

✓ SOCIAL SCIENCES ✓

JANUARY, 1957

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New World
REVIEW

LAND REFORM IN CHINA

by D. N. PRITT

*How 500,000,000 Chinese Farmers,
One Fifth of the World's People,
Won the Right to Their Own Land*

Prospects for Peace In 1957

NEW WORLD REVIEW

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NEW WORLD REVIEW

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PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN 1957

by JESSICA SMITH

SHAFTS of light are beginning to break through the menacing clouds that darkened the world scene and meant so much human tragedy in Egypt and Hungary in the last months of 1956.

They give us hope that the New Year may see a new turn in world affairs, a real beginning toward disarmament and the banning of all nuclear weapons, a restoration of the trend toward ending the cold war, toward the peaceful co-existence and harmonious and fruitful international relations set in motion by the Geneva Summit Conference.

In Egypt we have seen the failure of aggression and outside efforts to overthrow the Nasser government, the withdrawal of foreign troops, and prospects for a solution through continued United Nations efforts. While no final settlement is yet in sight, the course of events indicates the doom of the old colonial system whereby oil and other resources can with impunity be exploited by nation's other than their owners, with the resulting impoverishment of masses of the world's people.

In Hungary we see the beginnings of stabilization which it may be hoped will lead to the withdrawal of Soviet troops within the framework of new relations between the Soviet Union and the Eastern European democracies exemplified in the new Soviet-Polish agreements, and within

a larger program for the withdrawal of *all* foreign troops in both Eastern and Western Europe and a new all-European security system.

New Disarmament Proposals

Among the most heartening of the end-of-the-year news items were the reports that the United States has decided to suspend further major H-bomb tests at least through 1957, and to make an attempt to break the arms reduction stalemate in response to Soviet disarmament proposals.

Robert G. Spivack wrote in the *New York Post*, December 12, that he had it "from the highest sources" that tests this year will be limited to smaller nuclear weapons that can be safely exploded on the mainland and designed to make sure that no large amount of Strontium 90—the world's deadliest poison—is released. Spivack reported that if the response from other nations is what is hoped, "there will be further announcement at some later date that this government has stopped making H-bombs."

James Reston wrote (*New York Times*, December 14) that the President had overruled those who have pressed for rigid adherence to past U.S. arms limitation proposals, and that three modifications had been approved at the highest level. These are, he said, 1) That the major nations should reduce their armed

forces to a maximum of 2,500,000 without waiting for the operation of a fool proof inspection system. 2) That the UN Disarmament Subcommittee should make a specific effort to reach an agreement on the limitation and control of future development of long-range guided missiles. 3) That every effort should be made to explore the proposal in Bulganin's November 17 letter "for a considerable reduction of U.S., Soviet, British and French troops in the territories of the North Atlantic Treaty and Warsaw Pact countries." However, according to Reston, while aerial and other inspection measures have been rejected as a mandatory first step for reduction of armed forces, U.S. policy is still grounded on a "fool-proof inspection system" in the field of testing atomic weapons. (The reasoning behind this seems to be that contrary to scientists opinions that all nuclear tests can be detected, U.S. officials now believe weapons could somehow be made non-detectable by being encased in lead.)

Reports of a new disarmament approach found partial confirmation in the speech made by U.S. delegate Henry Cabot Lodge Jr. at the November 20 meeting of the UN Disarmament Commission called at the request of Soviet delegate Arkady Sobolev. Mr. Lodge announced that the United States would "thoughtfully consider" the new Soviet disarmament proposals, and "notes with some hope" the Bulganin offer to consider partial adoption of the open skies plan, in a belt 480 miles wide on either side of the demarcation line between the NATO and Warsaw Pact countries in Europe. Without spelling out any new proposals, Mr. Lodge said:

"The United States is prepared to renew its efforts to reach a sound, safeguarded agreement for the reduction and regulation of armed forces."

On the other hand, divisions in Washington were stressed by Robert S. Allen (*New York Post*, December 21) who revealed that the report of a "new Administration plan" was in fact mainly a trial balloon released by Harold Stassen, Presidential disarmament adviser, in special press briefings. Allen declared that the program had not yet won the implied Presidential approval, and that top Defense Department officials and especially the Joint Chiefs of Staff, vigorously oppose it.

Yet even a trial balloon of this nature can have the greatest importance if the people speak out with sufficient vigor to strengthen the hands of those who support new disarmament moves, and press the demand for the ending of all nuclear weapons tests and effective steps toward disarmament. Special support should be given, too, to the new idea of ending the tests of intercontinental ballistic missiles which, if perfected, as pointed out last June in *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, would become the greatest of all threats of mutual annihilation to the nations possessing them and all the rest of the world.

Hungary and European Security

In our review of the situation in Hungary in the December NWR, we pointed out that the tragedy in Hungary arose out of a combination of the past errors of its own Communist Party and Government as well as of the USSR, and their too-slow correction, and the Western cold war policies which had sup-

ported and encouraged revolt. Had not outside pressures transformed a justified people's demonstration into a counter-revolution against socialism, there is every reason to believe that the Soviet Union would have acted as it has in relation to Poland, and that it will still do so if these pressures are removed.

No person of good will can fail to have the deepest sympathy for the people of Hungary for the suffering they have endured and the difficulties they face. Yet we can hope now that out of Hungary's travail may come new initiatives which will bring about a new international situation guaranteeing against a repetition of the Hungarian events. The Soviet Union has already indicated its desire for this in its proposals for withdrawal of all foreign troops from European countries and new security arrangements.

There are bellicose elements in the United States who have seized upon the troubled situation in Eastern Europe to stir up anew the war spirit against the USSR. But there are also important trends in a new direction, indicating a recognition that continued efforts to create governments hostile to the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe could only boomerang against ourselves.

James Reston has discussed these trends in several articles in the *New York Times*. On December 18 he wrote that there were divided counsels in Washington, some seeing in the new situation in Europe an opportunity of negotiating with the Soviet Union on a partial withdrawal of forces by both sides, others insisting this was the wrong time for any discussion of arms control or security arrangements. The

next day he wrote that due to divided Cabinet opinion President Eisenhower would be asked to make a decision "about whether to open negotiations with the Soviet Union on a new security system for East and West Europe." Reston pointed out that while Secretary Dulles agrees regarding the new strategic situation, he does not favor the United States taking any initiative at the present time.

Reston further noted that Britain is considering a major reduction of her forces in West Germany, and that many influential German leaders (although not Adenauer) are seriously considering ending Allied occupation, if such concessions would lead to the withdrawal of the Soviet Army from East Germany and German unification, and that European diplomats in Washington are increasingly in favor of withdrawal of troops by both East and West and a new all-European security system. In the *New York Times* of December 23, Harold Callendar reported from Paris the great interest among both military and civilian officials in Europe in a demilitarized zone on both sides of the NATO frontier and mutual troop withdrawals.

Obviously a powerful factor in these considerations is the growing division in the Atlantic Alliance, further shaken by the British-French invasion of Egypt. Mr. Dulles flew to Paris for the purpose of shoring it up, but only met more pressures for new policies.

With any fear of Soviet aggression long since dissipated, the big European powers have little concern about NATO as a shield against the USSR and insisted on making clear in Paris that the organization would

not go to war to "liberate" the Eastern European countries. Britain and France want NATO not for anti-Soviet aims, but mainly for the suppression of colonial freedom struggles in Cyprus and North Africa, in which they would like to have U.S. support. The United States must tread softly, since it wants to earn the good-will of the Arab-Asian nations by taking a position against colonialism, while at the same time moving in on Anglo-French imperialist positions. All these contradictions, reflected in U.S. policies, operate against the fundamental change so greatly needed. But at the same time they weaken the ability to continue on the old basis of military pacts and colonial exploitation.

So far, all the United States offers is to supply Europe with atomic weapons and the technical data to enable them to produce the nuclear warheads to go with them. If all the talk of troop reduction and withdrawals merely means greater dependence on atomic weapons, this of course does not spell progress toward disarmament.

Which side will win in the pressures which are being put on the President today? Republican commentator Walter Lippmann, who has been urging a negotiated settlement with the Soviet Union almost daily in his columns, suggests that the trend is in its favor. In the *New York Herald Tribune*, December 18, he wrote:

It is in the American interest, and it is in the interest of the Western world, that the liberation of Eastern Europe should be achieved not by an explosion but by a negotiated settlement. This is the considered view of the Administration. It is the considered view of the NATO powers . . .

There are two things we can do which may help. One is to keep making it clear that we hope for peaceably negotiated settlements between the Soviet Union and its Eastern European neighbors. The other is to keep alive in the field of open public discussion all over the world the idea of a general settlement in which NATO would enter—a settlement based on the reunification of Germany and the withdrawal of foreign troops throughout some kind of broad neutralized security belt extending from Scandinavia to the Balkans. . . .

At the same time, Mr. Lippmann is worried by Secretary Dulles' position that the time is not ripe for plans for a larger European settlement, and suggests (December 20) that "it is high time that the government, and informed public opinion came to grips with the problems themselves . . . in big governments, waiting only too often means doing nothing until there is a crisis, and then improvising in a hurry."

The Nehru Visit

The vague, friendly generalities of the communique on the talks between Premier Nehru of India and the President did not indicate what meeting of minds there may have been between them. It is perhaps significant that Nehru said he found U.S. foreign policy more flexible than he had supposed. And in his press conference and talks at the UN reception and elsewhere, Nehru made his position clear on a number of matters which he must also have expressed to the President.

If it turns out that the Nehru-Eisenhower conversations have helped lay the basis for a new attitude toward U.S. relations with People's China and toward its admission to the United Nations, this would be

a vitally important contribution to peace. Before coming here, Nehru had talked with Chinese Premier Chou En-lai, and urged upon him the release of the ten Americans still held in China. Here, he stressed Chou's desire for better relations with the United States. Asked at his December 19 press conference why he advocated admission of the Chinese People's Republic to the UN, he replied that "there is only one China," and added:

Obviously the Formosan Government, at the most, is the Formosan Government. It is not China. Let me say, the map will show you it is not China, whatever else it is. It is Formosa, and to call it China is slightly stretching language.

While strongly critical of Soviet actions in Hungary, Nehru made clear that he opposed the condemnatory attitude expressed in the recent UN resolution, and considered India's resolution that the Secretary General should himself move for the United Nations in this matter a more constructive approach. He expressed the view that while he did not agree with many things in the Soviet Union, he felt that the Soviet people are "extraordinarily friendly people, hospitable people, and passionately desirous of peace." He said many recent tendencies in the Soviet Union had been in "the right direction of liberalization, democratization and that he did not think it possible for them to be stopped. On the question of disarmament, he said he felt "the two main parties concerned are remarkably near to each other."

Nehru's most important statements were made at the UN reception on December 20. He scored the cold war as a negation of UN principles, and made a strong plea

that it be ended as essentially "wrong, immoral and opposed to all ideas of peace and cooperation." He called for an end to "all these pacts and military alliances as completely out of place," declaring:

If it is our objective, as it must be of any reasonable person, that we must have peace, then it follows necessarily that we must not have cold war, from which it follows, necessarily and logically, that we must not buttress our idea of peace by past military pacts and alliances.

There is no need, said Nehru, of places dotted all over with armed forces and military bases. He saw the steps toward terminating the cold war as national independence, no maintenance by any country of armed forces on foreign soil, and some measure of disarmament.

In Ottawa, Dec. 23, Nehru scored France on Algeria, where conditions, he said, have been "infinitely worse than in Hungary."

The Polish-Soviet Agreements

The Polish-Soviet agreements of November 19 and December 17 indicate the kind of relations that could have developed between the USSR and Hungary had not events in the latter country turned into a counter-revolutionary uprising.

The agreement signed in Warsaw December 17 by Foreign Minister Dmitri T. Shepilov and Defense Minister Georgi Zhukov opens with the words: "The temporary stay of Soviet troops in Poland can in no way affect the sovereignty of the Polish state and cannot lead to their interference in the affairs of the Polish People's Republic."

While various detailed arrangements regarding the strength and location of Soviet troops in Poland

are subject to future negotiations, the general principle is firmly laid down that Soviet troops may move out of their bases whether for maneuvers or any other purpose only with the consent of the Polish Government, and that all troops and persons connected with them are under the jurisdiction of Polish courts except in cases of crime or misdemeanors committed against only the USSR or its nationals. M. S. Handler, in a dispatch from Warsaw to the *New York Times*, December 19, commented:

In some respects the legal control vested in the Polish Government over Soviet troop movements is equal to or greater than the power vested in West European governments to control the movements of United States and British forces in their territories.

In signing the agreement, Polish Premier Cyrankiewicz noted that the presence of Soviet troops in Poland is made necessary by West German designs on the Oder-Neisse territory taken over by Poland after World War II.

The agreement on troops was based on the agreement reached in Moscow November 17 at the conclusion of the visit of the top Polish Government and Party leaders, including Wladyslaw Gomulka.

The joint statement at that time emphasized the cordiality and friendship of the talks and stressed the mutual desire to base relations between the two Communist Parties and the two states "on the Leninist principles of equality of nations." Both sides stressed the importance of the Soviet-Polish alliance and expressed confidence that

... the indestructible union and fraternal friendship between the Soviet Union and Poland will widen and

consolidate, developing on the principles of complete equality and respect for territorial integrity, national independence and sovereignty, and of non-interference in internal affairs.

The two countries agreed to strengthen economic relations "on the basis of equal rights, mutual benefit and fraternal mutual help."

It was agreed to cancel Polish debts arising out of Soviet credits for coal delivered by Poland to the Soviet Union.

The Soviet Government agreed to deliver on credit 1,400,000 tons of grain to the Polish People's republic during 1957. It also agreed to grant Poland long-term commodity credits to the amount of 700,000,000 rubles.

Both sides agreed on the need for the temporary stationing of Soviet troops on Polish territory in view of the absence of guarantees against the rebirth of German militarism and the objection of revanchist forces to the existing Polish-Western frontier.

Other matters agreed on included Soviet agreement to promote further repatriation of Poles remaining in the Soviet Union, close cultural co-operation, and continued exchange of information on political, economic and other matters and mutual achievements in socialist construction.

The Soviet-Japanese Agreement

On December 12 ratification instruments of the Soviet-Japanese agreement on ending the state of war and resuming diplomatic relations were exchanged in Tokyo. Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu said he was convinced this action would "contribute vastly to the peace of East Asia and the whole world."

(Continued on page 38)

LAND REFORM IN THE NEW CHINA

by D. N. PRITT

It is a privilege to publish this study of Land Reform in People's China, by the distinguished British lawyer, D. N. Pritt, Queen's Counsel and former Labor M.P. We believe that its special value lies in its detailed exposition of the careful, flexible, step-by-step process whereby the first stages of land reform were accomplished, with the active and willing participation of the Chinese farmers themselves. This careful preparation paved the way for the faster, but equally careful, transition to the stage of producers' cooperatives, assuring their wholly voluntary nature. Thus were avoided some of the difficulties accompanying the process of collectivization in the Soviet Union and the Eastern European People's Democracies. Mr. Pritt was accompanied on his trip to China by Mrs. Pritt, who has written the introduction that follows.—THE EDITORS

WHAT LAND REFORM has meant to the people of China, and especially to the peasants who till the land, was vividly revealed to me when I travelled through the vast countryside of China in 1952 and again in 1955. I was impressed by the eagerness of the people to talk about the change, their pride in cultivating every inch of land to the best of their ability, and above all, their hopefulness and confidence in the future. One peasant, trying to convince me how much better things were than before, told me, "we now have a padded suit for each member of the family, whereas before we had only one between us." A padded suit is a "must" in the bitter Chinese winter. In 1955 I saw the peasants crowding into the new four-story stores in Peking and Shanghai buying not only padded suits but also

sheepskin jackets, so obviously they were even more prosperous than in 1952.

Side by side with the great Land Reform, came the magnificent campaign to eradicate illiteracy in the countryside. The young girl of 21 who told me her story is typical of what is happening among millions of peasants. She had been illiterate, and worked all her life on the landlord's land. Now, she is literate. She has learnt the 2,000 characters which are essential for simple reading and writing. She is economically independent because she has her share of the land allocated to her family. And her newly released talents for organization are fully employed because she is the local secretary of the Women's Federation. What work does this entail, I asked her? Very modestly she re-

plied: "I am responsible for seeing the women are helped with all their special problems."

Peasants everywhere, in their varying shades of blue cotton suits, working industriously on crops which make a patchwork of different shades of green, remain one of my happiest memories of China.

I met and talked to many of the men and women from the cities who had gone out into the countryside to help carry through the great plan which has changed the life of millions, bringing happiness where

there was poverty and despair. Many of them were very young and all of them were most modest when telling me the story of their work. Despite the physical strain of sharing in the hard life of the peasants, I am sure they carry in their hearts a deep and satisfying sense of something achieved . . . a miracle achieved, it seems to outsiders.

In the following pages, my husband tells the story of this miracle, which enabled millions of Chinese to "stand up."

MARIE PRITT

Land Reform in China

THE PROBLEMS which face the 600,000,000 people of China on their journey to socialism are infinitely complex and varied. The first impression which a visiting friend forms of the way in which the varied problems are being faced and solved, under the guidance of the Communist Party, is that there is not merely the required flexibility of approach but also a very high measure of patience and tolerance.

The patience is that of leaders and people who understand that fundamental changes cannot be carried through faster than the masses of the people are prepared to understand and support them, and indeed to carry them through by their own strength. The tolerance is that of wise fighters, who know the advantages of enlisting on one's own side as large a proportion of the social elements "in the middle of road" elements which may easily swing over to one side or the other—as one can safely conciliate and enlist.

The work of land reform fur-

nishes a good example both of the complexity of the problems and of the patience and tolerance with which they have been faced.

What were the essential features of the rural problem which confronted the peoples of China at the time of the liberation? The Preamble to the Constitution of the new regime (which was adopted in 1954) declared that it was necessary to accomplish "step by step . . . the socialist transformation of agriculture." To achieve this, feudal organization of rural life in China had not merely to be abolished; it had to be replaced not by a modern capitalist system but by socialism.

This was a tremendous double task. The peasants of China number at least 500,000,000, constituting by themselves over one-fifth of the population of the whole world. Until quite recently, they lived not merely in great poverty but in feudal subjection to a rich, powerful and merciless landlord class, which formed much less than one-tenth of the ru-

ral population and owned very much more than half the cultivable land. In small family groups, they cultivated, by the most primitive methods, land which for the most part did not belong to themselves.

To socialize agriculture in such conditions, it was necessary to proceed by two stages. The first was to end the feudal system; that is, to end the rule of the landlords, and to vest the lands in the peasants who cultivated it. The second was to bring the peasants, who would thus have become for the first time in many, many centuries the owners of the land, to pool their precious lands into cooperative cultivation and then into collective (socialist) ownership.

To achieve this, the good will and confidence of the peasants must be won and maintained at every stage, so that they would first take courage to rid themselves of landlord tyranny, and then have the foresight to put into collective operation and ownership the lands they had thus won for themselves. And, of course, an important feature and aim of the work at every stage must be to improve the working and yield of the land, so as to convince the peasants that they were on the right road to prosperity not only through possessing the land, but also in the subsequent steps towards collectivization.

Ending the Feudal System

The first and major part of this study is concerned with the first stage of the work, which may be described, by paraphrasing the first Article of the Agrarian Reform Law promulgated June 30, 1950 (when

the Chinese People's Republic was nine months old), as the task of "abolishing the land ownership system of feudal exploitation by the landlord class and introducing the system of peasant land ownership."

Let me begin with a few words about the general position of China at the time of the Liberation. The last decade or so before the People's Republic was established on October 1, 1949, saw the definite end of well over a century of imperialist and semi-colonial domination of the Chinese people. As the Preamble to the Constitution, adopted in September, 1954, expresses it, "in the year 1949 . . . the Chinese people, led by the Communist Party of China, finally achieved their great victory in the people's revolution against imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucrat-capitalism."

Liberation did not, of itself, solve all the problems. It did indeed get rid of imperialism and colonialism, really and fully; but it did not, of course, of itself remove feudalism, let alone capitalism. It did not yet mean the removal of the landlords as a class which, in China, was the beginning and end of removing feudalism. It did, however, provide the necessary conditions for their removal; and by the time the Constitution was adopted, the same Preamble had the right to tell the world that "in the last few years our people have successfully carried out . . . the reform of the agrarian system."

In other words, what the Preamble tells us, and what is sober fact, is that before September, 1954,—and in the main, before 1952 was over—the Chinese people had removed their rural landlords and had thus "abolished the land ownership sys-

tem of feudal exploitation by the landlord class," and introduced in its place "the system of peasant land ownership."

Thus, in a few short years, over a vast area, and in respect of a peasantry over three times as numerous as the total population of the United States, a powerful and long-established class of feudal society—the landlord class—had completely ceased to exist. Thereby, the principal cause of the stagnation, backwardness, and deep poverty of the country had been brought to an end, and incalculably great productive forces had been released from their feudal shackles and given the opportunity not only of free development at a period when science permits free men everywhere to take a vast social profit from the riches of nature, but also of advancement in due course to a socialist system.

This was the work of Chinese people at the end of long and exhaustive wars and at the very beginning of what must and shall be a period of peace. It would not be correct, of course, to say that this tremendous change, which was completed by the end of 1952, had begun as late as October, 1949; for the liberation of China came gradually, region by region, and some part of the work of removing the landlords had been carried out, in the earlier-liberated areas, before October, 1949.

But in any view it is a colossal achievement to have abolished the feudal system in three or four years. The only sense in which the abolition was not then complete, except in Taiwan (Formosa), is that the "national minorities," constituting between 3 per cent and 4 per cent of the total population, and being

on the whole rather more backward than the majority "Han" areas, had to be left, in accordance with socialist principles, to work the problem out in their own way and at their own speed, thus taking a little longer to complete the transformation.

What Became of the Landlords?

This account is largely based on what I learned of the practical operation of the first stage of land reform in one particular medium-sized village in Southern China. But before examining the details, it is as well to see the setting of the picture. In removing the landlords and distributing their land among the peasants, the Chinese people were not seeking simply to ease the heavy burdens of poorer peasants, or to punish cruel landlords, nor even, simply, to abolish the feudal system. They had more far-reaching and positive aims. As expressed in the Agrarian Reform Law already cited, they aimed "to set free the rural productive forces, develop agricultural production, and thus pave the way for New China's industrialization." They aimed at a great march forward of the hundreds of millions of Chinese peasants, hand in hand with the industrial workers, to build a new great socialist state with balanced industry and agriculture.

The first stage, the throwing off of feudalism, was of course a tremendous enterprise, and there were many difficulties to be foreseen. The work involved the political awakening and education of the whole peasantry. Without this, the peasants could never carry through the removal of their landlords, something

which it was psychologically and politically essential that they themselves should achieve, and not just have done for them by others. And, once they were so awakened, the building of New China would be reinforced by the vast contribution to the ranks of active supporters and creators of the new world involved in five-sixths of the nation thus "standing up."

I can now come to my example, and examine, with the help of a friend who took part in the operation, the practical working out of the removal of landlords in this one particular village.

The period of this example, on the whole a fairly typical one, was March-April, 1952, which fell within the busiest period of the Agrarian Reform. (It was eighteen months later, of course, than the establishment of the Chinese People's Republic, and its circumstances were different from those described in the very interesting novel, "The Hurricane," by Chou Li-po, covering events of the year 1946 at the other end of China.)

The village has a population of about 1,500. Rice is its main crop. Its inhabitants have a subsidiary occupation, as do most villages; in this case it consists of a foundry making the metal parts of plows and of other instruments of agriculture, as well as pots and pans. At the time of the liberation of the area (in the summer of 1949) many of the Kuomintang forces who had strongly held it, had withdrawn to the mountains and resorted to banditry. Troops of the Chinese People's Liberation Army had had to come into the village, and the area generally, to wipe out the bandits, and the

village had thus had some experience of organization and of intervention from outside. This history also involved the disadvantage that there might well be in or around the village some hidden bandits, some hidden arms, and probably some Kuomintang agents, so that more than the usual vigilance was called for. The inhabitants were poor, but militant.

Land Reform Groups at Work

How was such a village, or any village, to start the work of getting rid of its strongly-entrenched landlords? Where was the spark that would start the prairie fire? And who were to organize and how were they to organize, the work of stimulating and persuading the peasants to carry through the reform in the teeth of landlords, themselves strongly organized, still possessing much power and prestige—and probably guns—and backed by centuries of the habit of exacting obedience and humble submission from peasants who had, alas, centuries of the habit of obedience and submission to cruelty and oppression?

The answer to these questions is to be found, in the main, in the institution of the "land reform groups" who went to every village, as they did to this one, and advised and encouraged the peasants to organize and work for the removal of their landlords by their own efforts.

It is easy to imagine the difficulties of such a group. It would number about ten. A strong group might consist of one or two local government or Communist Party workers, two or three leading men ("cadres") from provincial offices, one or two

cadres from provincial capitals, and several university teachers and students. But, as more and more groups were needed to work simultaneously in tens of thousands of villages, "dilution" would be necessary, and there would be fewer cadres in the group and many more teachers and students. The latter would of necessity be much less politically advanced, and it would indeed often be found that, once the class-consciousness and militancy of the peasants was aroused, the latter would be leading and teaching the former!

But, whether the group were strongly composed or diluted, it would almost certainly contain no working peasants, even if some of its members were of peasant origin. In the eyes of the peasants, its members would all be strangers from the towns, and nearly all of them would have difficulty in understanding or speaking the local dialect.

The members of the group would have studied fully in advance the procedure to be followed, and the rules for classification of the various grades of peasants; and they would have taken part in actual operations, as members of a larger group, in one village, treated as an experimental or training ground. But they might well have had no other practical experience of the formidable task they were undertaking. And the only help or advice they would normally be able to get for the solution of their many problems and difficulties would be periodical discussions and "reporting-back" among themselves and neighboring groups.

Their task would not be to carry out the operation at all; it was vital that the peasants themselves should do this, and the visitors only advise

and encourage. And they must approach their delicate task in the teeth of the suspicions and anxieties naturally aroused in the minds of many of the peasants by this incursion of strange townsmen, speaking a strange dialect, urging them to stand up and oppose their landlords. The peasants had no cause to love their landlords, of course; but they had feared and obeyed them for centuries, and could still be deceived by them. And by now the landlords would be both cajoling them with offers of remission of rent or loan-interest, and frightening them with rumors that—for example—Chiang Kai-shek had landed in Canton, and that the village would therefore soon be back under the rule of the Kuomintang, which would deal cruelly with any peasant who had associated with "the Communists."

Winning the Peasants' Confidence

The first step that such a group must take was to win the confidence of the peasants. There was only one sure way to do this; it was a hard way. It was to enter into the life of the peasants—and particularly that of the poorest—in the fullest sense, living in their cottages, eating the same pitiful diet, and working with them in the fields.

That was what this group, like other groups, did. On arrival in the village, it spent its first night in the school-house, and began to make inquiries as to the presence of bandits and other particularly suspect elements. More positively, it sought to learn which were the best families with whom the members should seek lodgings. The "best families" for

this purpose were the very poorest and most oppressed, if they were at the same time honest and trustworthy. The poorest peasants (in which description I include here the landless peasants, or farm laborers) were plainly essential as the spear-head of the operation.

Within a day or two, all the members of the land reform group had moved into various peasant families. They slept in the cottages or huts, on wooden beds, like their hosts, they ate the same food as their hosts and paid them for it. In this village, the diet was a porridge made of rice and nothing else, eaten twice a day. On that starvation diet, these townsmen worked alongside the peasant family in the fields. Gradually, in this way, they won the confidence of the peasants.

They had of course on the one hand to begin by awakening the peasants' class-consciousness, and on the other to learn from the peasants the "set-up" in the village: who was the landlord, who were the rich peasants, which of the poorer elements were untrustworthy. To rouse the peasants to class-consciousness, and to get them to realize that the oppression of the landlord-class was not something inevitable, not "fate," but that on the contrary they could fight it and bring it to an end, was a longer and more difficult task than might be expected, for they had accepted their cruel lot passively for so long. This education, agitation, "putting ideas in their heads," or whatever it be called, had of course to go by stages. The first stage was to find out in the course of conversations with the peasants in the evenings or in rest-pauses in the work in the fields, what were their main

grievances and complaints. Did they consciously hate the system, did they just hate one or two or three landlords, and which of them was the most hated? What specific grievances did they bear against any landlord? At this stage, peasants would tell something of what lay in their memories, but not all. Feelings of shyness or shame or horror, or the pain of remembering great sufferings or injustices, would hold them back.

When individual conversations of this kind had sown enough seed of class-consciousness and of determination to find a remedy, the working group suggested the calling of small informal meetings of groups of five or six of the poorer peasants who had already had plenty of individual conversations, and had been seen to be conscious of a number of genuine grievances. In these small meetings, the peasants were soon led to discuss their grievances, to compare notes, and to remind each other of grievances they may not have felt equal to bringing out in individual conversation. By now there would be a definite foundation for the building-up of a reliable peasant movement in the village, having the confidence and strength to fight the landlords successfully to the end.

A Stage by Stage Process

The next of the many stages—for this was indeed a matter of advancing carefully from stage to stage, a remarkable technique carefully worked out by the Communist Party from actual experience—was to hold larger meetings. These did not yet draw in all classes of the

peasantry in the village. Here grievances were again discussed, but the further object was pursued—always with advice and suggestions, but no more, from the land reform group—of drawing into the movement some wider groups of peasants who were somewhat less poor than those already involved. At this stage, the peasants had to consider what further persons it was safe to enlist from "the middle of the road," and then arrange to talk to them individually.

The next stage was to hold a still larger meeting, with the newer and wider elements now enlisted. To this partly new audience, many of whose minds were less fully awakened, the most moving stories of hardships and cruelties would be told and re-told by those poorer peasants who had experienced them. Such a meeting, held in the evening, in any available space, would be tense, emotional and dramatic.

If this meeting were successful, bringing in more people than before, the organizational stage would follow. The peasants who had already been brought in to activity would be advised to form a committee. The land reform workers would suggest what sort of person would be most suitable—the poorest and those with most grievances, so long as they were honest and really willing to work, and not the nimble-minded or those most capable of organizational work, for those are more likely to have bad qualities. They would also advise that women should constitute one-third, and youth (16 to 25), another one-third of the membership. Once again, the land reform workers must not do more than advise; they should not

even suggest specific names, for the Committee must be in fact, the creation of the peasants alone; and the peasants, after all, know one another best, and so should be able to make the best selection.

This committee would not yet be part of the "peasants' association" which I will describe later, although it would make a good nucleus for its formation.

As a next stage, the committee must start its work. After weeks of patient preliminary work such as I have described, the main body of the peasants would be nearly ready for action, and the committee must meet to discuss and decide which of the landlords is the worst enemy, so that the whole strength and indignation of the awakening movement may be concentrated on one good target, whose past criminal and anti-social activities could be ascertained and listed. It must be realized that the likely candidates for the position of "worst enemy" will, of course, not have been inactive all these weeks. They will probably have tried, with limited success, to seduce some of the peasants to forgive them, and even to collaborate with them. But the peasants will meanwhile have strongly developed their own class-consciousness and built up against the landlords a movement of the great majority of the village, which will neither forgive nor collaborate. The landlords will also have smuggled out, or hidden, a good deal of valuable property—gold, silver, jewelry, guns; and the peasants may already have found out something of what has been done in this field.

When the committee has selected the landlord on whom they are to

concentrate, he will be watched continuously by the peasants, to prevent his running away or playing other tricks, and to prevent any of his friends or "stooges" helping him. He will be isolated socially, and as far as possible even his household will be persuaded to leave him. Farm hands, domestic slaves, oppressed daughters-in-law, and those in the village who have acted as his agents or "running dogs," may well succumb to this persuasion if they are tactfully handled. The committee, which is—in a loose sense of the words—"preparing the case," will be drawing up a pretty full list of specific charges (not strictly criminal charges, for when there is evidence to prove definite crimes the landlord is prosecuted before the courts) of cruelties or injustices the landlord has perpetrated in the past, as well as particulars of his connections with other landlords and his political activities. It will have also been able to discover with the help of anyone who knows anything of the facts, what valuable property he has concealed or smuggled away.

"Mass Accusation" Meetings

When the committee has done this part of its work, there comes what is certainly the most important stage so far, that of the "mass-accusation" meeting. (We are still some way from what everyone with a sense of drama is longing to see, namely the actual confiscation and distribution of the land; but New China is not built in a day, and this vital and significant piece of destruction and reconstruction must be well and scientifically prepared and "built to endure." We must go about our work step by step).

The mass-accusation meeting, (this description seems to me more accurate than the more usual name of "struggle meeting") is crucial. It must be successful, or the whole reform, in this village, will suffer a severe set-back, with loss of "face" and confidence at the very moment when the peasants' confidence is at its height and must be maintained and fortified, and loss of face must be the lot of the enemy. The condition of success, is of course proper preparation through all the earlier stages, and particularly in the committee's work.

The mass accusation meeting is a mass meeting of the village. The middle peasants are, by now, included. The rich peasants are not regarded as participants in the meeting, but they have to attend it. At this meeting the selected landlord hears the accusations of the village as to his past offenses against them, and is called upon to confess. The atmosphere is tense, charged with emotion. His past abuses by word or deed are recounted in detail by his victims or their relatives. The grim narratives may be corroborated by showing the scarred or crippled bodies of those whom he has ill-treated or tortured, or the remnants of peasant possessions he has destroyed. Peasants have long memories, and by the time the mass-accusation meeting is held their memories have been re-awakened (if that be necessary) and their fears of reprisals are gone. Such a meeting, properly prepared, does not fail.

The main object of the meeting is to make the landlord confess to his offenses, and to disclose where he may have hidden valuables. If he confesses, he loses all face, and is

thoroughly disgraced. The poorer peasants will have now full confidence in their own power; and any middle peasants or others who may have been his friends, or may even still have been wondering which side to join, will now burn their boats and come over to the majority. If the landlord does not confess, the proof of his misdeeds which is brought forward at the meeting works almost as well as a confession to destroy his face, to build the peasants' confidence, and to bring over the waverers.

The chairman of the committee presides at this vital meeting; the police are not present. Tortures or beatings of the landlord, however bad his past conduct, are forbidden, and very rarely occur; the peasants are by now sufficiently self-disciplined to see that they do not take place.*

When the mass-accusation meeting is successfully over, there are still several stages to go before the peasant can put his foot on a piece of Mother Earth that is allotted to him. The allotments have to be made justly, and in full detail, and the next step is that the inhabitants of the village must be classified into landlords, rich peasants, middle peasants, poor peasants, and farm laborers (landless workers). This classification is important from various

points of view, and must be most carefully and impartially carried out.

Classifying the Landlords

To understand this work of classification, one must have a pretty accurate understanding of what these terms, which have been very fully worked out in practice, really mean. The ordinary man, even in highly industrialized states, thinks he knows what a rural landlord in a truly peasant country is; and he has a pretty good conception of a peasant, as a man who works with his family in the cultivation of a small area of land, working hard all the year for small gains, and subject not only to the risks of the climate but also to the oppressions of landlords or money-lenders or both; and he has no difficulty in seeing that typical rural landlords and typical peasants are antagonists. But there are many varieties of peasants, and even some variations among landlords; and the divisions between the various groups and sub-groups shade off "at the edges" into questions of degree.

The citizens of New China naturally attach great importance, in classifying people as anti-social, to exploitation of man by man, and to its extent and degree. A landlord may exploit by letting land, particularly by letting it at a high rent or on hard share-cropping terms; he may exploit by lending money, particularly at usurious rates of interest; he may exploit by hiring labor, particularly at low rates of pay. And poor peasants or farm laborers may be exploited in all these ways. Moreover, others than landlords may let land, or lend money, or hire labor. And poor peasants may sometimes

* Descriptions of mass-accusation meetings have occasionally appeared in some Western newspapers, in which the procedure has been criticized on the assumption that they are judicial proceedings, and are not conducted properly as such. I need not discuss how far these meetings might be held wanting in strict adherence to court procedure, for they are in no sense court proceedings; there is no judge, no formal conviction, and no sentence. Where evidence is available on which crimes can be brought home to landlords, they are prosecuted before the regular courts.

Wilder descriptions, or rather misdescriptions, alleging wholesale killings of landlords, can also be ignored. That in the heat of the moment some were killed may well be the case; but the numbers killed must have been very few.

be hired like farm laborers. There are thus a good many varieties and sub-varieties, and Chinese law and practice provide some pretty clear rules as to how the rural population is to be classified, and as to what may be done to them or for them when they are classified.

First, who is to be classified as a landlord? A person who owns land, but does not himself engage in labor (or only engages in supplementary labor, i.e., the minor and less exhausting forms of agricultural work) and who depends on exploitation for his means of livelihood is classified as a landlord. A "sub-landlord" is one who rents large areas of land from a landlord, and does not himself work, but sub-lets the land to others and lives on the rent, like a landlord; but such a person will be called a sub-landlord only if his living conditions are better than those of an ordinary middle peasant. A person classified as a sub-landlord is generally treated as a landlord; but if he himself works in cultivating part of the land himself he will be classified as a rich peasant.

The treatment of a landlord, who will normally own a great deal of land, let out a large area of it for rent, act as a money-lender, employ hired labor to cultivate that part of his land which he does not let out, and do no work on the land himself, is that his land, draught animals, farm implements, surplus grain, and surplus houses in the country (i.e., not any houses he may own in a town) will be confiscated, but his other property will not be confiscated. (Article 2, Agrarian Reform Law.) A portion of his confiscated land, equivalent to the amount al-

lotted to landless workers, will, however, be allotted to him in order that he may, if he will, rehabilitate himself by the work of his own hands. Five years of such work will entitle him to the restoration of full civil rights, including the vote.

Moreover, at the time of land confiscation and distribution, enough of the landlord's personal property outside the categories normally subject to confiscation, may be taken and sold or distributed to make good to those whom he has exploited during the preceding few years the profit he has derived from exploiting them.

Next, who must be classified as a rich peasant? A rich peasant is one who falls short of the full characteristics of the landlord, but is not far removed from them. He generally owns land, although he may rent part or even all of what he cultivates. He generally takes some part in working his land, but he derives more than 25 per cent of his total means of livelihood from exploitation. The exploitation lies chiefly in hiring laborers, but he may also let out land and lend money. (In certain circumstances, a man deriving as much as 30 per cent of his means of livelihood from exploitation may still not be classified as a rich peasant).

If a rich peasant lets out more land than he cultivates (i.e., cultivates by his own labor and his hired labor) he is called a "rich peasant of a semi-landlord type."

The treatment accorded to a rich peasant is that, in general, he is not subjected to any confiscation; but in certain special areas land let out by rich peasants may be confiscated, and in all areas the land let out by

"rich peasants of a semi-landlord type" will be confiscated. There is yet another sub-division; "reactionary rich peasants." Any rich peasant who engaged in serious counter-revolutionary activities before, and especially after, liberation, must be classified as a reactionary rich peasant; and then his land and other property will be confiscated. But the counter-revolutionary activities must have been really serious to incur this penalty, minor ones being condoned; and the property of other members of his family will not be seized unless they also took part in serious counter-revolutionary activities.

It is in dealing with the cases of rich peasants that one sees best exemplified both the wisdom of conciliating border-line elements rather than driving them into the ranks of the enemy, and the dangers of such a course. Those who are near to landlords in their outlook generally and in their views as to where their economic interests lie, may not merely prove to be weak and unstable allies in the contest with landlords and other reactionary elements, but may come in as false friends, spies, and saboteurs. (And, when the first stage of land reform is completed, and collectives begin to be formed, they may be cunning enough to secure office or other prominent positions in the collective organizations, and work to destroy them from inside.)

The Need for Tolerance

It is thus a vital and extremely difficult question—one on which views and practices varied to some extent in the course of land reform—as to where the line should be

drawn, above which the enemies of poorer peasants and of land reform are to be found, and below which peasants can normally be regarded as at any rate not sufficiently hostile to require elimination as a class. It is a question of a type that it is vital to answer correctly in any revolutionary period. If the line be drawn too high, one risks having enemies in one's own ranks, or at any rate leaving them at liberty and able to operate all around one. If it be put too low, one may range among one's enemies those who might well be friends, even if lukewarm.

The Chinese people, confident in their firmly-established power, now apply the most tolerant view possible. There can of course be no question but that landlords of the Chinese rural type are enemies, but rich peasants, who in the more dangerous period before complete liberation had been subjected to the same confiscations as landlords, are now more favorably treated. They resemble landlords, and may in certain cases be subject to measures of confiscation; but as a matter of general principle they are left free of any confiscation, and may reconcile themselves to the regime. They were not very numerous, but are an important section of the rural community, and regarded as, for the time being, a useful and productive element in agriculture. It was expected that they would remain useful during a long transitional period, but—as Article 8 of the Constitution says—"the policy of the state towards rich-peasant economy is to restrict and gradually eliminate it." (As we shall see, the period of transition is proving much shorter than was expected). Under full socialist agri-

culture, peasants will be prosperous, but there will be no "rich peasants" as a class.

Next, who is a middle peasant? Here we are below the line of any possible expropriation, but in a field where the members (although not rich by Western standards) are too well-to-do to be thought reliable in the early stages of the awakening of political consciousness in a village. The middle peasant is one who depends wholly or mainly on his labor for his living; he may be exploited by exaction of land rent or loan interest, but does not usually need to be hired out ("to sell his labor power"); sometimes he practices a little exploitation (by hiring labor) but this is not constant nor on a substantial scale. He may own some land, or none; but he cultivates land for his own account, either owning or renting it.

A variety of middle peasant, called "well-to-do middle peasant," is one who practices a more substantial degree of exploitation, mostly by hiring labor casually, or by letting out land on rent or money at interest. Unless his income from exploitation exceeds 15 per cent of his total means of livelihood, the well-to-do middle peasant remains classified as a middle peasant. If it exceeds 15 per cent, he becomes in general a rich peasant, but special circumstances may save him.

Then, who is a poor peasant? He may own a little land, or rent all he cultivates. He is in general exploited not only in the form of land rent and interest on loans, but also in having to hire himself out for part of his time to cultivate the lands of others, for he has not himself enough land to maintain himself

and his family even on the meagre standard to which he is accustomed. The basic difference between the poor peasant and the middle peasant is that the former has to hire out whilst the latter does not need to do so.

Lastly, the worker, farm-hand, farm-laborer, landless peasant. He owns no land, or very, very little. He depends wholly or mainly upon hiring himself out for his livelihood.

These last two classes, as we have seen, are the poorest and most exploited, the classes who benefit most from the reform, the classes to whom the land reform workers turn first and on whose consciousness and activity the whole reform depends. The revolution which lightens their lot, however many other benefits it seeks to achieve, renders a vast service to human happiness by this alone; but as we have seen, the revolution has many other glorious objects to win.

These two classes are to be counted in hundreds of millions; one recalls the observation of Abraham Lincoln that "God must love poor people; he has made so many of them." They must become, and are becoming, with the industrial workers, the core of New China.

Let me now come back to the work of classification of the peasants in the village. The first classification lists were prepared by all the peasants in the village, meeting in small groups, to agree on the classification of each member of their own group. (The task, to those who know the village as they do, was easy enough in the great majority of cases, but could be very difficult in "border-line" cases). This operation produced a complete preliminary

classification, which was passed on to a committee appointed by the peasants for the purpose; and that committee settled the list.

It might of course be of great importance to any peasant on the border line between middle and rich, and (still more) on that between rich peasant and landlord, that he should be properly classified; and any peasant was accordingly entitled to argue his case with the committee, or even to carry it to appeal before the court. But sooner or later the list was completed, and then it was written out and published.

Redistributing the Land

The next stage was that of working out and calculating exactly how the land confiscated was to be distributed. This work was done by a land distribution committee of the peasants, elected by themselves. The committee had of course to begin by ascertaining exactly how much land all persons classified as landlords had and where it lay, and what the landlords owned in the way of draught animals and farm implements and surplus houses. To that substantial mass of property—probably comprising over half the land in the village and a large proportion of the draught animals and implements—were added “public lands” in the village, i.e., land belonging to ancestral shrines, monasteries, churches, schools, and other bodies. These were often quite extensive and had generally been rented from the owners by a landlord or a rich peasant, and used or let out by him for cultivation.

The total land to be thus confiscated, less the small portion left to

each landlord for his own personal cultivation, was thus ascertained. Each peasant then declared, in the same sort of group discussion as I have described, how much land (in terms of productivity, not of bare acreage) he already owned; if he was a rich peasant, he already had probably twice as much land as the average to which all the available land, divided by the number of peasants, would entitle him. If he was a middle peasant, he probably, but by no means certainly, had already more than average. If he was a poor peasant, he was almost certain to be entitled to a substantial allotment in addition to the land which he owned (if any). If he was a landless worker, he was of course entitled to a full allotment.

With all these data, the committee was able to decide pretty definitely how much land—in terms, of course, of productivity and not of acreage—had to be allotted in order to make up the total holding proper to be given to any peasant who had not already enough. And from there it could proceed to the actual parcelling-out, on paper, of the precise land (named field by field) to be allotted to each peasant, in order to achieve the proper distribution.

The allotment, and the right to claim an allotment, did not belong to a family or the head of a family, but to each inhabitant, old men, old women, young men, young women, children, and even new-born babies. (If a wife is later divorced, or a daughter married, she takes her land with her). In the parcelling out of so much land, necessarily of varying quality and convenience of access, most recipients would get several parcels of land in different parts of

the village, although they would be given as convenient an arrangement as possible. The poorest peasants or workers got the first choice as to any particular piece of land, within the limits of the necessity of giving everyone some good land and some poor land.

When all these details had been worked out, the final list was published, showing the full details, field by field, of the distribution.

The distribution of draught animals and farm implements was done in corresponding fashion. And where any landlord was shown to have made definite profits by exploitation, his other movable property could be taken to make this good. Those who had suffered from the exploitation would take some movables at the valuation established, or the property could be sold and the proceeds utilized to repay the victims. All outstanding debts for money lent or interest were simply cancelled.

The houses which the landlords owned—for they will have owned quite a few, apart from their own mansions—were divided up among those peasants most in need of better accommodation. The mansions themselves might even be divided up for this purpose, or be put to the general use of the village.

Finally there came a day when the peasants went out and proudly staked out the land to which the list showed they were entitled.

The very last direct operation was for title deeds to the new lands to be given to the peasants, and for a grand ceremonial bonfire to consume the title deeds of the old landlords. But there was also an important meeting to be held, at which the

peasants would make an estimate as to how each peasant had worked all through the course of the operation. And then, if there was not yet a peasants' association in the Hsiang (a group of several villages) of which the village forms part, one was established; if there was already such an association it was reorganized. The estimate of each peasant's work in the struggle would be fresh in all their minds, and would have an important influence on the election of the members of the association. At the same time, the village must elect its members of the Hsiang government. The members of the peasants' association and of the Hsiang government must of course be the best and most politically-conscious peasants.

The peasants' associations, it should be explained, are mass organizations of peasants, founded on a voluntary basis. To quote the "General Regulations governing the organization of Peasants' Associations," adopted by the Government Administration Council July 14, 1950, the tasks of these associations are:

"To unite farm laborers, poor peasants, middle peasants, and all anti-feudal elements in the rural areas, so as to carry out step by step anti-feudal social reforms and to protect the interests of the peasants . . . to organize the peasants for production, to set up rural co-operatives, to develop agriculture and subsidiary occupations, and to improve the living conditions of the peasants; to safeguard the political rights of the peasants, to raise the peasants' political and cultural level, and to take part in the construction of a state of people's democracy." The "General

Regulations" provide that, after agrarian reform is completed, rich peasants may be admitted to membership of the association if approved by a peasant mass meeting or a peasant congress of the Hsiang. As late as the end of 1952 rich peasants were not being admitted.

The peasants' associations have not strictly either legislative or executive powers, although they are "legal organs in the rural areas for reforming the agrarian system." But the great value and importance of the associations in the work of raising and maintaining the political, cultural and economic level of the whole of the country-side needs no emphasis; for the redistribution of the land and the elimination of the landlord class, mighty step as it is, is only the beginning of great tasks.

Preparation for Collectives

There came next the second great stage, that of preparation for the collectivization of agriculture.

This stage, as the countries in Europe which have taken the road to socialism have shown us so clearly, is a difficult one. Peasants who have longed for centuries to own the land they cultivate have at last achieved their aim. No sooner have they achieved it than people from the towns, whom they have mistrusted for centuries, start to persuade them to put the land into collectives—i.e., to part to a large extent with their ownership, and wholly with their personal control, of the land they own and love. This they will of course never consent to do until they are fully convinced of the advantages of the course proposed. They can not be so convinced by

theoretical socialist arguments, however sound they may be, but only by clear proof that collectivized cultivation brings better results—results due partly to its more economical application of labor and still more to the opportunities it provides for mechanization, for the use of tractors, combine-harvesters, and other modern machines.

European experience has shown that collectivization normally introduces itself slowly, as one peasant after another is convinced of its advantages; that the movement to collectivization has not only spurts but recessions, as occasional misfortunes or mismanagement, or even sabotage by hostile elements, bring about unfavorable results which cause peasants to lose faith in it. Forced collectivization is, of course, impossible of success; it can never succeed unless the peasants whole-heartedly accept it. It is difficult to foretell how many years or decades any country must take to carry collectivization through; each country must develop its own particular forms, and make some mistakes of its own; and most countries expect agricultural collectivization to lag behind the socialist development of industry. When the land reform was substantially concluded in China, nobody was prepared to prophesy as to when collectivization would be realized.

By 1956, however, success had exceeded all expectations. In this study I must limit myself to a brief statement of the lines on which the advance was planned and carried out, and of the results achieved.

The line of advance was simple. It consisted in the main of three steps, "mutual aid teams," "semi-socialist collectives," and "socialist

collectives," with great flexibility and variations to meet the many different conditions, climates, and stages of development that are to be found in the vast country.

"Mutual aid teams" are in essence no more than arrangements among the various peasant households in a village, whereby groups of peasants combine into teams to operate the various stages of cultivation, first on the land of one household and then on that of another, so that the work is done more efficiently and with less waste of labor than would be the case if each household confined itself to working on its own land. This is a good first step; while it has no real element of collective cultivation, it shows the peasants the advantages to be gained for all of them by cooperating in their work, overcomes mutual suspicions, and thus prepares them for the next stage.

"Semi-socialist collectivization" is a substantial step further. It involves the pooling of the land belonging to the various households for the purpose of its being cultivated jointly by a collective organization of the peasants of the village, with the collective use of the various draught animals. But the ownership of the land remains with the individual peasants. The collective organization pays rent out of the proceeds of the cultivation, to each owner for the land brought into the collective, as well as wages to each peasant for the work he puts in.

"Socialist collectivization" is a step further, a short step organizationally, but a very large one psychologically. The collective cultivation is the same as in the intermediate stage of semi-socialism, but rent is no longer paid, and the whole of the

proceeds available (after administrative expenses) are distributed in payment of the work put in by each peasant.

Results of Collectivization

Turning now to the results, the records show that there were three hundred collectives by December 15, 1951; 14,000 by December 16, 1953; 100,000 by the autumn of 1954; and 650,000 by June, 1955. They were mostly small, and they were mostly semi-socialist. They embraced 16,900,000 peasant households (out of the total of 110,000,000 peasant households which the 500,000,000 peasants comprised). As late as the end of July, 1955, it was thought that it might take until the end of the third Five-Year Plan (1967), to complete socialist collectivization.

A remarkable acceleration, however, came in the latter part of 1955 (after a lull in the first half of the year). This ran parallel with the great movement of commerce and small industry into the intermediate stage between private enterprise and socialist organization known as "joint state and private." By January, 1956, over 60 per cent of the 110,000,000 peasant households were in collectives, and it was expected that 85 per cent would be in by the end of 1956,* and that the whole transition to socialist collectivization would be complete by about the end of 1958. Further, it was hoped that by the end of 1956 it would be safe to admit into the collectives all but the worst of the ex-landlords and rich peasants, although it might not yet

* Actually, by May 18, 1956, the "target" of 85 per cent for 1956 was passed, 90 per cent of the households having already joined by that date.

be wise to let them hold important office in the peasant organization.

This upsurge was no doubt partly due to the 1955 harvest, which exceeded all previous records. The plans for further agricultural development include very important proposals for improvements of all kinds, in cultivation, better livestock, elimination of floods and droughts, electrification, fertilizers, seeds, pest elimination, afforestation, bringing waste lands into cultivation, better housing, health education, sports, roads, radio, telephones, cooperative credits, and many other similar advances. It is noticeable that general mechanization is not a thing of the immediate future, the upsurge of 1955-56 being achieved without many power-driven machines being yet in use. But mechanization is of course being hastened. The farms could at present absorb up to 1,500,000 standard 15-h.p. tractors, with an annual replacement of 150,000.

There are, of course, many problems still to be solved, and incessant care will be needed to ensure that the collectives work efficiently. What has been achieved already would be incredible if it had not happened; but the average Chinese peasant, however much his economic and cultural position has improved, still leads a hard and poor life. So much has, however, been won that the hardest part of the struggle is over, and the way is clear for the peasants to become prosperous members of the new socialist China, working hard but not too hard, as free men and women, secure from famine and enriching themselves, their neighbors in the town, and all their countrymen, whilst the townsmen and wom-

en in their turn help to enrich their peasant neighbors in new China.

In this whole agricultural development the work of inspiration and guidance given by the first land reform groups deserves the greatest praise. It was a difficult and delicate task, physically very exhausting. It involved endless major and minor problems, endless small setbacks and restarts, as the group worked patiently towards its great goal, never forgetting that "working" does not mean that its members do any of the work of land reform but always and only that they induce the peasants to do it. And they had at the same time to do a good deal of quiet political propaganda side by side with the crucial, central task of getting the landlord class eliminated. The peasants were backward not only in their cultivation and landholding; and they have to advance on all fronts. One of the most important fronts, involving one of the most important subsidiary tasks of the land reform group, was to plant the seeds of the new socialist attitude as to the rights of women, above all as to the right of free choice in marriage, which reverses many long and deeply held anti-social traditions in all classes of society.

The Chinese peasants have stood up. Let them grow in stature and add new happiness to their own and their country's life, and new riches to the growing socialist world.

ADDENDUM

It is interesting to note the following estimate of the position of agriculture, given in the "Resolution on the Political Report," adopted by the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China on September 27, 1956:

"Agriculture exerts a wide, far-reaching and extremely important influence on industrialization. The development of agriculture not only has a direct bearing on the standards of living of the people and the tempo of development of light industry, but also has an impact on the tempo of development of heavy industry. Since our country's agricultural production is at present still unable to meet our ever increasing requirements, we must make a still greater effort to foster its growth. Nevertheless, our country will not in the near future be in the position of having an agricultural machinery industry and chemical fertilizer industry of a rather large scale. Nor will it be in a position to carry out reclamation of waste land on a rather large scale, and rapidly end flood and drought for good. Such being the case, the principal way to increase agricultural production at present is by making full use of the favorable conditions afforded us by agricultural cooperation, which has been brought about in the main in agriculture, by relying on the collective strength of the cooperatives and the assistance of the government, and by taking the following measures for increasing yield per unit area:

"Initiation of water conservancy projects; use of fertilizers; improvement of the soil; the use of improved seeds; popularization of the use of new farm implements; increasing the area sown to several crops a year; improving farming methods; the prevention of plant diseases and insect pests, etc.

"In addition to this, we should energetically apply ourselves to reclaiming waste land and expanding the cultivated area to the full extent of the resources at our disposal. Grain production being the foundation of agriculture, its development must be given priority. But at the same time we must develop the production of cotton and other industrial crops in a suitable proportion, and promote the development of animal husbandry and the production of subsidiary occupations, as well as a diversified rural economy in general.

"In order to give full scope to the initiative of the peasants in production, the state should pursue a sound tax policy, a sound grain policy, and a sound policy for commodity prices, and, apart from this, the agricultural producers' cooperatives must adhere to the principles of running the co-

operatives industriously, thriftily and democratically, deal correctly with the relations between the collective and the individual members of the cooperative, and further consolidate the system of collective ownership."

One Big Family

We print below an excerpt from "The Great Road" by Agnes Smedley, a biography of the Chinese military leader General Chu Teh. In the book his life is largely told in his own words as set down by Miss Smedley during many conversations.

A reading of "The Great Road" provides a deeper understanding of the significance of the land reforms described in D. N. Pritt's article in this issue as it brings before the reader unforgettable pictures of the way the peasants of China had lived for thousands of years before the establishment of the People's Government in 1949. Miss Smedley, author of many books about China, where she lived for years, recalls her own childhood in a Rockefeller mining camp in Colorado.

We publish this excerpt through the courtesy of Monthly Review Press, publishers of the book.

THE WORK began immediately after breakfast and, except for the noonday meal and supper, lasted until darkness drove everyone to bed. It would have been condemned as rank extravagance to have a light when darkness fell, just as it was considered extravagance for any man of the family to smoke the tobacco which they grew in the fields and dried and prepared for market. Now and then the Chu men would fill the bowl of one pipe with tobacco and pass it from one to another,

each taking a puff. Chu Teh's father sometimes declared openly that each man should have the right to a whole pipe of tobacco. But he was a resentful and violent man who had to be held in check by the others.

There was no laziness, no slackness, no weekly day of rest for the Chu family, or for other peasants either. Well-situated people enjoyed themselves for a week or two during the lunar New Year celebrations, but for tenants and poor peasants there was no rest even during that period. Peasants could slacken a little during the winter months, but even then the soil had to be prepared for the spring crops, or winter crops put in. Pigs and chickens, grown through the summer, were taken to the market town for sale. After the cotton from the fields was picked and cleaned, the women spun it into yarn, but they did not weave. Weaving was done by wandering weavers, all of whom were men. During the winter also, oil was pressed from the rape grown in the fields and either used for cooking or sold, or, on the most exceptional occasions, placed in a bowl with a twisted cotton wick and used for a light in the evening. Chu Teh was twenty years of age before he had a light in the evening, and it was only after he returned home as a student that he slept in a bed by himself, and had a room to himself, and that was only for a few days.

There was also an old, unwritten feudal law that tenants, both men and women, had to work for their landlords, free of charge, during the New Year or other national festivals, or on special occasions such as when the landlord's wife or one of his concubines bore another son, or when

a banquet was prepared for some visiting official. On such occasions the tenants were also expected to make special gifts of food to the landlord.

"It did not matter to the landlord that the peasants did not have enough food for themselves, or that they were needed at home for plowing or harvesting," General Chu remarked bitterly. "The men of my family had to go, and my mother or foster mother had to work in the landlord's kitchen. When they returned home they sometimes brought out some choice bit of food which they had hidden in their clothing, and gave us children each a bite; and they told us tales that sounded like fairy stories."

Sometimes, when General Chu talked like this, I would be unable to go on and he would regard me with curious and questioning eyes.

"Sometimes," I would explain, "you seem to be describing my own mother. We did not work for a feudal landlord, but my mother washed clothing for rich people and worked in their kitchens during holidays. She would sometimes sneak out food for us children, give us each a bite and tell us of the fine food in the home of her employer. Her hands, too, were almost black from work, and she wore her hair in a knot at the nape of her neck. Her hair was black and disheveled."

"And your father?" he asked in wonderment.

"In my early childhood he was a poor farmer who plowed the fields in his bare feet, but wore leather shoes most of the time. He ran away periodically because he hated our life, and left my mother alone. He was not so disciplined as the men of

your family. Then he became an unskilled day laborer, and we never had enough to eat. But we did have salt enough."

"The poor of the world are one big family," he said in his hoarse voice, and we sat for a long time in silence.

SOONG CHING-LING SPEAKS

Soong Ching-ling, a deputy Vice-Chairman of the People's Republic of China, is better known outside of China as Madame Sun Yat-sen, widow of the great Chinese revolutionary, Sun Yat-sen, whose hopes for a re-born China she has been indefatigable in forwarding since his death in 1924. She was a fraternal delegate at the 8th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party held in September of this year. Below is her speech to the Congress:

ALLOW me first of all to extend my sincerest and warmest greetings to the 8th National Congress of the Communist Party of China and to all the comrades who are taking part in its deliberations. I congratulate you on the brilliant achievements you have won across the years in every stage of the revolutionary struggle.

Comrades! Not being a member of the Communist Party, I consider it the greatest honor and pleasure of my life to have been able to attend this historic Congress.

For some ten days I have been here at the Congress. I have heard reports of great consequence. I have heard the greetings of our friends from abroad, and I have heard the important speeches of many comrades. I feel greatly inspired; thus

I cannot refrain from saying a few words.

The Chinese people have gone through many bitter experiences and learned many lessons over the years. At last, under the correct leadership of the Communist Party of China, they quickly freed themselves from the shackles of imperialism and destroyed feudalism; they forged ahead to achieve a decisive victory in the socialist revolution.

By these two revolutions, we have overthrown the system of exploitation of man by man and stood up on our own feet. Another great milestone has been passed in the march of human history. We are grateful to the Communist Party, which has always struggled for the liberation of mankind. Without the leadership of the Party we would not have been able to achieve our victories.

The people are the creators of history. Basing itself on this truth, the Chinese Communist Party has consistently followed a mass line in exercising its leadership. It unites and educates the masses. It listens to their opinions and works for their interests and welfare. It has never stood apart from the masses. Under the banner of patriotism, the Chinese Communist Party has rallied round itself all the democratic parties, brought into being a united front

and established a coalition government.

With this state power as an instrument, it has put down the counter-revolutionaries and rehabilitated the national economy to pave the way for building a socialist society. That is to say, by means of the People's Democratic State Power, it has led the revolution from victory to victory. The Chinese Communist Party has led us to build a socialist society by peaceful means.

Our socialist construction has won the warm support of millions upon millions of people all over the world. At the same time, it has met with hostility and obstruction by the counter-revolutionaries. Within the borders of our country, the Chiang Kai-shek clique is still entrenched on Taiwan. Abroad, there still exist the aggressive forces of imperialism headed by a warlike bloc. We must sharpen our vigilance against the counter-revolutionaries, strengthen our people's dictatorship and smash their plots. Meanwhile, we should continue to unite with all the peace-loving people in other lands, foster cultural exchange, develop trade on the basis of equality and mutual benefit and spread the spirit of negotiation and cooperation to all corners of the earth.

The steady growth of the advanced type of agricultural cooperatives has transformed the system of private ownership of land. The continued development of the joint state-private enterprises and cooperatives of various kinds are building the foundations of our socialist society. But in order to keep pace effectively with the new socialist-economic relations, with the new relations of production, new ways of thinking are

necessary. New relationships are not born of backward ideas. Decadent habits can only wreck progressive institutions. Without education in patriotism, it would be very difficult for state enterprises to fulfill their tasks. Without doing away with individualist ideas, it would be very difficult for the cooperatives to achieve their aim. From now on our work in ideological education is bound to be both difficult and arduous. At the present time, the mounting socialist emulation movement, the blossoming of flowers of many kinds in art and literature, the contending of diverse schools of thought in scientific work, are opening up splendid prospects before us. We must keep up unceasing efforts in these fields.

Our recent achievements have been a tremendous encouragement to us. Dear Comrades! Class society with its systems of exploitation has existed for more than 5,000 years on this planet of ours. But in the 35 years since the founding of the Communist Party of China, a very large part of mankind has already broken the fetters of imperialism and taken the socialist road. I firmly believe that in the not too distant future, socialism will become the prevailing social system throughout the whole world. The coming of that time means that the society that has neither classes nor exploitation will be more widespread. Mankind will have crossed the threshold into a world of universal harmony. This social system, I think, can only be realized under the leadership of the Communist Party—and it will certainly be realized.

In conclusion, allow me once again to wish the Congress success!

The Changed Face of China

by C. P. FITZGERALD

THERE is a new face in China which is almost unrecognizable. The north of China, a great wheat dry farming area, used to be a patchwork of small fields, often not larger than two tennis courts put together, divided one from the other by small dykes and dotted at frequent intervals by large accumulations of grave mounds. Now it is a sea of wheat stretching as far as the eye can reach over the horizon. No fences, no boundary dykes, and only a few graves are left. It is a land waiting for the tractor, which will appear in 1959.

Under the new system of cooperative farming there is no longer any barrier to large-scale mechanized farming throughout the North China plain. What happens to the 100,000,000 people who are now cultivating that plain with hoes and reaping the crops with sickles? What will they do except watch the tractors work in 1970? We were told that they will be absorbed into secondary industry; 100,000,000 people in secondary industry will create some formidable competition for the rest of the world when that day dawns!

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This change in the agriculture of the countryside must count as one of the main achievements of the New China.

It so happened that I was able to compare villages which I had known at different times in the last twenty years with their present state. Where they were partly ruins they are now rebuilt and re-roofed; where they were dirty and incredibly unsanitary they are now clean; where the people were in rags they are dressed in simple but sufficient clothing; where children had pot bellies from malnutrition they are now healthy and look well fed.

Wherever you go in China today you find people dressed, almost identically, in a very simple almost poor fashion, in blue coats and trousers. They may turn out to be directors of important educational institutes or they may turn out to be people who come to mend the taps. You cannot tell from their appearance which they are. Only very recently has there been a movement to brighten women's dress, and to give some expression to the graces of feminine charm.

You are at first puzzled as to what has become of all the people who used to be well dressed and well educated. As you walk down the street you do not see them any more, and you might imagine that some really

large scale purge had eliminated them. Until you listen to people talking. As you visit the installations and the institutions you find that the people who show you around these places, however workaday their dress, are betrayed by their speech. They are clearly members of the former educated class of Chinese.

In other words, strangely enough, the administrators, the academics and in many cases also the Party members of the Communist state are often of landlord origin. This becomes more than ever plain when you seek out your own friends, and, I am very happy to state, I was able in city after city to find them, and to find them in better jobs than they had ever had before. This was the more interesting to me, because I had known many of them for more than 20 years. I knew very well from what families they came and something of their personal backgrounds and origins. In the old China, it was inevitable that one came to meet people who were educated, people who had been abroad. They were all, without exception, from families which were in no way proletarian. Nevertheless, they are doing very well for themselves. They are in very senior posts, academic, professional and administrative.

The first thing I want to make plain is that they are not opportunists. They are not just there because it is a job, keeping quiet and doing what they are told without any independent thought whatever. It may be true in some cases, but it is not the dominant attitude of the intellectual, or of people of landlord, or bourgeois or any other non-proletarian origin, now working for the Chinese Communist government.

Theirs is an attitude which can be closely compared with that of someone who has had a conversion to a religious belief. These are extreme enthusiasts. Some old friends of mine would begin to pour out to me their conviction of the excellence of the regime in all respects. These were not typical. The average person of that class and that origin says, "Well, you see these Communists have really done something, not only for me, they have done something for the people, which was never done before, and they have made us understand how important it is for the people to be treated as human beings and not as creatures of a different race." That was said to me and to other members of our party, by so large a number of people of this type that it can only be described as a common social attitude running throughout the Chinese nation today, throughout the former educated landlord class, the intellectuals.

It is an awakening of conscience very similar to that which swept through Victorian England in the period in which Dickens wrote and worked, when for the first time the condition of the poor began to excite the interest and repentance of the rich. I think you could call this phenomenon in China today, "the remorse of the rich"—or the formerly rich—for the neglect of centuries; a realization that a great social wrong had been committed, and a willingness now to repair it. This is a very important element in the psychological forces which have rallied the intellectuals and the educated classes in enormous numbers to the service of the new State.

That is one factor; with it goes

another one, a more material one. For the first time these people find their talents really employed at full stretch—and more. Everybody, every professional man, every academic, is working at a pressure which must in the end tell on their health, but which so far seems to be keeping them happy as well as very active; so absorbed in their work that they seem to have little time to think or talk about subjects which are far outside it. I found in meeting old friends again in their own homes, without anybody present to supervise, that they were absolutely absorbed in what they were doing.

We were constantly asked for our criticism; every visitor is asked for his criticisms; his criticisms of this, that or the other; of the place he visits, of every subject that crops up. This criticism is not just a kind of make-believe. One of my Chinese friends said to me, when we were talking about this, "Well, we do have these weekly meetings in which we"—he had some Australian knowledge—"bash' our leadership," and, he said, "they bash us back." In fact it appeared that a mutual orgy of fault-finding occurred on these occasions, which everybody seemed to find very satisfactory, and apparently left no ill-feelings.

It would seem that criticism, or "bashing the leadership," has two effects. Firstly, it does give an occasion for people to ventilate real grievances about the way matters are being conducted, which is important in a country where the press is a controlled press; where the press criticizes the execution of policy but does not criticize policy itself. Such meetings as these give greater freedom for persons engaged in the or-

ganizations themselves to criticize policy as well as the execution of policy. Secondly, it gives to the intelligent man working in an organization an opportunity to feel that he is not merely obeying orders blindly, but is taking part in a constructive criticism of the working of the organization. It seems to give a psychological satisfaction to those engaged in the work. Therefore one cannot ignore the fact that criticism is something which has its value and its purpose in the constitution of Chinese society today, and helps to reconcile the intellectual worker to his situation.

One other aspect of this society should be mentioned, for it is of great importance. We often wonder, outside, how it is that some of the changes now taking place can be accomplished. How is it that the peasants can be persuaded to renounce their interest in owning small plots of land and join in such large numbers the "higher stage of cooperative" in which their ownership is pooled; and how is it that the intellectuals and former bourgeois have been persuaded in such large numbers to cooperate with the regime, to put their talents at its disposal? The ready answer which is often given in the West is—by compulsion; by armed force, or the threat of force.

When you get to China, and actually see what goes on, this supposition becomes much less tenable. You do not see the apparatus which would be necessary to perform this operation in such a way. In order to compel the hundreds of millions of peasants in their innumerable villages to join cooperatives, it would be necessary to station troops or police throughout the country in enor-

mous numbers. But they are not there; you do not see many troops in China today; fewer, I would say, than ever before in my experience. I am not suggesting for a moment that the Chinese army has disappeared, or been disbanded. I am merely suggesting that it is being housed now in a proper way, in barracks, and not in the inns, and homes of the populace as it used to be. Nor are the troops being quartered on the rural population. Instead, the government uses a system of persuasion, exhortation, urging, coaxing and explanation which penetrates deeply down into every part of the community.

These forces of persuasion are the main instrument by which the Chinese Government operates. It is not done by policy power or military force, it is done by propaganda in the largest sense of the term: propaganda which enters into every aspect which is now covered elsewhere by advertisement and publicity. This is so well directed that it has been proved possible to persuade many millions of people to adopt policies which at first sight would not seem to be within their interest, and gradually to coax them into the belief and feeling that these policies have their merits and are in their interest. You cannot understand Chinese society today unless you take account of the forces of persuasion, how they are organized, how they are directed, and concentrated.

It must also be stressed that whatever doubts people may sometimes feel about certain activities of the present regime, whatever criticisms they may make of the execution of policy—there is always one unspoken and complete assumption in their

minds. They are not comparing the present regime unfavorably with the one that went before. If you want to arouse an immediate response, you have only to suggest that there is a possibility of the return of the old regime, or that there was merit in the old regime; you get such an immediate and direct negative that you are left in no doubt at all that one of the main forces which has rallied the people, particularly the intellectuals, behind the present government is detestation of the last one.

Yet there is a new confidence and a new tolerance in the approach to what might be thought to be a very controversial subject. In Canton they are building a beautiful memorial and tomb to those who died in what is called the Canton Commune of 1927. The Canton Commune was a ferocious uprising which was equally ferociously suppressed by the Nationalists. In the course of this, many hundreds of people were killed in a barbarous massacre. I said to the official who was showing us around, "Would I be quite wrong in thinking that the Nationalist general who was responsible for this terrible massacre was Li Chi-shen? Is it not the case that he is now President of the Revolutionary Nationalist Party, one of the coalition parties in the Government, and a Deputy Prime Minister?" Our host laughed and said, "Yes, that's quite right. What's more," he added, "the other one responsible for it, more responsible, was Huang Shu-sheng. Do you know what he is now? He is the Vice-Minister for Physical Culture." I said, "This is a very interesting story and I suppose that these people are now in this situation because many years ago they broke

with Chiang Kai-shek and later they supported the People's Republic." "Yes, that's right," he replied. "They changed their opinions long ago and we accept everybody who changes their opinions entirely."

I pointed out that this is something that never seemed to happen in Soviet Russia. He replied that there was nothing in Marxism-Leninism against such a development. I pointed out that there was equally nothing in Russian practice in favor of it. He replied that they

did not have to copy Russia in every respect. "We can learn from Russian mistakes. Anyway, we do not bear any ill-will against Chinese who have changed their opinions. If Chiang Kai-shek were to do the same tomorrow, he could come back here, and he would be given a job in the Government." I think that this, perhaps, contains the seeds of what may be the solution of the problem of Formosa.

—Condensed from "Report on China," published by the Australia-China Society, New South Wales Branch.

SEEING CHINA CHANGE

ASSIGNMENT CHINA, by Julian Schuman. *Whittier Books, Inc., New York*, 1956; pp. 253. \$4.00.

THE author of this book was previously China correspondent of the Chicago Sun-Times, the American Broadcasting Company, and associate editor of the China Monthly Review. Going to China in 1947 with knowledge of the language acquired in army training schools, he remained through the most climactic period of Chinese history. Largely working from Shanghai, he acquired a thorough knowledge of lurid accounts of events there, preceding Liberation, and he remained through the first four years of the new government.

Everybody interested in China must be grateful to Mr. Schuman for his skillful, highly readable account of these years. Cut off as we are from regular newspaper coverage of China, and periodically exposed to lurid accounts of events there, particularly of just those years covered by this book, this cool and detached description of the great change-over from a corrupt, thoroughly demoralized government to a revitalized regime—energetic, purposeful, scrupulously devoted to the masses of the Chinese people—is very enlightening.

The full story of this period of Chinese history will not be known in detail for

many years, but the testimony at present available to us in books like Mr. Schuman's (of which there are all too few) makes clear that one of the greatest changes in man's history is taking place in China—a change profound in its depth and boundless in its future prospects for all human relationships.

As his boat sailed down the Whangpoo river on his way home Mr. Schuman saw a group in a little park bordering the river:

"There were a young woman, an elderly one who might have been her mother, and a little girl of perhaps three or four. There was nothing very special about them, except that the little girl at the moment did not appear to be happy. She was crying bitterly as the grandmother held on to her while the younger woman walked off with a wave of her hand, perhaps, I conjectured, to do some shopping or household chore.

"As the little tableau passed into the distance, I could not help thinking about the unhappy child, and reflecting that however great her momentary grief might have been, she had in the long run much less to cry about than would any child of her age in old China. Nobody would ever be allowed to sell her into concubinage or slavery. If she married, no husband could misuse her as he pleased and

no tyrannical mother-in-law could make her life a hell of submission.

"When she grew up she would be compelled to go to school and receive at least a primary education. She would be taught a trade; if she showed aptitude for it, she could continue her studies and learn an art or profession. If she conducted herself as a normal and useful citizen, she was entitled to the fulfillment of her normal wants from the beginning of her life to its end.

And she was entitled to this not by reason of any particular kind of birth or family, or of any superior personal gifts, but simply because she was a human being."

Mr. Schuman's book makes clear why such a future opens for this child—and all the other children of China. "Assignment China" is a valuable addition to our real information about this great country and should be read widely.

MURRAY YOUNG

ON "FORCE AND VIOLENCE"

THE COMMUNIST TRIALS AND THE AMERICAN TRADITION, by John Somerville, Ph.D. *Cameron Associates, New York, 1956. 256 pp. \$3.50.*

THE proposition borrowed from the Anti-Comintern Axis that Communism is a world-wide conspiracy controlled by Moscow and dedicated to the violent overthrow of all capitalist governments at the earliest opportune moment has become the first article in the political orthodoxy of cold war America. It is written into the Congressional "findings of fact" of the Internal Security and Communist Control Acts. It has provided the basis for the conviction of 114 persons under the Smith Act and for the victimization of thousands of others—Communist and non-Communists alike—by criminal prosecutions, Congressional witchhunts, deportation proceedings, passport regulations and a host of loyalty procedures that pervade almost every field of employment, public and private. It has likewise furnished the pretext for the vast armaments program and for the system of alliances—NATO, SEATO and the rest—which have girdled the globe with American military bases and stationed our armed forces in a score of foreign countries.

It is asserted that this proposition upon which so much of our governmental policy rests is established by the published writings of the Communists themselves, and particularly by the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Indeed, the cold war period has produced a new crop of students of the literature of Communism,

a field long neglected by our universities and colleges. Such personages as Secretary of State Dulles, FBI Director Hoover, Senator Eastland and Representative Walters periodically publish the results of their researches which establish, to the satisfaction of the authors, that Communism is nothing but a conspiracy for the violent seizure of political power by the criminal clique. Renegades from Communism have made a profitable profession out of "expert" testimony to the same effect in criminal prosecutions, deportation cases and loyalty proceedings. Any challenge to these conclusions is heresy fraught with danger to the heretic.

It takes no little fortitude, therefore, for a university professor to devote himself to a thorough and objective study of Communist theory and practice. To go further, to emerge from his cloister and make the results of his scholarship available to the defendants in a Smith Act trial by testifying as an expert witness on their behalf, is not only an act of great courage but one in the finest tradition of learning in the service of truth and justice. Dr. John Somerville is to be saluted for undertaking both of these onerous and hazardous tasks.

In the present book, Dr. Somerville recounts his experience as a witness in three Smith Act trials where he pitted his scholarship against the police spy version of Marxism-Leninism upon which the case for the prosecution was based. His qualifications in the field are attested by twenty years of research, including several in the Soviet Union, numerous books and articles and lectureships at leading universities.

The author's conclusion from his studies, insofar as it bears on the question at issue in a Smith Act case, can be quickly stated. It is that Marx and his followers advocate violent revolution only under the circumstances that it was advocated by such democratic thinkers and statesmen as John Locke and Thomas Jefferson and as their advocacy was embodied in our own Declaration of Independence—that is, as a last resort to effectuate the majority will when a tyrannical government has foreclosed the possibility of peaceful change.

In his book, as in his testimony from which it quotes at length, Dr. Somerville documents this conclusion from the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and American Communists and shows that the prosecution's version of the literature is drawn either from a perverse reading of isolated passages or from demonstrably irrational inferences. He further shows that since it has never been charged, much less proved, that American Communists have engaged or prepared to engage in acts of violence, they are being punished for advocacy of the identical view of political revolution on which our nation was founded.

The author's source material is plain and his logic unassailable. Yet, Smith Act defendants are convicted with almost unrelieved monotony. Dr. Somerville's book leaves the reader with the sense of frustration experienced by the defendants and their lawyers (including a growing number of conservative members of the bar appointed by the court) who have attempted to expound a political theory in the cramped confines of a criminal trial and to appeal to the reason of jurors who enter the court room conditioned by years of exposure to anti-Communist hysteria and motivated by fear of reprisal if their verdict rejects official dogma.

Dr. Somerville's book makes a noteworthy contribution to the refutation of the biggest and most dangerous lie of our time. But as his own experience demonstrates, the lie cannot be fully exposed or its consequences defeated, until trials like those in which he participated have been banned by a return to the basic constitutional principle that men may not be punished for their views and opinions, but only for criminal acts or incitements to violence. This will not be accomplished by battles

in the court room, but primarily in the arena of public opinion. Recent successes in overcoming some of the worst excesses of McCarthyism give ground for confidence that it will not be long before the sound democratic instincts of the American people fully reassert themselves and, in the words of Mr. Justice Black, "restore the First Amendment liberties to the high preferred place where they belong in a free society."

JOHN ABT

RUSSIA RESEEN

RUSSIA REVIEWED, by Rev. Stanley G. Evans. *Religion and the People Publications*. London, 1956. Pp. 11. 15 cents.

The Reverend Stanley Evans, long a friend of the Soviet Union, in this pamphlet considers the problem of those many people, whose main interest in socialism and its development in the USSR springs from a deeply religious attitude. He faces squarely the revelations of the Khrushchev speech and balances against them what he feels to be the great achievements of the first socialist country. Honest, searching, carefully considered, this is a pamphlet many people will find of great interest.

SOVIET EDUCATION

SOVIET RUSSIA GOES TO SCHOOL, by Beatrice King. *People's Publishing House, Ltd.*, Delhi, India. 1956. 260 pp.

The deep crisis in our own educational system has made curiosity about education under socialism very present in the minds of educators everywhere. How is it that each year the number of graduates in advanced scientific work in the USSR increasingly exceeds our own? What are the merits of a polytechnical education that more and more appears to adjust students to participate fruitfully in a highly industrial society? What does the Soviet student do with his leisure time? What is the relation of the child's life in the family to his life in School?

Mrs. King answers these and a host of other questions in the course of her book. Anybody interested in the problem of education, at whatever level will find this a revealing study.

PROSPECTS FOR PEACE

(Continued from page 8)

The agreement, reached in Moscow October 19 after negotiations between top Soviet officials and a Japanese delegation headed by Prime Minister Ichiro Hatoyama, is a further step in the normalization of international relations.

The two countries agreed to end the state of war, re-establish peace and good neighborly relations and exchange diplomatic and consular officials.

The USSR agreed to support Japan's membership in the United Nations and to release and repatriate all Japanese citizens serving sentence in the USSR (as a result of war crimes trials).

The USSR agreed to renounce all claims to reparations from Japan, and both sides renounced all claims by either state, its organizations or citizens, arising since August 9, 1945, as a result of the war.

The two countries agreed to begin negotiations for treaties and agreements in the field of trade, shipping and other commercial matters, and that the Fishing Convention of May 14, 1956, should come into effect simultaneously with the present agreement.

Since agreement on territorial matters, especially Japan's claim to certain islands of the Kurile chain which had gone to the USSR with Allied agreement at the end of the war, had not been reached during the negotiations, it was mutually agreed that negotiations for a peace treaty would be continued after the resumption of diplomatic relations. The USSR agreed to transfer the islands of Habomai and Shikotan (North of Japan) after the conclu-

sion of the proposed peace treaty.

Our Tasks in the New Year

We have indicated the positive trends that give hope for new initiatives and new progress for peace in 1957.

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This requires unending pressure for an end to nuclear weapons tests, for effective moves toward disarmament, the scrapping of military pacts and the withdrawal of all troops from foreign soil by all nations, for an all-European Security Treaty, and for the admission of People's China to the United Nations. It means demanding that our government end the cold war and concentrate on reaching peaceful settlements through the United Nations, through bilateral negotiations with the Soviet Union and through a top-level five-power conference as has been proposed by Switzerland, and strongly supported by India and the Soviet Union.

While we may rightly be concerned with the mistakes and shortcomings of other countries, as Americans our contribution to the cause of peace can be made only by the influence we exert upon shaping the policies of our own government.

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