land for mechanized farming and irrigation.



Transplanting rice in Luchuan county, Kwangsi Chuang Autonomous Region.



The Shihliho hydro-power station in Lingchuan county, Shansi province, uses the force of a spring brought through a 3.5-kilometer ditch and over a 327-meter-high hill.



Terracing hills with fields, like these in northern Shensi province, is part of the vast effort of people along the upper and middle reaches of the Yellow River to control water loss and soil erosion.



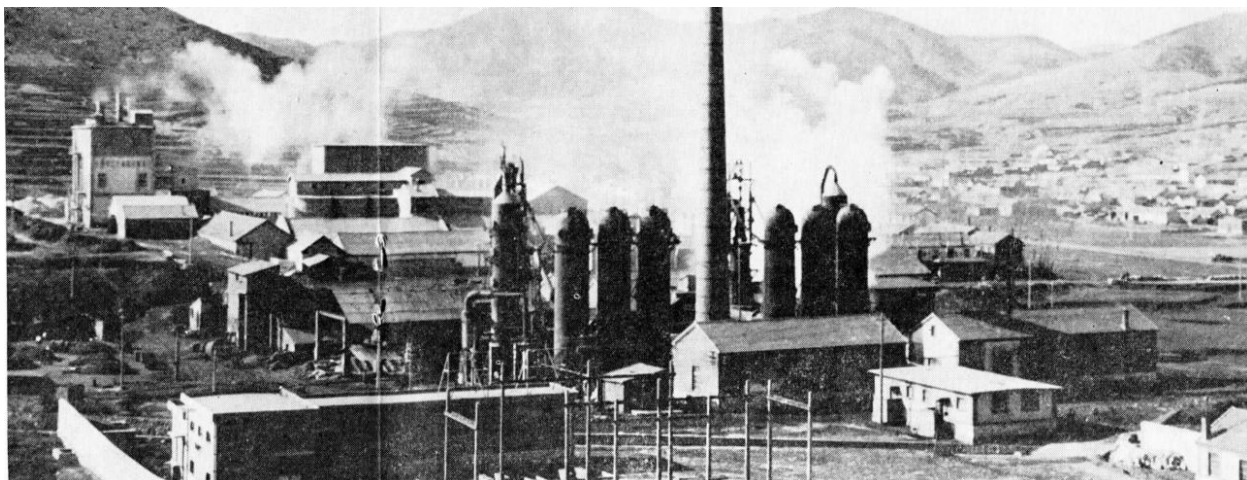
Hsianghungtien Reservoir, one of five large ones built in the Tapih Mountains of Anhwei province, irrigates 534,000 hectares of land.



Li Shao-kuei, seasoned steel worker in China's "Iron City" of Anshan, passes on his experience to young workers.



Cadres, veteran peasants and technicians select seeds together in a newly harvested wheat field of the Nanchungchia brigade in Shantung province.



Blast furnaces of a small iron and steel complex in the Yantai area in Shantung province built in accordance with the policy of "walking on two legs".



The Taching Oil Refinery, a large enterprise.



"Anything men can do; women can do too." Women workers of the Hutung Shipyard, Shanghai, on the job atop a high mast.



People of Fengsheng neighborhood, Peking, in one of the groups they have organized to study current affairs.



Morning in a small lane.



A neighborhood mending and embroidery group.



Little Red Guards write a black-board newspaper at Peking's Wenshing Street Primary School.



A third-grader learns writing with a brush.



Pupils often work in the pharmaceutical plant.



Old folk singer of the Kazakh nationality in the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region.



Dr. Lin Chiao-chih, well-known gynecologist and obstetrician, gives a prenatal examination.



Peasants welcome a mobile medical team sent out by the Weitsin commune hospital, Kirin province.

THE POLICY OF 'WALKING ON TWO LEGS'

What does the policy of “walking on two legs” mean?

In developing her national economy, China balances the relations between industry and agriculture, heavy industry and light industry, large enterprises and medium-to-small enterprises, modern production methods and indigenous methods, enterprises run by the central government and those run by local authorities, and other pairs of relations. She does not emphasize one to the neglect of the other but develops both simultaneously in such a way that they coordinate with and promote each other.

The relations between these pairs are like that between the two legs of a person. When both legs coordinate well, the person is able to walk steadier and faster. Therefore, the policies for handling these pairs of relations in developing the national economy have been named simply the policy of “walking on two legs”.

What is the basic content of these policies and the underlying reasons for them?

The basic content is as follows:

1. Industry and agriculture develop simultaneously. China is still a large agricultural country and most of her population is in the countryside. Only a rapidly developing agriculture can meet the people's food and clothing needs and provide industry with ample raw materials for development and a wide market for its products. At the same time, the development of agriculture depends on the support of industry. Only a modern industry can provide the large amounts of farm machinery, electricity, chemical fertilizers and insecticides necessary for a modern agriculture. Thus, industry and agriculture in China are developed simultaneously and the two complement each other.

2. Heavy industry and light industry develop simultaneously. Building a modern industry, modern agriculture and strong national defense requires advanced equipment and materials from heavy industry. To develop heavy industry, however, requires a great amount of funds. In China today, one of the main sources of these funds is the accumulation from light industry. Light industry needs comparatively less funds, goes into production faster and the period of capital turnover is shorter. Therefore, while giving priority to developing heavy industry, China is also actively developing light industry. As light industry progresses, more and more consumer goods are produced to satisfy the increasing needs of the people and a growing amount of funds is thus provided for heavy industry to expand reproduction. Developing light industry also promotes the development of heavy industry because light industry demands

more and more machinery and industrial raw materials such as plastics and materials for the chemical and synthetic fiber industries.

3. Large enterprises and medium-to-small enterprises develop simultaneously. To build a modern industry, it is necessary to build some large core enterprises with a high level of technology and productivity. But large enterprises require large investment, a rather long time to build and the technological requirements are complicated. Therefore, at the same time that large-scale enterprises are being built, many medium-to-small enterprises are also rising up throughout the country. Medium-to-small enterprises require comparatively less investment, a shorter time to build and simpler technology. They not only provide the people with urgently needed industrial products but also train technicians and accumulate more experience and funds for building the large enterprises, thus promoting the development of the big enterprises.

4. Modern production methods and indigenous methods develop together. This means that in the main China adopts the newest modern technology and at the same time actively adopts the simple and practical technical experience of the local people. New China's industrial base was very weak, so it is impossible in a short time to have the newest equipment and technology for all factories and mines. Wherever it has not yet been possible to adopt the newest technology, simple and practical indigenous methods are being used. These methods are then continually improved upon. This saves time and speeds up China's industrialization.

5. National and local enterprises develop simultaneously. China is a big country with a huge population. Its provinces and autonomous regions range from 100,000 to several hundred thousand square kilometers in area. Their populations range from several million to several dozen million people. In such a large economically under-developed country it is not possible for the central government to run everything in economic construction.

China is carrying out a planned socialist economy in which the industries throughout the country are parts of the whole, like chessmen in a game of chess. On the one hand, important mines and factories which act as the core in the country's industrial development have been built and are directly managed by the central government. On the other hand, the central government encourages every province, autonomous region, municipality, region and county to build local industries according to their particular conditions. These industries use the raw materials of their locality and manufacture for that locality. Their production plans are part of the unified national production plan.

By developing national and local enterprises at the same time, the initiative of both can be given full play, and the natural resources, funds, equipment and technology of every part of the country can be fully utilized. This speeds up China's economic construction.

What is the main significance of “walking on two legs” in developing the national economy and building socialism?

The policy of “walking on two legs” suits China’s concrete situation and conforms to the objective laws of China’s economic development. It enables China to mobilize all positive factors for the building of socialism, thus accelerating the country’s economic development and guaranteeing that the General Line for Socialist Construction — “go all out, aim high and achieve greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism” — is put into effect.

Precisely because the initiative of the national and local authorities and the people have been brought into full play, China's agriculture has had good harvests every year for the past decade, her main core enterprises have developed rather quickly — thus laying the preliminary basis for socialist industrialization, and local industries have shot up everywhere.

Every province (not including Taiwan), municipality and autonomous region has thousands of factories and mines in production. Ninety-six percent of the counties have built their own farm-tool manufacturing and repair plants and 70 percent have built cement factories. As the masses set up factories, not only are engineers and experienced veteran workers able to display their initiative to the full, but the peasants' enthusiasm for building industries is also aroused.

China’s large core enterprises utilize rich natural resources where they are concentrated, whereas the thousands of medium-to-small enterprises utilize natural resources that are scattered. This brings the people's initiative into full play and makes full use of materials and land.

There is also a long-range significance of the “walking on two legs” policy. Because it has brought about the increasing numbers of modern industries in China’s vast countryside which train many workers and engineers from among the peasants, the policy leads to reducing the differences between workers and peasants, city and countryside, mental and manual labor. The policy, therefore, will help China make the transformation from a socialist system to a communist society in which these differences will be eliminated.

(From China Reconstructs August 1973)

FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER CONSERVATION

Man's Will, Not Heaven, Decides

China Reconstructs interviewed a spokesman for the Ministry of Water Conservation and Electric Power on progress in China's water control work. Below are his answers to our questions.

What was the situation in water conservation work when the People's Government took it over after the liberation in 1949?

It was an awful mess. Under the reactionary rule of past feudal dynasties and the Chiang Kai-shek government, China's watercourses had not been dredged or renovated; many dykes had long been in disrepair; floods were frequent and there was no protection against drought; erosion and alkalinization of the country's soil were very serious.

Historical records show that during the two thousand years up to liberation, the Yellow River valley suffered over 1,500 floods and 1,070 droughts. In the 580 years before 1949 the Haiho River valley had 387 floods and 407 droughts. The Huai River valley and the land along the middle Yangtze had also frequently suffered from flood and drought. Each big flood or drought always led to great loss of life, sometimes bringing death to hundreds of thousands or even millions and causing tens of millions to lose their homes and face famine.

For more than 20 years the reactionary Chiang Kai-shek government boasted time and again of alleged plans for conducting away the overflow of the Huai River, developing the Yangtze and controlling the Yungting River, a main tributary of the Haiho River in north China. On the pretext of carrying out these schemes, great quantities of government bonds were issued to extort money from the people. The money went into the pockets of high-ranking officials and the plans for water control construction remained nothing but empty talk.

No important project was ever built. On the contrary, to preserve itself, the reactionary government even damaged existing water conservation facilities. In 1938 during the war against Japanese aggression, instead of going out to fight the Japanese forces, the Chiang Kai-shek troops blew up the dyke along the Yellow River at Huayankou near the city of Chengchow in Honan province to cover their retreat. This resulted in flooding 54,000 square kilometers of land in three provinces, bringing disaster to 12,500,000 people, 890,000 of whom died in the flood.

Early after liberation we were faced with huge problems when we began dealing with water conservation work. They had to be tackled one by one according to their importance and urgency.

Will you describe the main steps the People's Government has taken in water conservation?

In the years 1949-1952, while China's economy was being rehabilitated, many dykes broke or gave way and many regions were struck by serious floods. We made the struggle against flood the key point of our work. In less than two years 4,690,000 peasant laborers and 320,000 men from the People's Liberation Army were mobilized for shock work on building or strengthening dykes.

Also, in this period we began our study of the problems of China's main rivers, and through practical experience on the worksites, began to train a corps of cadres for further water conservation work. A few large projects were begun, and some of them completed. Among them were the Ching River flood diversion project on the middle Yangtze, which can divert and store 5,500 million cubic meters of water, the Paisha Reservoir, the Futzeling Reservoir and the Nan-wan Reservoir in the Huai River valley and the Kuanting Reservoir in the Haiho River valley.

China's First Five-Year Plan for building socialism begun in 1953 pointed out the direction for water conservation work: both permanent and temporary control measures combining control of floods and waterlogging with relief from drought. This plan provided specifically for continuing projects for permanent control of the Huai and strengthening the dykes along the Yangtze. During this period a comprehensive plan was worked out for bringing the Yellow River under control and putting it to use. Research was begun in preparation for work on the Haiho River system. The collectivization of agriculture — the agricultural producers' cooperatives set up throughout the country in this period — led to a mass movement for construction of irrigation projects. By 1958, the first year of the Second Five-Year Plan, the agricultural cooperatives had developed into people's communes, bigger collectives with a more solid base for providing manpower and materials. The establishment of the people's communes spurred the development of water conservation for farming and enabled projects to be undertaken on a larger scale and in a better organized way.

Collective agriculture has opened up tremendous potentialities for water conservation work, and the Chinese Communist Party and People's Government are making full use of them. Chairman Mao has laid down a whole set of policies for "walking on two legs" in economic construction, one of which is to depend not only on the central government but to bring out the initiative of the localities too. The National Program for Agricultural Development provided full scope for the latter, as well as for the initiative of the broad masses of the peasants, by defining construction of medium and small-size irrigation works as the main task, but stating that necessary and feasible large-size backbone projects should also be built. It urged that as many as possible of the small projects be constructed by the localities and agricultural cooperatives (later people's communes) in a planned way. By linking these with projects of large and medium

size built by the state, after several five-year plans we hope to basically eliminate the possibility of ordinary floods and the consequences of ordinary droughts.

Through following the above principle in the second and third five-year plans and the present Fourth Five-Year Plan we have been able to make water conservation work not only the task of the central government and localities, but the undertaking of both the cities and rural areas, of the several hundred millions of peasants as well as the workers and technicians, and to fully bring out the initiative of all. In short, since liberation we have always carried out the mass line and the principle of self-reliance as Chairman Mao advocates. Our experience has shown that in a developing country like China, the mass line is the key to achieving the greatest results in construction in the shortest time. I'll say more on this later.

What are the main achievements in water conservation since liberation?

First, I want to say something about the work of controlling China's four major rivers—the Yangtze River, the Yellow River, the Huai River and the Haiho River. Let's start with the Huai, the first river for which Chairman Mao issued a directive.

Huai River: This river originates in Honan province in central China and passes through four provinces, Honan, Anhwei, Shantung and Kiangsu. The river valley, with a population of 100 million and 13,400,000 hectares of farmland, covers 260,000 square kilometers. The peasants in this area describe the situation before liberation with the saying, "A big rain meant a big disaster, a small rain meant a small disaster, and no rain meant drought."

Since liberation the people of the four provinces, working together, have built 30 large reservoirs and 2,000 medium and small-sized ones in the mountains and hilly areas along the upper and middle reaches. To create outlets for the floodwaters on the plains along the middle and lower reaches, they have dug 13 big watercourses connecting with the Yangtze and the sea. Making use of lakes and low-lying land, they have completed a number of flood storage and flood detention projects. They have also built the giant Pi-Shih-Hang project involving those three rivers, which can irrigate over 533,000 hectares of farmland, the Chiangtu irrigation and drainage station and several other huge projects. Today the ability to prevent flood, drain areas prone to waterlogging and withstand drought has been greatly strengthened. The flood-draining capacity has increased from the original 8,000 cubic meters per second to 21,000 cubic meters per second. Five times as much land is irrigated as in 1949.

Yellow River: Now let's take the Yellow River. The harm it used to do is known throughout the world, I don't even have to describe it. Originating in Chinghai province, the Yellow River, 4,800 kilometers long, flows through seven provinces and two autonomous regions before it empties into the sea on the coast of Shantung province. The Yellow River valley covers 745,000 square kilometers. Severe erosion of soil in the loess highlands on the upper and

middle reaches used to result in the deposit of over 1,000 million tons of silt a year in the lower reaches. This continually raised the riverbed; on this section of the Yellow River the riverbed was actually higher than the surrounding land. The river frequently breached the dykes holding it in.

Since liberation all of the 1,800 kilometers of dykes along the lower reaches of the Yellow River have been reinforced and heightened. There has been no breach during the high-water season in more than twenty years. Many large and small projects for irrigation and sedimentation are utilizing the water and silt of the river, once the bane of the people, to wash alkali out of the soil and create fields. The people of the loess highlands on the river's upper and middle reaches are now undertaking a sweeping mass movement for water and soil conservation. In the past no reservoir existed along the river's main waterway or its tributaries. Now there are a number of large key projects for flood storage, irrigation and electric power along the main artery and some 1,000 large, medium and small-size reservoirs and power stations on the tributaries. These projects have brought more than 3,200,000 hectares of farmland under irrigation and supply the cities and rural areas with great quantities of electricity.

Haiho River: The Haiho River is the largest water system in north China. It was also known as a harmful river. The river itself is only 70 kilometers long, but because of its several hundred tributaries the entire river system covers 265,000 square kilometers. The greater part is in Hopei province.

In this area heavy rain is concentrated in summer and autumn. During these seasons all the floodwaters from the tributaries rush down into the short and narrow Haiho seeking a way out to the sea. The river could not take them, and the waters would burst out over the plain. Yet, in the spring when there is little rain in Hopei province, the Haiho valley used to suffer from serious droughts.

The work of curbing the Haiho River on a large scale did not begin until 1963. In the past decade 29 main watercourses have been dug or dredged, and several new mouths for floodwaters to empty into the sea have been opened. The capacity for carrying floodwater into the sea has been increased by over five times and that for draining waterlogged areas by more than seven times. In the mountain areas on its upper reaches 85 large and medium-size reservoirs and 1,500 small ones (including those completed between 1950 and 1963) were built.

Thus, the Haiho River valley is now basically free from the menace of floods and waterlogging. This utilization of ground surface water plus mechanically pumped wells using underground water has enabled Hopei to increase its irrigated area to more than four times

that before liberation. This province, which historically was always short of food grains, has now become self-sufficient.

Yangtze: The Yangtze, 5,800 kilometers long, is China's biggest river. It originates in Chinghai province and, flowing through eight provinces and an autonomous region in northwest, southwest, central-south and east China, empties into the East China Sea at Wusungkou outside Shanghai. It drains a basin of 1,800,000 square kilometers. The greater part of the basin has a warm climate, rich water resources and fertile land. But the middle section of the Yangtze, known as the Ching River, used to cause serious floods. This was because the swift current from the upper reaches slows down as it enters the narrow winding course across the plain and deposits its silt. This has raised the water level a dozen meters above the surrounding land so that the water was a serious menace to the Chiangnan Plain.

The completion of the Ching River flood diversion area in 1952 and the strengthening of the dykes along the Ching brought the flood waters endangering the Chiangnan Plain basically under control. In the two decades since, all the dykes in the Yangtze valley have been reinforced, lakes and waterways brought under control and navigation channels dredged and deepened. Completed water conservation projects include more than 500 reservoirs of all sizes and tens of thousands of small projects for irrigation and the prevention of flood and waterlogging. Construction of water conservation projects in some areas plagued by snail fever (schistosomiasis) was linked with the destruction of the snails. The irrigated area in the middle and lower reaches has expanded from 4 million hectares soon after liberation to 10 million hectares today.

In the course of control work on the big rivers, agricultural collectivization enabled hundreds of thousands of small water conservation projects to be built. In this task, self-reliance, relying on the masses and taking the construction of small projects as the main task were the principles followed. In 1971 commune members of the Yangtze valley completed 5,000 million cubic meters of stone and earth work to make 2 million hectares of farmland secure against drought and waterlogging.

The projects undertaken by people's communes are planned according to local conditions and serve many purposes. In mountainous areas and on the loess plateau these include planting trees on the hills, growing fodder grass and terracing slopes. Silting is cut down and fields are created by erecting dams across ravines and letting the silt accumulate behind them. The people also build small reservoirs and ponds for storing water and dig ditches to bring water from other sources. These multi-purpose projects, in addition to conserving water and soil, aid the development of farming, forestry, livestock breeding, sideline production and fishery.

In the plains, river control work is accompanied by the building of irrigation and drainage systems. Where the soil is heavily saline or alkaline, ways are found to run water through the fields to gradually wash out the alkali. Platform and strip fields are used. Where long dry spells often occur, work centers around digging wells and installing pumps to make use of underground water.

Today there are 1,700 reservoirs of large and medium size located in China's mountainous and hilly areas, and small ones by the tens of thousands. In the major river basins, there are 130,000 kilometers of dykes, newly-built or strengthened, and close to 100 big canals for draining away floodwater. Throughout the country equipment with a total of 20 million horsepower is in use in electric irrigation and drainage stations. Wells with pumps have exceeded 900,000 in number. About half of the land in saline and alkaline areas has been improved.

All this work has increased our ability to overcome floods, waterlogging and drought, and consequently expanded our agricultural production.

What are the main factors contributing to these achievements?

The most important factor is the nature of China's political power and social system. Under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and Chairman Mao, our political power represents the interests of the working people. The People's Government regards water conservation as important for developing the economy, raising industrial and agricultural production and improving the life of the people.

Since liberation Chairman Mao has made several inspection tours on the Yangtze, the Yellow and other major rivers and personally indicated the tasks for water control. When the Huai River rose in flood in 1950 Chairman Mao gave the instruction that "the Huai River must be harnessed". Later he issued the directives: "Strive for the successful completion of the Ching River flood diversion project in the interests of the people", "Work on the Yellow River must be done well" and "The Haiho River must be brought under permanent control." These have inspired the people to surmount every difficulty in their fight to conquer nature.

Special organizations have been set up to draw up plans and lead the work for control of the Yangtze, Yellow, Huai and Haiho rivers. The government appropriates a large amount of money for water conservation every year. Already 8,000 million yuan has been spent on the Yellow and Huai rivers.

China is a socialist country and the state controls the economy. The land in the countryside is owned collectively by people's communes. This makes it possible to plan and make arrangements in a unified way. The Huai River project, for example, gives unified

leadership to work in all four provinces that the river passes through. It coordinates the socialist cooperative efforts of the provinces, counties and communes in supplying manpower and materials.

Under a unified plan for developing the socialist economy, rolled steel, cement, machinery and equipment for water conservation work can be produced according to plan. Although China's industrial foundation is still not highly developed, it provides water conservation with great quantities of rolled steel, cement, electric motors and transmission lines.

The mass line advocated by Chairman Mao has played a decisive role in water conservation achievements. A fundamental line for the work of the Chinese Communist Party, it brings the people's initiative and spirit of self-reliance and hard work into full play for building socialism.

The control of the Haiho River is a good example of the mass line in action. Two-thirds of Hopei province lies in the Haiho River basin. Every winter and spring for the past nine years 300,000 to 400,000 people in this province have come out to work on various projects. Commune members make up the main force; others include workers, cadres and technicians. Several million others have worked on reservoirs, canals, pump wells and the improvement of saline and alkaline soil.

China's industry is not yet able to supply all the machinery needed for this countrywide effort to control the rivers. In the work going on at the Haiho, physical labor — digging with spades and transporting earth with hand carts — is still the main method of work. Then, too, a major part of the work is done in winter and early spring when the ground is frozen so hard that it has to be cracked with sledge hammers. Blizzards, tidal waves and earthquakes have more than once held up or set back the progress of work. Yet, the people's dedication to building socialism has moved them to give their best. The earthwork involved in dredging waterways, building dykes and other channels, came to 1,900 million cubic meters, equivalent to digging five Suez canals. In addition, commune members, with the help of workers and technicians, have put up 50,000 supplementary structures — bridges, waterlocks, dams and culverts.

Scenes like those on the Haiho worksite can be found all over the country during the winter and spring. We estimate that several tens of millions of people take part every year.

What kind of difficulties has China had to overcome in water conservation? What major problems lie ahead?

Like everything else, the achievements of water conservation did not come easily. First of all, there is the struggle over what line to follow in water conservation. This is inseparable

from the struggle over the ideological and political line during the entire period of building socialism. At the same time that the masses of the people were following Chairman Mao in building socialism, a small number of class enemies who had wormed their way into the Party and usurped a portion of the power tried to destroy our socialist achievements. In economic construction they were against Chairman Mao's line of relying on the masses and his policies of self-reliance and "walking on two legs". They did not want to build small projects. They looked down on the initiative and creativity of the masses of the people. They were for each locality undertaking its water conservation projects individually and opposed unified effort and socialist cooperation. As a result of their influence, for a time some of our water projects went off on the wrong track. But their counter-revolutionary nature was exposed during the cultural revolution.

The battle to make China permanently free from flood and drought and put her water resources to full use is a long, hard struggle. Due to lack of experience, there have been some mistakes in our work. China is very big and her terrain is complicated. There is a great difference in water resources in the north and in the south. Water work does not proceed at the same rate all over. We must set our targets higher. And, there are many specific problems to be solved. One is to make use of underground water in the north, probably the permanent solution to the problem of insufficient water resources above ground. Another is the conservation of water and soil on the upper and middle reaches of the Yellow River in order to end silting. As for putting our abundant water resources to use, we have only just begun.

We have a long way to go in our fight to conquer nature and turn water from a menace into a benefit for the people. But what we have done in the past 23 years has shown us the power of the socialist collective. For a long time, the Chinese people were dominated by the feudal and idealist idea that man can only abide by the will of heaven. This, no more. Today our motto is "Man's will, not heaven, decides", our ambition is to make socialism a full reality in China.

(From China Reconstructs January 1973)

ABOUT NATIONAL MINORITIES

What is the position of national minorities in China?

China is a single state of many nationalities. In addition to the Han people, who are the great majority, there are 54 minority nationalities. In the 1957 census their population was 38 million, about 6 percent of the total population. Ten of these nationalities had a population of a million or more. The other 44 range in size from several hundred to several hundred thousand.

While the number of the minority peoples is proportionately small, the areas inhabited mainly by them cover 50 to 60 percent of the whole country. Different nationalities often live together in the same place; in the majority of the counties in the country there are at least two or more nationalities. The greater portion of the minority peoples live in large or small compact communities of primarily their own people.

China's various nationalities have coexisted on her vast territory since ancient times, and together they created her history and culture. Over a long period in Chinese history, however, oppression of other nationalities was a part of the system of rule. The different nationalities within the country never had equal status. The Han rulers oppressed the people of other nationalities; when they held power over the country, rulers of nationalities which were a minority, such as the Mongols (Yuan dynasty, 1271-1368) and the Manchus (Ching dynasty, 1644-1911), oppressed the Hans. And, of course, the ruling class, whether of Han or other nationality, always oppressed and exploited the working people of their own nationalities too. As Chairman Mao said, "In the final analysis, national struggle is a matter of class struggle."

Foreign imperialism invading China in the last hundred years worked in collusion with the reactionary ruling classes to oppress and exploit the people of all nationalities. This bound the ordinary people of the various nationalities together in a common struggle against imperialism and feudalism. After more than 20 years of armed struggle under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and Chair-man Mao, the people overthrew the reactionary rule of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism and founded the People's Republic of China.

The people's government has brought national oppression to an end and established equality and unity among the various nationalities. China has entered a new era in which the different nationalities help each other and advance together. All peoples have equal rights in deciding and administering state affairs and in working together to build their socialist country.

What kind of social and economic conditions exist among the minority nationalities?

Liberation found the minority nationalities at many stages of social development. Over 30 of them were basically under a feudal landlord economy. These included the Hui, Chuang, Uighur, Manchu, Korean, Tung, Yao, Pai and Tuchia nationalities and the majority of the people of the Mongolian nationality. Among some of these, elements of capitalist economy were found to exist.

The serf system prevailed among the Tais in the Hsishuangpanna region in Yunnan province and the Tibetans; the Yi people of Szechuan were still in the stage of slave society. Remnants of primitive communism existed in varying degrees among the Lisu, Wa, Chingpo, Tulung, Nu and Pulang nationalities in Yunnan province and the Olunchuns and Owenks in the northeast.

Economically the minority areas were generally more underdeveloped than the Han areas. In some of this cultivation was done by setting fire to a patch of scrub and sowing the seed in holes dug with a stick or a crude iron hoe. Production was extremely low.

After the founding of the new China, the Communist Party and the government put in a lot of effort giving leadership and assistance to the minority peoples in carrying out democratic reforms — which put an end to exploitation and oppression by feudal landlords or slave or serf owners — and socialist transformation, which accomplished the change from individual to socialist (collective or state) ownership of the means of production. Removal of the restraints of feudalism, slavery or primitive communism and establishment of the socialist system greatly emancipated the forces of production and opened up broad prospects for social and economic progress in the minority areas. To accelerate economic and cultural development in the minority areas, since liberation the government has done the following:

(1) In planning for economic and cultural construction it gives special consideration to investments for minority areas so that these areas can make faster-than-average progress and catch up with the rest of the country.

(2) Every year it allocates necessary financial subsidies to the minority areas.

(3) It sees that the minority areas get sufficient material supplies such as industrial and agricultural products and machinery and equipment.

(4) It sends large numbers of cadres, technical personnel, young people and veteran workers to the minority areas to aid in local construction.

(5) It enables minority people in the frontier regions or where transport is difficult to buy what they need at reasonable prices and sell their local and special products at fair prices through state trading teams which tour these areas.

With these forms of assistance modern industries — steel, coal, machinery, power, chemical, textile, transport and communications — were developed for the first time in many of the minority areas.

Free treatment by mobile medical teams dispatched by the government helps overcome the lack of health and medical care that once existed in the minority areas.

How is political equality guaranteed for the national minorities?

Equality among the nationalities is the basic principle for the unity of our state, for unity among the nationalities and for solving all matters centering around the national question. The Constitution of the People's Republic of China states that all Chinese citizens regardless of nationality or race enjoy equal rights. It prohibits discriminatory and oppressive acts against any nationality. While regarding both great-nation chauvinism and local nationalism as harmful to the unity of our state and unity among the nationalities, the Party and government give special attention to educating cadres and people of the Han nationality to overcome Han chauvinism.

To guarantee equal rights to the minority nationalities the following measures have been taken:

(1) More than 50 peoples have been identified and recognized as separate nationalities. This was done on the basis of extensive investigation and study in accordance with the wishes of the people of these nationalities. Through the ages scores of minority peoples were never legally recognized as such by the reactionary rulers. The anti-people clique of the Kuomintang that ruled China for 22 years before liberation denied that other nationalities existed in China, and referred to all peoples excepting the Han nationality as “tribes”.

Many people of minority nationalities, on their part, did not want to be known as such, hoping to avoid discrimination and oppression. The Chuangs, who are China's biggest minority, were recognized as a separate nationality only after liberation.

In 1951 the Central People's Government issued a directive prohibiting all forms of address and abolishing all place names and tablet inscriptions "of a nature discriminatory and insulting to the minority nationalities".

(2) Work has been done to guarantee that all minority nationalities, regardless of the number of the people, the size of the area they inhabit or the stage of social development they were in before democratic reform, have the right to participate in the administration of state

affairs. There have always been deputies to the National People's Congress who are members of minority nationalities.

(3) Efforts are made to see that cadres from the minority nationalities are employed by Party organizations and government offices at every level in the minority areas. The number of minority cadres has increased rapidly since liberation. In the Kwangsi Chuang Autonomous Region in 1970 there were 78,000 cadres from the minority nationalities as against 900 in the early days after liberation. Many minority cadres hold important positions at every level in local Party and government organizations. Three of the seven secretaries of the Communist Party committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region are Tibetans. A number of Party members from the minority nationalities have been elected as members or alternate members of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. Yi people hold 51 percent of the leading positions in the Party committee of the Liangshan Yi Autonomous *Chou*³ and the nine county committees under it. They hold over 80 percent of such positions in Party organizations at the district, township and commune level.

What is national regional autonomy? Why was this way chosen for China?

National regional autonomy is a basic policy of the Chinese Communist Party for solving the nationalities question within the country. It was formulated by the Party through applying basic Marxist-Leninist principles on the national question according to historical conditions and the present situation in China. Any nationality, as long as it has a compact community large enough to form an administrative unit (autonomous region, *chou* or county), can establish an autonomous area with its own organs of self-government which can exercise autonomy in administering internal affairs.

The purpose of national regional autonomy is to guarantee political equality for the national minorities and to give special consideration to the characteristics of the minority areas so that the policies and principles of the Party and government can be implemented more effectively. It also aims to give full scope to the minority peoples' initiative in participation in state life and the building of socialism, and to accelerate socialist revolution and construction in the minority areas. It is a necessary measure for promoting solidarity among the nationalities, consolidating the unity of the country and strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Constitution and national laws provide that there should be regional autonomy in areas where minority peoples live in compact groups and that such autonomous units are inseparable parts of the People's Republic of China. As local governments, these are part of the

³ Autonomous *Chou* is an administrative area below the province.

apparatus carrying out the dictatorship of the proletariat. On the other hand, under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government, in addition to exercising the usual powers and functions of local organs of state, such organs of self-government at all levels have the right to administer local finances within the limits of the authority prescribed by law. They may, in accordance with the political, economic and cultural characteristics of the nationalities in their locality, make regulations on the exercise of autonomy as well as specific regulations. Examples are apportionment of electoral representation based on special local conditions, regulations for organizing organs of self-government and for tax collection. Such regulations become valid when approved by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress.

In performing their functions, organs of self-government of autonomous areas employ the spoken and written language or languages commonly used by the nationality or nationalities in the locality. In actual practice the policy of national regional autonomy has proved itself suited to the historical conditions of China and the wishes of the national minorities. There are at present 5 autonomous regions (province level)—the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region, the Kwangsi Chuang Autonomous Region, the Ningsia Hui Autonomous Region and the Tibet Autonomous Region—29 autonomous chou and 69 autonomous counties.

What is done to see that the languages, customs, habits and religious beliefs of the minority nationalities are respected?

That these must be respected is written into the Constitution. All acts running counter to them are violations of law.

Under the discrimination and oppression of the reactionary Han ruling class before liberation, many minority nationalities were not able to develop writing for their languages. Some which had writing were not allowed to use it. In some areas the existing written language was not in general use. Those with no written language had to keep records by making marks on wood or tying knots in cords.

After liberation all nationalities have the freedom to use their own languages, both in speech and writing. In areas where people of a minority nationality live in a compact community or where a number of nationalities live together, the people's courts conduct hearings in the language commonly used in the locality. Judgments, notices and other documents are made public in that language. Citizens of all nationalities have the right to make accusations in their own languages.

The government publishes Marxist-Leninist classics, Chairman Mao's writings and other books, as well as newspapers and magazines in Mongolian, Tibetan, Uighur, Korean, Kazakh and

other languages. It also promotes films, theater and music in the minority languages. Both the central and local broadcasting stations carry programs in minority languages.

In old China the reactionary Han rulers in many areas did not allow the minority peoples to celebrate their national festivals. For following their own customs or ways of life, such as wearing national dress, the minority peoples frequently suffered insults and discrimination. Today the customs of all nationalities are respected, and the people have the freedom to wear their national dress. The colorful national dress of the minority peoples adds a bright spot to the dramatic and musical stage. As for undesirable customs, it is for the different nationalities to reform these of their own accord as their people raise their level of political consciousness and scientific and cultural knowledge.

People of all nationalities enjoy freedom to believe in any religion, but also the freedom not to believe, and freedom to carry on propaganda for atheism. This is a fundamental right of the Chinese people of all nationalities.

What has the new China done to develop education for the national minorities?

Because of the policy of oppression and discrimination of the reactionary ruling classes through the ages, education among the national minorities was in a deplorable state. Most of the working people could not go to school. There were very few schools. In Tibet, for example, there was not one regular school even of the primary level. All the serfs were illiterate. The feudal hold of the monastery, a pillar of the serf system, kept the working people ignorant and backward.

After liberation measures were taken to develop education for the minority peoples. Special sections or personnel in the education departments in the central and local governments give attention to this work. In minority areas where the people live sparsely scattered, classes and schools are more numerous than they would be if in proportion to the population. Limitations on age are extended for the minority people. Some schools run special preparatory classes for minority students to help them catch up with the others and go on to higher studies.

To meet the need for teachers, in addition to sending Han teachers to assist in the development of minority education, special attention is given to schools and classes for training teachers from the minority nationalities.

Nationalities institutes, located in Peking and other cities, have been set up for training minority cadres. Universities and colleges have been established in the principal minority areas, Sinkiang, Inner Mongolia, Kwangsi, Yunnan, Kweichow, Chinghai, Ningsia and the Yenpien

Korean Autonomous Chou in Kirin province. All higher institutes make it a point to seek out students of minority nationalities.

Primary and middle schools have been set up extensively in all the minority areas so that the majority of school-age children are in school. Tibet, for example, has a nationalities institute, a teachers' school, seven middle schools and 2,500 primary schools. In 1971 there were 30 times as many young people in school as in 1959, before the democratic reform.

China's Minority Nationalities

Mongolian	Yao	Lahu	Sala	Penglung
Hui	Pai	Shui	Maonan	Paoan
Tibetan	Tuchia	Tunghsiang	Kelao	Yuku
Uighur	Hani	Nahsi	Sibo	Ching
Miao	Kazakh	Chingpo	Achang	Tartar
Yi	Tai	Khalkhas	Pumi	Tulung
Chuang	Li	Tu	Tajik	Olunchun
Puyi	Lisu	Tahur	Nu	Hoche
Korean	Wa	Mulao	Uzbek	Monba
Manchu	Sheh	Chiang	Russian	Loba
Tung	Kaoshan	Pulang	Owenk	—

(From China Reconstructs December 1972)

WOMEN IN CHINA

– Interview with Comrade Liu Kuei-ying, a woman weaver and vice-chairman of the revolutionary committee of Peking No. 2 Cotton Textile Mill

Would you talk about women's position in today's political and social life?

Well, first of all, after the People's Republic of China was founded, it was specifically written into the Constitution that women "enjoy equal rights with men in all spheres of political, economic, cultural, social and family life". As the revolution and the building of socialism developed in China, this provision came more and more into full effect.

The history of the older women in our mill shows this. Before liberation, poverty forced many of them to become child brides or maidservants of the rich. When they came to work in the mill, they were oppressed and exploited more than the men by the capitalists and their bosses. Their life was so utterly miserable that you couldn't say they had any political or social status at all. Not only that, but most women were poisoned by the feudal and bourgeois thinking of the old society and did not know what kind of status or rights they should have. Only a very few who had progressive ideas recognized this.

Today, with equal rights in every field, women are handling all kinds of work. They are in leading positions at all levels. During the proletarian cultural revolution, when we elected members of the revolutionary committee, the leadership kept insisting that there should be a proper proportion of women. In our mill, one-third of the leaders in the revolutionary committee and the various workshops are women. Our women are also deputies to the National People's Congress, the highest organ of state power, and representatives to the national congresses of the Chinese Communist Party.

Is equal pay for equal work universal?

Yes. Women are paid the same as men for equal work. But in order to take over some jobs traditionally done by men, we need first to master the skills. Thus, the state pays a lot of attention to training women.

In the old society I could only keep from starving by picking over cinders. There wasn't any way to study. After liberation came in 1949, I went to a primary school for a year and a half. In 1954 I entered the mill when it was still being built and was promptly sent to a textile mill in Tsingtao to learn. Over 3,000 people went, most of them women. Then after we came back to Peking, we joined the spare time literacy class run by our mill.

The Party paid much attention to the raising of our political consciousness. In 1959 I became a member of the Communist Party and in 1968 I was elected to the mill's revolutionary committee.

Since a high political level raises ability, the leaders of the revolutionary committee and workshops have a fixed day each week to study works by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Chairman Mao. This helps us use the scientific principles of Marxism-Leninism to analyze, discuss and discover ways to solve practical problems in our work.

How does China protect the health and well-being of women?

In many ways. Women are not assigned heavy work. Beginning from her seventh month of pregnancy, a woman worker may work seven hours a day instead of eight. After the birth, she has 56 days of paid maternity leave—70 days for twins or difficult birth. The mill has a nursery for babies and a kindergarten for children up to seven years old. Mothers get two half-hours off to nurse their babies during each working day. If the baby is taken care of at home not near the mill, the nursing time can be increased.

Great attention is paid to the health of women and their families. The mill has a 30-bed clinic and health stations in the workshops, nursery, kindergarten and dormitories. This is time saving and convenient for women workers, their children and other family members. Medical charges for workers and cadres are free. Family members pay at half cost and the rest is provided by the state. All women workers have regular physical examinations. In addition, those over 35 years of age have a special medical check in order to detect in time diseases common to this age group.

What measures do you take for planned parenthood?

Most of us in the mill have two or three children. The comrades responsible for the well-being of women workers and the clinic medical workers explain the benefits of planned parenthood to the women and tell them how to do it. Now that women workers are independent economically, they have equal rights in deciding family affairs — a thing that didn't exist in the old society. Workers in our mill pay attention to planned parenthood because it ensures the health of mothers and children, gives mothers more time for study and for educating their children better. The state also helps us women in other ways such as making the contraceptive pill, abortions and planned-parenthood operations available. This is all free of charge and the women have the right of decision in these matters.

(From China Reconstructs March 1972)

Women's Liberation Through Struggle

HSU KUANG ⁴

I was born in a poor family in Nankung, a small county town in southern Hopei province, and in 1936 entered the normal school there. I was very indignant at the society that allowed the bloodsucking landlords and officials to ride roughshod over the poor, while the latter, after grueling labor, still went hungry. A teacher named Chang often talked about why class oppression existed and introduced me to some progressive books. The elder sister of a classmate, who I later came to know was an underground Communist Party member, told us that the Communist Party had been leading the poor to make revolution and that after a 25,000-li Long March the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army led by Chairman Mao had set up an anti-Japanese base in Yen-an. I began to learn the truths of revolution.

It was the time of the Kuomintang white terror. Teacher Chang soon lost his job. Because I had led some of my fellow students to oppose this decision by the school principal, I was expelled and taken to the county government office where I was interrogated and beaten. I had to leave town and finally got a job as substitute teacher in a primary school in a distant village.

In 1937 the Japanese imperialists invaded Peiping and pushed southward along the railway line. Nankung was bombed, and the Kuomintang officials fled in panic. Just as I was searching for the road to revolution the Eighth Route Army led by the Communist Party marched into Nankung and set up the anti-Japanese local government there. The Party organization carried out education among us young people first. Soon I joined the revolutionary ranks. In 1938 the first Women's Association for National Salvation in south Hopei came into being. I was elected head of the propaganda department. In that same year I joined the Communist Party.

Smashing Feudal Shackles

The women's association sought to mobilize and bring the women in the villages into the movement to save the nation from Japanese aggression. We intellectuals had had little contact with the peasants and when we first walked through the village in our Chinese gowns or skirts the people would just stare at us and talk behind our backs. When the village head beat gongs to call out the women to the meetings we were holding for them, only men and old women came, but no young ones. Later we found out that the landlords and rich peasants had spread slanders among the masses, saying, "They're a pack of wild women. Their words are not for young brides to hear."

⁴ **HSU KUANG** is deputy head of the revolutionary committee of Peking's western district. Working at organizing women since before the liberation, she later was chairwoman of the women's federation in Tientsin.

In old China not only did the working women suffer the same oppression and exploitation by the landlords and officials as the men, but in addition they were fettered by the feudal concept that women were inferior to men. Marriage was arranged arbitrarily by the parents. The men ruled over the women. In southern Hopei it was very common for women to be kept from working in the fields out of the fear that they would be seen by strange men. The daughter-in-law or wife had to ask her mother-in-law or husband for every cent. Young women had no position at all in the family.

When the women's association was faced with the job of mobilizing the women for anti-Japanese work, two opposing views arose among its members. One view supported the demands of some young women that tyrannical husbands and mothers-in-law be taken to meetings and publicly criticized. This, they felt, would strengthen the women's determination and give vent to their anger. Others pointed out that at present Japanese imperialism was the enemy of the whole Chinese people, and that this method would undermine the unity of the people against the invaders and sharpen contradictions in the family. Through discussion we finally agreed that victory in the war could be won only by uniting all those that could be united. Without national liberation, women's liberation would have no meaning. We went from house to house visiting and making friends with the women. They came to understand us and learned to reason patiently with their stubborn mothers-in-law and husbands.

This proved a good way. The change in the family of Sister Wang Erh in Hsiaowang village, Chulu County, is an example. She was married into the Wang family as a child-bride at the age of 12. Her husband was a tenant farmer and 17 years older than she. She had been ill-treated by the family, and whenever they got a poor harvest, as payment for the rent she was sent to labor for the landlord like a beast of burden. With the backbreaking toil and unhappy family relations, she rarely said anything all day long. People called her "the dumb daughter-in-law". She was not allowed to come to our mobilization meetings because her mother-in-law was afraid, she might get out of hand and neglect the household work, while her husband feared she would be attracted to other men.

When I went to visit her, her mother-in-law received me coolly and wouldn't even allow the younger woman to show herself. Some comrades contended that the only hope for Sister Wang Erh's emancipation was for her to get a divorce, return to her mother's house and join the women's association there. I refused to be discouraged and went back again and again to visit and chat with the mother-in-law. I tried to help her see that women should contribute their share to the resistance—that if the invaders took over our country, we would become slaves. I described the sufferings of our fellow countrymen in the northeast, which had been occupied by the Japanese invaders, and pointed out that if we were to lose our country, families would be broken up. I also told her about my own life.

When the mother-in-law learned that I too came from a poor family which had been persecuted by the Kuomintang, and that my mother had died when I was 15, she became very sympathetic. As we talked, I would help her with whatever she was doing, like cooking the meal or feeding the pig. And when she was spinning, I would prepare the cotton for her. She began saying, "These women have heads on their shoulders. They are also downtrodden people and are of one heart and mind with us."

One evening the mother-in-law sent her son away for the night and had me stay over with her daughter-in-law. Sister Wang Erh poured out her sufferings to me and said she wanted to get a divorce. I tried to help her see that her mother-in-law and husband were also poor people. This formed a basis for improvement of relations. Actually, the husband's own thinking was already changing under constant help from members of the Peasants' Association.⁵

In 1938 the enemy occupied the county seat of Nankung and often carried out mopping up campaigns in the surrounding villages. The enemy's burning, killing and looting also educated the local people. Later the husband joined the Peasants' Association and the wife and mother both joined the women's association. We students also changed in the course of doing mass work. We discarded our city dress and put on peasant clothes. We became very close to the local people and many of the elderly women "adopted" us as "daughters".

'Dumb Daughter-in-Law' to Chairwoman

After we got the women mobilized, we organized them to weave cloth and make shoes which were sold to the Eighth Route Army at cost. We also organized a self-defense unit of young women. They took turns guarding the village, tearing down town walls or destroying roads before the oncoming enemy, nursing the wounded, carrying stretchers, acting as secret messengers, hiding stocks of grain from the enemy and helping the soldiers' families. During the time of the mop-ups we organized young women's guerrilla units. To confuse and frighten the enemy, we took pot shots at them and threw hand grenades. Often, we lit firecrackers in kerosene cans when we didn't have enough ammunition.

"Dumb daughter-in-law", Sister Wang Erh, was particularly active in supporting the front. She was a fast weaver and the cloth was very good. She could make twice as many shoes as the others. She was elected head of the village women's association. Her home and land lay just at the end of the village. One day while she was working in her garden and at the same time keeping a lookout, someone came along whom she suspected to be a spy. As she engaged him in conversation she reached for a string hanging outside her house connected to a signal in her mother-in-law's room, and pulled. This told the old lady to call the self-defense corps. They

⁵ An anti-Japanese organization open to all peasants except rich peasants. Landlords, too, were not eligible.

caught the man on the spot. Another time, Sister Wang Erh caught several more spies using the same method. “‘Dumb daughter-in-law’ has become a capable chairwoman,” said the villagers.

Fighting shoulder-to-shoulder alongside the men, women made a great contribution in the struggle to repel the Japanese aggressors. This not only gave them encouragement but also educated the men and the people as a whole. In the course of the struggle the feudal thinking and customs discriminating against women were broken down.

Reality also educated those of us doing women's work. We came to understand more clearly that the women's movement was an integral part of the revolutionary movement. We saw that if the women's movement had been divorced from revolution as a whole, and had fought solely for women's rights — thus becoming a struggle to wrest rights from men and making men the target of their struggle — it would have split the revolutionary ranks. Endless conflicts between the men and women, and between the young women and the old women, would have resulted. This would have been harmful to the struggle for national liberation and that for the liberation of all oppressed classes; it would have turned society against the women's struggle and put obstacles in its way.

The Same as Men

After eight years of war the Chinese people drove out the Japanese invaders. Supported by the U.S. imperialists, the Kuomintang reactionaries — who had always been apathetic about resisting the Japanese aggressors but very active in attacking the Communist-led patriotic forces — robbed the people of the fruits of their victory. Using the areas and cities taken over from the surrendering Japanese, the Kuomintang launched civil war on an unprecedented scale. This was opposed by all patriotic people. In 1948, as the People's Liberation Army moved from victory to victory, I was working in the liberated villages of southern Hopei, organizing the people to support the front and carry out the land reform, and on problems of women's welfare.

Steeled in the eight years of resistance against the Japanese invaders, women in the liberated areas were determined to carry the revolution through to the very end. Everywhere women were sending their husbands or sons off to the People's Liberation Army.

One of the most moving incidents is the story of Chao Hsiu-o, chairwoman of the Chaochia village branch of the Democratic Federation of Women in Chihhsien county (the name of the Women's Association for National Salvation had changed to the Democratic Federation of Women). There were only three in her family, two of whom were widows. Her father-in-law, a hired hand for a landlord, had died under the tyrant's maltreatment before the war. Her husband was killed fighting the Japanese. She had only one child, a son. The two widows were drawn together by their feelings of class and national hatred. Both Chao Hsiu-o and her mother-in-law joined the Chinese Communist Party, and she became secretary of the Party branch. Her

mother-in-law would often say to me: "At home, I'm head of the family, but with matters of the revolution, it's my daughter-in-law who leads me."

Then one day Chao Hsiu-o was preparing to send her son off to the PLA. Her mother-in-law could not bear the thought. He was the only grandchild, the last one to carry on the family name. Hsiu-o sat down to talk with the grandmother and together they recalled their sufferings under the landlords' oppression. She helped the old woman see that the Kuomintang reactionaries backed up the landlords because their power in the countryside was based on the landlord class. "If we don't overthrow these reactionaries," she said, "we'll have to suffer under them again." Finally, the grandmother consented to let her grandson go.

Since most of the men were fighting at the front, women became the main force in agricultural and sideline production. They also enthusiastically made supplies for the army. To meet the clothing needs of the field army they produced 800,000 bolts of hand-woven cloth ahead of time, in a month and a half. The women also nursed the wounded, filled up trenches and tore down the enemy's barricades. In all these support-the-front activities the women displayed ability they had never shown before. It made even those who had always maintained "women's place is around the stove" acknowledge that women had become an indispensable force in every period of the revolutionary struggle.

Revolution and Women's Rights

In 1947 the Communist Party Central Committee promulgated the land reform program for the liberated areas. In this struggle to thoroughly destroy the feudal system, two views arose concerning women's emancipation. As the situation developed, some women's problems such as the question of marriage, woman and child care, were in urgent need of solution. In Chaochia village a number of women said to me, "Let the Peasants' Association work on the land reform, the women's federation should concentrate on women's problems."

Through discussion, we in the federation came to the agreement that while we must, of course, solve the particular problems of women—otherwise we would be divorcing ourselves from the masses and neglecting our duty—at the same time the most important of our duties was to carry out the main task of the revolution. The feudal landlord class oppressed men and women alike. Without overthrowing the landlords, the working women could not really stand up either politically or economically. There would be no solution to their problems to speak of. The strength of both men and women must be concentrated on carrying out the land reform. In the land reform the women took the lead in many ways. For example, at a struggle meeting against the landlords in Chaochia village, Chao Hsiu-o, supporting her mother-in-law at her side, was the first to stand up and accuse the landlord of his cruel exploitation. Her story of blood and tears roused the bitter memories of many and strengthened their determination to

overthrow the landlord class. Every poor peasant, man or woman, was allotted a piece of land in the land reform. To emphasize the fact that women had economic equality with men we gave each woman a land certificate in her own name or wrote her name alongside her husband's on one certificate. Before, women had always been referred to by others as "so-and-so's wife" or "so-and-so's mother". Now for the first time in their lives many women heard their own names spoken in public.

At the meeting to give out the land certificates Chao Hsiu-o mounted the platform to talk about the new draft marriage law, attacking the feudal marriage system with its polygamy, concubinage, child-brides and arranged forced marriages. She called on the people to create a new kind of family based on democracy and harmony.

After the land reform the federation started work on woman and child care in a big way. In the villages, where once there was the bitter saying, "Pregnant women are seen, but no baby's laughter is ever heard", training classes for midwives were started. Before, in the villages in this area no girl ever went to school. Now we started night literacy classes and the sound of women reciting the texts could often be heard. After being allotted land, the women organized themselves into mutual-aid teams for agricultural production and co-ops for manufacturing home woven cloth. In this way they started on the road of socialist collectivization.

These activities again proved that at every stage of the revolution women were an important force. Equality between men and women, freedom of marriage and other women's rights and the solution of their special problems can only be achieved step by step as the revolutionary struggle, with the women participating, achieves victory and revolutionary state power is established.

The revolutionary struggle liberated women, and steeled and trained many women activists. After liberation those in southern Hopei became cadres of the various local governments, including heads of counties, districts or courts of justice. As for myself, I went to Tientsin and later Peking to continue to organize and mobilize women for socialist revolution and construction.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

– Interview with the Revolutionary Committee of Wenhsing Street School

Who attends your school?

Our school, like other primary schools in Peking, takes children from the neighborhood, in our case, 20 streets with 1,300 families. If they move out of the area they transfer to another school. We take children at about the age of 7. This last term we had an enrolment of 1,040, about an equal number of girls and boys, in 23 classes.

After graduation at the end of grade school, they are accepted into the local junior middle school without an examination. Each year the children have two vacations of about a month, generally beginning in January and July.

Do the children have to pay tuition fees?

Children in the city's primary schools each pay a fee of 2.50 yuan plus 0.40-0.80 yuan for books and stationery each term. This is a relatively low fee, within the reach of all. Gone are the days when a family could not send their children to school for lack of funds. The major expenses of the schools are paid out of the national budget.

What do the children study?

Every child takes Chinese, arithmetic, music, drawing and physical training. Beginning in the third grade, every child in our school studies English. Some other schools offer French, Spanish or other languages. In the fourth grade a course in political studies is added. The reading material for it is mainly selections from Chairman Mao's writings and stories of revolutionary struggles of the past. Thus, from quite early, the children are exposed to Marxist-Leninist thought and learn to appreciate the traditions of the revolution. Another course added in fourth grade, entitled "general knowledge", deals mainly with natural science. The school day begins with setting-up exercises in the morning and has six 45-minute periods, four in the morning and two in the afternoon. From the third grade on, pupils at our school often go with their teachers to visit factories and rural people's communes, to work in them and absorb the working-class attitudes of the workers and peasants. This is to help them relate their book learning to life and to learn a correct view of labor. When there is a lesson on wheat, for instance, the pupils go to a commune, on papermaking, to a paper mill. Ten workers, peasants and members of the People's Liberation Army serve as permanent after-school activities counsellors.

How many years does a child spend in primary school now?

Primary schooling used to last six years, but we have found that it is not really necessary for it to be so long. If the repetition in course material is cut out, the same amount of ground can be covered in five years. The plan is to change all primary schools in the Peking municipality over to the five-year system. The textbooks we have been using since 1970 are geared to the five-year course, and we are changing to it step by step. The children will finish the equivalent of six years' study in five years and leave primary school at 12.

How about grading?

The guide for our work and for evaluating our pupils is Chairman Mao's directive on education: **"Our educational policy must enable everyone who receives an education to develop morally, intellectually and physically and become a worker with both socialist consciousness and culture."**

At the end of each term every pupil takes home a report card which is an all-round record of his progress, including both his scholastic achievement and character development. The latter is reported in a commentary written by the teacher and takes into consideration the child's attitude toward study and labor, adherence to discipline, the way he unites and co-operates with other children, his concern for the collective and his care of public property. In judging pupils in the upper grades, we also consider whether or not they are consciously studying for the revolution and have an interest in national affairs.

Pupils receive a grade for each course. These are based on a combination of examination results, the record of homework and attitude toward study. Pupils who fail in some subjects can get help from teachers and classmates during vacation. Before the new school term begins, they can take a make-up exam. If a pupil fails again in two major subjects (political study, Chinese or arithmetic) or one major and two minor subjects, the school reviews his situation to decide whether he should repeat the same grade. If the failure is due to poor health or other unavoidable reasons, he usually remains with his class and gets help from teachers and classmates in order to catch up. If the pupil fails because he has not studied well, he will be held back a year with his parents' consent. Such cases are rare, only seven in our whole school this year.

Is there an organization for children?

Many pupils in our school, like others throughout the country, belong to the Little Red Guards. Any child between the ages of seven and thirteen may apply to join. His home room Little Red Guards group and their teacher discuss whether the applicant has suitable moral, intellectual and physical qualifications and his admission is approved by the school. The Little

Red Guards wear a red scarf — red, the color of revolution, symbolically, a corner of the national flag.

About 700 of our school's 1,040 pupils are Little Red Guards. The units are divided by brigade (the school), teams (grades) and small groups (home rooms). Leaders of each are democratically elected. The committee of brigade cadres gets direct guidance and help from the Communist Youth League group in the school. The Little Red Guards hold after-school activities to which applicants not yet approved are welcomed. The Little Red Guards must see to it that they set a good example for others in whatever they do. They should be honest, courageous, lively and promote unity among their classmates.

(From China Reconstructs June 1973)

MEDICAL CARE SYSTEM

What kind of health and medical care is available to the people of China today?

Since liberation in 1949 much progress has been made in this field. According to Chairman Mao's teaching, "**Vigorous action should be taken to prevent and cure endemic and other diseases among the people and to expand the people's medical and health services**", soon after the establishment of the New China, smallpox, plague and cholera were quickly brought under control. Areas in which parasitic diseases such as snail fever (schistosomiasis), malaria, hookworm and filariasis are found have been greatly reduced in size. Step by step the number of hospitals has been increased and units for prevention of contagious diseases have been set up. The nationwide health and medical network now taking shape covers both city and countryside and stretches into the remote border regions.

The aim of China's health and medical work is to serve the broad masses of the working people. Chairman Mao has issued many directives on this point. The one of June 26, 1965, "**In medical and health work, put the stress on the rural areas**", expresses particularly succinctly his line for this field, the basic spirit of which is whole-hearted service to the people. Guided by this revolutionary line, China's health and medical work is oriented towards the workers, peasants and soldiers. It puts prevention first, brings together the efforts of doctors of both western and Chinese medicine and organizes the masses to carry on health work.

Before the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution Liu Shao-chi promoted his reactionary line to combat and sabotage Chairman Mao's revolutionary line in this field. Liu and his clique, while pretending to support Chairman Mao's line, behind his back actually promoted a program concentrating most of the medical personnel and supplies in the cities. It viewed research as a matter of a few specialists doing studies on rare and difficult-to-cure diseases, thus benefiting only a small minority. Liu's line, giving little attention to the health problems of the working people, was not oriented at study and prevention of ordinary, frequently-occurring illnesses. All kinds of excuses were found for not utilizing Chinese traditional medicine. It was not Liu's line for city medical personnel to go to the countryside. The result of all of this was that for a long time there was a lack of doctors and medicines in the rural areas. Chairman Mao had sharply criticized the way Liu and his clique had turned the Ministry of Public Health into "a ministry of health for urban overlords".

In the course of the cultural revolution, the revisionist line of Liu Shao-chi and Lin Biao was reprobated and medical personnel and the masses gained a deeper understanding of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line. In the past two to three years 300,000 city medical workers and medical school graduates have gone to live and work in the countryside. Since 1968 about 700,000 medical personnel from the cities have made tours of the rural areas in mobile medical

teams. Between them they have trained over a million "barefoot doctors". These are commune members with some basic training enabling them to treat ordinary and frequently occurring illnesses while they continue to do farm work. The name originated in the south where commune members work barefooted in the paddy fields.

Efforts to collect and compound Chinese herbal medicines and to combine the use of traditional and western medicine are developing into a mass movement and bringing increasingly good results. Notable among these has been the use of acupuncture to induce anesthesia, surgery and curing without surgery of acute gastrointestinal conditions, and the treatment of pneumonia in children and the after-effects of polio through a combination of Chinese and western medicine.

Does China have free medical care?

In China today some people receive free medical care, others receive medical treatment under a form of cooperative medical insurance. Those who are covered by neither pay very low prices for their medical treatment. Because China's medical and health work exists to serve the welfare of the broad masses of the people it does not operate for profit.

Who is entitled to free medical care?

People working in state-run units directly related to production, like factories, mines, communication units and other places of work covered by the National Labor Insurance Regulations are entitled to medical examinations, treatment, medicines, surgery and hospitalization with the cost borne by their places of work. The patients pay only a tiny registration fee and the cost of meals while in the hospital. Most of this treatment is given at clinics or hospitals run by such places of work, or at hospitals of both Chinese and western medicine with which they have contracts or other arrangements.

The children and wives or husbands or other dependents of such workers, if they are not covered by some other medical system, pay half the cost of their medical treatment, the rest being paid out of the enterprise's labor insurance fund. When a person covered under the National Labor Insurance Regulations is ill and cannot work for a long period, he also receives sick-leave pay. The amount differs according to the number of years the person has worked and the length of the sick leave. If the illness causes economic hardship for the family, the enterprise supplements this payment. No matter how long his sick leave, the worker does not lose his job. The above medical benefits continue after the worker retires. A worker who is injured on the job receives full pay throughout the period of treatment and recuperation. His medical expenses are paid and also 80 percent of the cost of his food while hospitalized.

Workers and members of the staff of state farms are covered in the same way as workers under labor insurance regulations.

Free medical care, including after retirement, is also extended to personnel in jobs not directly related to production such as those in all levels of government offices and organizations, people's organizations, cultural, scientific, athletic, medical, economic and commercial units, primary and middle schools and colleges. Students in college and disabled veterans of the revolutionary wars are also entitled to free medical care, the latter also after retirement. The dependents of all the above pay the full fee for their own medical treatment.

What is cooperative medical care?

Systems for cooperative medical care have been set up in 70 percent of the production brigades under the people's communes. In most cases members pay one or two yuan per person (in some areas less) every year into the cooperative medical fund and the brigade allocates an additional sum. This money goes to set up and maintain a health station or clinic for the brigade and covers the cost of treatment and medicines needed by its members. Commune members pay only a three to five fen registration fee, and in some places no fee at all. If a member of the brigade is referred to the commune hospital or county hospital or needs to go further, the brigade cooperative medical fund pays the cost of treatment of his illness. With a hospital in every county, smaller hospitals in most of the communes and a health station in every brigade, health and medical care in the rural areas is much improved.

The Central People's Government aids this work in the countryside. In the past few year's funds for medical supplies, equipment and other aid to county hospitals and commune hospitals accounted for the greater part of its expenditures for medical care. The medical teams from the cities which tour the countryside are also sent out under the auspices of government health departments at different levels.

Is any special consideration given to the health of working women?

Yes. There are a number of special provisions for women who work at places covered by the Labor Insurance Regulations and other forms of free medical care. Women may retire five years earlier than men (at 55). From her seventh month of pregnancy a woman is no longer assigned to night shifts and is transferred to a lighter job, working seven hours a day instead of eight, while receiving her full wage. Expenses for prenatal care and hospital delivery are covered in the same way as other medical treatment. Maternity leave is 56 days with full pay, and for twins or a difficult birth 70 days. After she goes back to work, if the baby is cared for in the creche at her place of work she can have two half-hour periods off during the day for nursing the baby, or slightly longer if the baby is cared for in her home. As long as the mother nurses

her baby she is not assigned to night shifts. In the rural areas, prenatal care and delivery are covered by the cooperative medical plans.

What does medical care cost for those who pay for it themselves?

The dependents of people working in non-productive jobs such as government offices and organizations, people's organizations and schools pay for their own medical treatment at quite low rates. In Peking, for example, registration fee for each hospital visit is one *chiao*.⁶ There is no charge for ordinary laboratory tests (blood, urine, etc.). Special tests cost a few *chiao*, a chest X-ray, three *chiao*. Various kinds of physiotherapies cost from one to five *chiao* a visit. All hospital accommodations are more or less alike, costing from several *chiao* up to one yuan per day, depending on the hospital. Birth delivery at a city hospital costs five yuan. An appendectomy or hernia repair costs eight yuan. Ordinary major operations do not run above 10 or 15 yuan. More difficult operations such as chest or brain surgery cost 30 yuan. Expenses (not including food) for a child hospitalized with pneumonia for eight days run about 16 yuan.

There have been repeated cuts in the price of medicines as the result of growth of the pharmaceutical industry and the emphasis on serving the people. There was an average 37 percent cut on a large number of medicines in August 1969, bringing them to about 80 percent below what they were in 1950, right after liberation. This cut brought the price of 200,000 units of penicillin from 23 fen down to 14 fen; of a gram of streptomycin from 44 fen to 24 fen; of 0.25 gram of tetracycline from 12 fen to 5 fen; of 0.25 gram of Terramycin from 8 fen to 3.5 fen. Prices of medical instruments and equipment, reagents, vaccines and blood plasma have also been reduced.

Every year the state provides vaccinations and immunization against such epidemic diseases as smallpox, measles, diphtheria, whooping cough, typhoid fever, infantile paralysis and tuberculosis free to all who need them. Endemic diseases, such as snail fever which occurs mainly in the south, are treated without charge.

In an attempt to further relieve the burden of medical costs, cooperative medical care plans are being tried out in some city neighborhoods among the family members of working people who would otherwise be paying the full cost of their medical treatment.

(From China Reconstructs November 1972)

⁶ One Chinese Yuan = 10 *Chiao*, or 100 *fen*.
One Chinese Yuan = £ 0.20.