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New World

REVIEW

WE BUILD THE MING TOMBS DAM

ISRAEL EPSTEIN

Afro-Asian Writers Conference

Ralph Parker

In a Chinese Commune

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USSR 7-Year Plan Targets

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TO OUR READERS

Israel Epstein's article in this issue, as you have discovered by reading it, is an illuminating description of how the Chinese are remaking not only the good earth of China but also themselves. Next month we will publish a detailed article by Mr. Epstein's wife, Elsie Fairfax-Cholmeley, on the Chinese communes, based on first hand observation.

Also in coming issues we will publish an article by Elizabeth Moos, just returned from the USSR, on Soviet education observed at firsthand; articles on the coming Trade Union and Communist Party Congresses and the important Russian Writers Congress; further material on the new 7-Year Plan; Soviet Social Security; and reports of various recent visitors, including Rockwell Kent.

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For a Peaceful New Year

by JESSICA SMITH

WE WISH you, our readers, a happy, useful and peaceful New Year. We believe that the events of the past year show that this can be achieved not only for this new year, but for all the years to come, if all of us do our part.

Another year has passed under the dreadful shadow of the mushroom clouds that threaten all these things we wish. Too much of the deadly contents of those clouds has already been released, dooming too many who live on earth today, too many yet unborn, to unnecessary illness and premature death.

Yet the final holocaust of world war that would spread this doom across the whole earth, turning it into a radioactive wilderness, has been avoided. It has been avoided through the mighty will of peoples everywhere for happiness and a good life which has stayed the hands of those who would lead the world into war, sacrificing man's future to their own selfish and predatory interests.

The expression of this will extinguished the flames that threatened to engulf the Middle and the Far East and spread to the ends of the earth. It led to the withdrawal of U.S. and British troops from Lebanon and Jordan where their presence was a flaming torch in the midst of the dry timber of the past. This has given the Arab peoples a chance to clear away the dry timber, to build a new free life on solid and unflammable foundations.

The expression of this will has so far damped the flames licking at the shores of China from the U.S. planes and ships

and troops engaged in the protection of the dead past in the form of Chiang Kai-shek and his retainers, once ready to plunge the world into war to try to realize his mad dream of returning to the mainland which has rejected him forever, now attempting to hold Taiwan, which is part of the mainland, for him as a "second China," a desiccated ghost without substance or meaning.

There are still greater tasks ahead as long as the testing and production and stockpiling and distribution of nuclear weapons continues, as long as aggressive forces exist who are ready to unleash their horror and exterminate hundreds of millions of people.

The first and most immediate task is intensified efforts to bring an end to the testing of atomic and hydrogen weapons now poisoning the atmosphere of our home the earth, as an essential step toward an international agreement never to use these weapons, to demolish all stockpiles, to stop their manufacture and use the limitless powers of atomic energy for life's enrichment and not its end.

And side by side with this task, which in itself will help to ease international tensions, is the task of curbing each new effort of the war-minded to create new hotbeds of war where atomic or any other weapons would be used.

This means the unceasing demand that negotiations must replace war and threats of war everywhere as a means of national policy.

All this is possible of achievement as

the preliminary successes of the past year have shown.

That tests of nuclear weapons can be abolished is indicated by the preliminary agreements among the representatives of the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union meeting in Geneva.

Important articles of a draft treaty on suspension of nuclear weapons tests have already been agreed on.

Under Article I, the parties have agreed "to prohibit and prevent the carrying out of nuclear weapons test explosions at any place under their jurisdiction and control," and to spread this prohibition to other nations by refraining from "causing, encouraging or in any way participating in the carrying out of nuclear weapons test explosions anywhere."

Under Article 2 the parties agree on the establishment of a control organization to assure the carrying out of these obligations and to cooperate fully with such an organization.

It is clear that agreement on the exact nature of the control organization to be set up under the treaty will face great obstacles, but they need not be insuperable.

The Soviet Union has made clear it is prepared to have inspection teams with Western representatives on its territory as long as it is accorded the same privilege by the West.

The Soviet position is that the activities of the inspection teams should be based on the principle of "mutual consent," that inspection should not be automatic, but governed by evidence of a "suspicious event." No state, they say, would refuse such inspection. However, if the teams could go wherever they wished at any time by majority vote, the USSR would always be outvoted by the Western powers two to one. To gauge the sincerity of the Western position that a majority vote should decide the activities of the inspection team, whether or not an actual explosion were reported, it is only necessary to ask

whether under similar circumstances they would be prepared to have their own atomic installations inspected at any time by a team including a Soviet representative.

However long and difficult the negotiations, the main thing is that they must continue until some agreement is reached.

We believe that the surest guarantee of peace, if we but accept it, rests in the great surge of creative construction going forward in the socialist nations, as exemplified in the breathtaking Seven Year Plan launched by the Soviet Union and the "great leap forward" in China. The success of these plans is dependent on peace. Both countries, therefore, can be depended on to do everything in their power to keep the peace. To be convinced of this, we recommend a careful reading of the resume in the issue of the Soviet Seven Year Plan targets, and of Israel Epstein's article on the Chinese methods of involving all their people in peaceful construction.

Right now there is much talk in the West of the "threat to Berlin" on the part of the Soviet Union.

The note of Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev to the Western powers on the status of Berlin (see p. 31) makes clear that no such threat exists.

Behind the new Berlin "crisis" lies the real threat to the peace of Europe of the stepped up tempo of German militarism and its further strengthening by atomic weapons from the West and rocket bases, and the alarming trend toward fascism in neighboring France. On the eve of the Paris NATO conference it was announced that the United States had decided to support proposals to eliminate some of the few restrictions that had previously been placed on German military forces and military manufacturing.

The threat of German rearming has been made more severe by the existence, over a hundred miles within the German Democratic Republic, of a divided Berlin, with the anachronism of four

power military occupation by the victorious nations thirteen years after the end of the war, constituting a malignant cold war growth. This Khrushchev proposes to eliminate by surgery—by the removal of foreign troops of both West and East, and by making of Western Berlin a free and neutralized city. The desire of the Soviet Union to approach the matter gradually and reasonably and not permit it to become the cause of a new outbreak of East-West hostility, is made clear by the period of six months offered to begin negotiations and to forego any unilateral action if such negotiations should get under way before the end of that period. While the United States so far has declared it "will hold firm," there are intimations that England is taking a less inflexible attitude, and allied differences may compel negotiations. This is what must be pressed for.

The astute Republican commentator, Walter Lippmann, wrote that the Soviet proposal for German confederation through negotiations between the two German states has validity, and that aside from Chancellor Adenauer, there is growing sentiment in West Germany for such a solution. Any successful approach, he said, must recognize the facts of life—that there are now two Germanys and two Berlins, which is precisely the approach Khrushchev has taken. The position of Adenauer and Dulles calling for the liquidation of the East German state and the extension of the borders of NATO to the Polish border is, Mr. Lippmann declares, "literally and exactly a demand for the unconditional surrender of the Soviet Union and is not a negotiating position."

There is no Soviet threat over Berlin or any other part of the world. There is a challenge and a serious one in the Soviet Seven Year Plan. No longer can Americans scoff that Soviet plans are unrealizable. Says Harry Schwartz of the *New York Times* (Nov. 16):

If the targets outlined by him [Khrushchev] for 1965 and 1970 are actually attained on schedule, then in the next decade or so the Communist world will clearly have won the economic competition with the West and, quite possibly, the political and propaganda contest for the allegiance of the uncommitted under-developed nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America as well.

Mr. Schwartz feels that Soviet assets for carrying out this program outweigh the obstacles, and declares:

The Soviet economy seems not subject to the recessions or depressions such as have historically interrupted the production progress of non-Communist countries. Each year since 1946 Soviet industry has produced more than the year before, and there is no present reason to suppose that this steady upward movement will not continue.

Do the leaders of America have enough faith in the capitalist way of life to accept the great challenge to peaceful economic competition which Khrushchev specifically offered in announcing the targets of the Seven Year Plan? After long talks with Khrushchev, both Walter Lippmann and Adlai Stevenson have written that acceptance of this competition and abandonment of cold war policies is the only viable course for U.S. diplomacy.

The road to peace and progress and a better America, a people's America, lies through an end of military preparations and the arms race, an end of world-encircling military bases, an end of a policy based on anti-communism and anti-liberation movements everywhere, and a constructive policy of ever increasing East-West cultural interchange and trade, help to the under-developed nations, negotiations at the summit on the main divisive issues, and peaceful competition in all spheres that will enlarge and guarantee the well-being of our own people.

We Build The Ming Tombs Dam

by ISRAEL EPSTEIN

*How a great dam was built in China by volunteer labor
—and human body and spirit enriched in the process*

IT WAS my good fortune last May to take part for two weeks in the building of the Ming Tombs (Shih-sanling) dam and reservoir near Peking, said at that time to be the biggest single job of volunteer labor ever done in the world. The entire project, which included a hydroelectric station, subsidiary highways and landscaping, was triumphantly opened in the presence of 150,000 people—only a fraction of those who had worked on it—on July 1.

That was only five months after the first earth was broken. By then a total of 7 million man-days of heavy physical labor had been put in, 2.5 million by the cooperative farmers of Peking's outlying Changping district (population 270,000), where the dam is located, 2 million by soldiers and officers of the People's Liberation Army and the Chinese People's Volunteers newly evacuated from Korea, 2.5 million by government workers, teachers, students, members of the professions and ordinary residents of Peking. Some were on the project from start to finish; but the majority worked from

ten days to a complete fortnight.

Often I thought of Western commentators who raise cries of "forced" or "unpaid" labor with regard to China's great constructions. Forced? Peking was buzzing with people fighting to go to the Ming Tombs; the waiting list was many times greater than the number who actually got there. As for the work being unpaid, it is true this labor cost the state budget not a penny. But all concerned continued to get wages from their regular employment, so one can also say it was whole organizations that volunteered, staff members who did not go shouldering the office work of those who did.

All in all, it was a gigantic and successful laboratory experiment in China's general line of socialist construction to build more, faster, better and more cheaply by stimulating the socialist morality, vigor and conscientiousness of the whole people, a striking embodiment of the achievements of the Chinese Communist Party in socialist education, of an idea gripping the masses to become a material force.

Instead of 20 million yuan, as at first estimated, the project took only 4 million yuan from the state budget. Instead of waiting for the Third Five Year Plan (1962-67) where the original financial priorities would

ISRAEL EPSTEIN has spent many years in China as correspondent for the United Press and the "New York Times." He returned to China from New York in 1951 and has been living in Peking since.

have put it, the reservoir already stands. Within a few weeks of its completion, it saved a big area from flood and through irrigation helped to produce high crop yields on 20,000 hectares (1 hectare=2.47 acres) of once perennially arid land. It is beginning to supply electric power to the locality, and from 1959 will provide the city with 1,000,000 kg. of fish annually. The new lake in the path of the desert winds from the west is ameliorating Peking's excessively dry climate. Hostels and sanatoria are growing along its banks, as well as boating clubs and other recreational facilities for the capital's workers.

No less striking are the political, spiritual results. The peasants, only two years after organization into socialist collectives, worked voluntarily and enthusiastically on a project benefiting not only their own co-ops but the whole area. This is the kind of thing that, all over the country, laid the basis of the communes.

Soldiers played their role as a socialist army, builders as well as defenders of socialism.

Intellectuals who left their desks to take up pick, shovel and earth-carrying basket gained a new respect for the gruelling physical labor of the Chinese people which most of them had never done before and thought "simple." Most educated Chinese are still of bourgeois or landlord origin, and this job gave them a new understanding of the fact that labor creates our world. Whatever their original status, everybody worked together on the same jobs, lived under the same conditions, ate the same rough food, competed in output and helped each other.

This is a brief general picture of

what happened during the first five months of 1958 in the area of Shih-sanling, where conscripted peasants once built 13 luxurious mausolea for successive emperors, where the local folk could never eat their fill from their dry, hilly fields, and where the free labor of a reborn people has brought into being, in a moment of time, a boon to the living much more magnificent than all the tombs of the dead potentates, created over hundreds of years. By the end of the year, tangible rewards were evident—here and in all other parts of the country where similar mass efforts had produced water for the fields and harvests without precedent—rewards in the shape of food not only available to all, but free as air itself in many thousands of new communes in the countryside.

Our First Lesson

I would like to describe just what happened to the small group of builders I was permitted to join, composed of people from publishing houses under China's Ministry of Culture. Some were senior Ministry cadres, some writers and editors; some were office personnel; some were drivers, messengers and cleaners. All reported at the muster-point like army recruits for rank-and-file service. Shouldering packs and bedding, they piled together into open trucks and sang together as they rode the 35 miles to the work site.

An hour later we stopped at a small walnut grove at the foot of the stony hills that mark the end of the North China plain. Here stood the cluster of tents lent by the army which were to quarter our unit, its 356 members a drop in the sea of 100,000 workers on the project at

that moment (and remember the 100,000 were themselves a drop in the ocean of 100 million peasants and others digging water conservancy works in China at the time). At its entrance was a small wooden archway with the inscription: "Frontline of Labor: Schoolroom of Politics."

Piling out of our truck we were met by a rush of bronzed, laughing men and women who, finding friends and colleagues in our ranks, slapped them on the back and pumped their hands. A moment later, at the sound of a whistle, we lined up on one side of the road, they on the other. The camp leader, Party secretary of one section of the Ministry, a young man in work-soiled dungarees, gave a short, vigorous talk. "We are here," he said, "to send off the old soldiers and welcome the new. The work is hard, but essential for the people. You old soldiers have shown that your revolutionary will is stronger than earth and rock; you did not let fatigue, wind or rain stop you; you have each moved an average of 3 cubic meters per man-day. We are sure you, the new recruits, will fight as hard. Old soldiers, hand over your banner!"

The best of the retiring workers marched up with a tattered red flag bearing the device of the Ministry of Culture. Having been borne to the work-site and set up there every day by all the seven groups that preceded us, it was as ripped by the mountain winds as the old battle standards one sees in war museums are shredded by shot and shell. The commander of our new battalion, previously elected by its company leaders who were in turn elected by the squad leaders, received it solemnly. Then he wheeled around

and we marched after him to our tents, while the returnees piled their gear into the trucks that had brought us and drove off.

That evening, after eating the rough buns of unleavened maize flour that made our entire supper and were to be our staple food for two weeks, we sat down on the ground (we were not to see a chair for the next two weeks) to hear the camp chief again. This time he acquainted us with the over-all situation which was pressing. With two-thirds of the time allotted already gone, the dam was still only a quarter of its final height of 29 meters—though with the foundations and thick base built, somewhat more than that proportion of the work was done. Not to finish before the summer rains, meant that all the labor already put in would be wasted. The peasants, who had relied on our help to make sure this year's late crop should fear neither drought nor flood, would be sadly disillusioned.

**"The Work," He Warned,
"Is Hard"**

The work, he warned us, was hard. Every intellectual had seen peasants use a carrying-pole, but few had tried it. The first day, our shoulders would ache badly. The second day they would swell. But on the third, provided we persisted, they would harden—and we would be lifting loads we never thought we could attempt. Certainly, it meant gritting our teeth. But how could we talk or write of sharing the outlook of the working people, as he was sure we all thought we did, if we shirked what every village boy and girl had to learn and then

do till old age? This did not mean idealizing such heavy toil. On the contrary, our work would make us all more active in thinking of new ways to lift the ancient burden off the backs of the people. Even now, on this project, we were trying to get rid of the carrying pole and change to the easier rubber-tyred tip-cart, besides using what machinery could be found. But for the moment we still had to rely mainly on the old ways, with which China's working folk had moved, and were still moving, mountains.

Safety was of supreme importance. Under this head, the camp chief gave us comprehensive warnings as to how to handle tools and ropes, and dig sand from a vertical face. People should work as hard as they could, but not beyond their real strength or if ill. A team with a good production record and a poor accident or illness record would be considered backward, not foremost, and its leader a bungler, not a hero.

Discipline was absolutely essential. A production army of 100,000 was not an office room. If this vast force, working three shifts a day, was not to fall into confusion all units had to assemble, start and finish work in a thoroughly organized way.

Way of life was important too. We would live and eat as ordinary Chinese earth workers still did. We had brought our own grain and cooks, and should not drain local reserves. If we bought additional food or in any way tried to carry on our city standards, we would make a poor impression on the people.

Finally, he dwelt on the wider political side. We were engaged in a demonstration of the superior poten-

tialities of socialism, showing what could be done by the people's voluntary, organized labor. Without the socialist revolution in the ownership of the means of production and on the ideological and political fronts, this would have been impossible. Moreover our work had international significance too. It was being watched throughout the world, and especially in Asia where, in many countries, the conditions were those we were tackling; not enough capital, not enough water, but huge manpower and land and resources awaiting its enriching hand. Failure, over which foes would gloat, would dim the confidence and consciousness of poor and oppressed peoples abroad, not awaken it. The deadline was the high water season, not two months away. To finish on schedule would be a real revolutionary feat of the spirit by Peking's people, on behalf of their city, the country and the general cause.

Our Job—To Quarry Sand and Stones

Such were the simple instructions. The next morning we began our work.

The jobs on the dam were many and varied. Ours was to quarry sand and small stones out of an old river-bed and convey them with pole and baskets, or by barrow pushed by one worker and pulled by another, up an inclined 200-meter path to a tip-platform from which it would be chuted down to waiting rail trucks.

The first eight-hour day of this, on office-flabbied muscles in the glaring heat of the sun, was a real test. The digging face, at times composed of comfortably soft sand, would suddenly change to a cement-

like conglomerate of stones, a stubborn and maddening enemy. To keep carrying one had to feel that the endlessly repeated uphill walk on grinding knee-caps, was as crucial as an uphill charge on which victory or defeat depend, except that one **does not make a charge** a hundred or more times a day. For our intellectuals, this was much harder, not only in physical but in mental habit, than bravery in battle. They could not regard themselves as individual performers; the rhythm of the huge mass job determined their actions and their pace. None were athletes; the only way they could complete **their quotas** was by active thinking, as well as bodily effort, to figure ways of getting more done with less effort.

To have illusions about one's own ability did no good here, where not words were involved but measurable earth and stone. To fall into dreams or despondency did no good either, by the same relentless measure. The quotas were reckoned not individually but by the whole squad—so one had to generate ideas not only for one's self but for the collective.

We came off the job that first night dead tired, sore all over, thinking sweetly of our bunks. But the company leader told us there was more to do; one of Peking's best drama troupes had come that day to perform for us after the shift. Sitting cross-legged on the ground, inwardly cursing all the theatrical arts, especially that of the stage electrician who took an endless time setting the outdoor lights, we suddenly found ourselves not only applauding the performance, a merry satire on bureaucracy, but forgetting our fatigue—till the moment came

for us to unfold our congealed limbs and attempt to rise shakily.

But Sweet Potatoes Can't Wait

Waddling stiffly to the work site the second day we had another hard eight hours, but again the longed-for bunks were not for us. No sooner had we finished than assembly was sounded, and there was our camp leader, with things to say. For 120 days there had been no rain. The cooperative farmers in the next village had sweet potato shoots in a seedbed, ready to transplant on a few waiting hectares of land. But with the ground so dry, each transplanting hole had to be watered manually. This the co-op had no manpower to do. Luckily we were there, 350 spare pairs of hands that could make the difference between several hundred tons of sweet potatoes—or nothing. Could we refuse to help? Of course not, we answered. Someone asked about utensils. "No problems, luckily," said the camp leader. "We all have wash basins."

So off we set for the muddy pond where the water was, filled our basins and, holding them stiff-armed before us, Indian-filed a half-kilometer or so to the fields, where we poured the precious liquid out hole by hole along the furrows while the bright-eyed, brisk village children scampered behind, popping in the shoots. Never had we known water was so heavy. But never had we realized how precious it was, nor that he who brings it brings life. On face after face, fatigue, irritation at getting a new job when tired, queasiness at the coffee-colored water in the face basins, gave way to a quite different set of feelings. We became fiercely determined to get those

seedlings re-set, not to let down those peasants and the waiting schoolchildren. "I felt tenderly towards those little green shoots as though they were my own babies being tucked in to sleep," one man told me. Many inquired anxiously of the peasants. "Do you think the potatoes will mature?" and shook their heads sadly when told that only about half would do so without rain. "If only that reservoir was already built and full," one said, "this land would already be irrigated."

The third day we worked side by side with the People's Liberation Army. All ranks were working on the same jobs, from colonels to privates with even a general here and there, cheerful, indefatigable and handy, never seeming to notice our comparative clumsiness but constantly praising the desk-workers for doing so well at unaccustomed labor, and saying they "wanted to learn from our spirit." Our intellectuals were tremendously moved. The older ones recalled the armies of the Kuomintang and the warlords, the small elite corps of overfed bullies for special police duties and the vast majority of gaunt, dull-eyed, unfortunate for whom the future held in store neither life, nor death in battle, but death simply from starvation while their officers pocketed their ration-money. That army had been a machine for turning strong peasant lads into skin-and-bone corpses in a few months. In the anti-Japanese war, and the subsequent civil war, it had done this to millions—and the people had hated and feared it. What a difference now! Making our first really close contact with them, we found these strong, keen young men both informed and

insatiably curious on everything in China and the world. We enjoyed the work break concerts and skits in which they demonstrated bright talent and intelligence. We began to understand, as never before, the meaning of Mao Tse-tung's call that literature and art should serve the workers, peasants and soldiers. For whom to create if not for those young bearers of the future?

Fourth day: As our camp leader had predicted, we were gradually getting into training, actually beginning to have moments of pleasure in the swing of the work and to think of increasing our capacity. Evening activities continued. It was the time of the countrywide basic elections, and preparatory to casting our votes on the camp site, we had a report and discussion on socialist and capitalist electoral systems—made more interesting by the fact that there were among us people with firsthand experience of a dozen foreign lands. That same day we saw an outdoor exhibit of contemporary photographs and sketches of the heroic Long March of the Chinese Red Army in 1934-35, prepared by staff-members of the Revolutionary Museum, also working at the reservoir. These vivid reminders, at a time when we ourselves were encamped and stretched to the limit, made an especially deep impact. Everyone realized, having his own fatigue turn into strength, through a sense of aim, that the whole revolution had been made by incredibly difficult and courageous effort, powered by a conviction that outlawed the word "impossible."

After dark in the light of a pressure-lamp, despite the many affairs of that day, our own group put on

a series of amateur performances, and worked on some self-composed poems and skits. It seemed our energy was endless!

The fifth day: This was something special. As we toiled in the sun, the cyclist postmen who brought the newspapers came into sight shouting the news, the launching of the third Soviet sputnik. Here indeed was a panorama of the growth of the new world. We were still piling sand and rock by manual labor. On the dam itself, powerful machines were tamping it down. The country as a whole was building modern industry, an earnest of which we had in the Chinese made jet-planes that often roared on test flights overhead. The Soviet people, by their labor, were conquering extra-terrestrial space. Nor did we feel our own earth-bound achievements negligible. The public address system announced that the Communist Party's call for the project, to put 30,000 cubic meters a day into the dam, instead of the some 15,000 per day of the week before, had been beaten—we were up to 34,000 (a few days later the daily average was 50,000.)

Help Others— Learn From Others

By the sixth day individual output had gone up from a cubic meter a day to almost three, our organization was far better, and we entered on an inter-company competition for the challenge red banner, awarded each shift to the foremost unit in quantity and quality. The first, made after measurement and discussion in the leading committee, went to the Fourth Company. One of its members raised a cheer: "The

Red Banner, May it always be ours!" Within a few hours several critical *ta tze pao* (wall newspapers) were posted. What was our objective, they asked, to run a race for glory or help the job forward? Then followed a written self-criticism by the shouter himself. Thereafter, after each award in which the banner passed from one unit to another, the slogans were: "Help others with our achievements," and "Learn from what other comrades have done." Once the banner went to a company that had fallen short of its quota, but spent hours helping a neighbor unit out of difficulties.

Now, each evening, there were group discussions on the work of the day, how to improve it on the morrow, what sort of showing had been made by individuals. The last three were devoted to the election of "advanced workers." The criteria were: effectiveness of work, care of implements, discipline, effectiveness as propagandists, initiative and inventiveness.

These standards, when talked over, proved far from simple. Working effectiveness, for instance, did not mean physical capacity but steadiness and application. We, like other groups, had had our show-off "athletes" boasting from the first how much they could lift and carry, discouraging instead of encouraging the physically weaker by their exhibitions. One, a very powerful young man, had piled his wheelbarrow so high that he broke several vehicles. Finally he strained his back and, given a lighter job, considered it far below him, treated it with scowling inattention, and proved worse at it than the frail wisps of girls who had to use their whole strength

doing it but did it well. So it was conscientiousness and willingness to do what one could and was needed that counted in the election.

Another thing needing clarification was what made "an active propagandist." This, the group decided from its experience, did not mean working mainly with the tongue, however beautiful the phrases—but such behavior, on the job at all times, as would raise the spirit and warm the hearts of others and stimulate them too to their best efforts. After the company awards had been made, the outstanding winners were recommended for battalion awards.

Finally, each worker was asked to assess his own showing during the two weeks—again for consideration by the group. Many, modest about what they had done, found that others saw them in a much better light. But some, who said they had done well, or "all they could," were challenged, not in vague ways but very concretely. Just as labor was measured by cubic meters of earth, so character could be measured by the extent of effort, and particularly of cooperation, expressed in things as simple as the tightness or slackness of a rope. A barrow of earth going uphill to the tipping point, had to be pushed from behind and pulled from in front. If the man between the shafts did not push his weight, the puller's burden was inordinately increased. If the person in front did not pull his or her weight, the pusher soon became exhausted. Only when both put in full strength did the barrow go up smoothly, without strain on either. Similarly, if the diggers did not fill enough baskets, or the leaders did

not empty them quickly enough into the barrows, the whole process was retarded. All these were not matters of doubt but of fact—and anyone who tried either to present a picture of himself that diverged from actual performance or to run down or flatter others, found it got him nowhere. The truth emerged clearly, people came to know themselves and their co-workers without illusions, without the consideration of "face" so dear to intellectuals in the past, with clarity as to what each had to do to become a socialist human being.

None, or virtually none, had been used to such frankness combined with mutual respect—since it takes mutual respect both to submit to criticism and to tell the truth to another's face. Many who had sat side by side in offices for years said they felt a new closeness to each other and people of different ranks, far from each other in their ordinary jobs, became firm friends. All this raised morale tremendously. So did visits to the main dam itself, when each could see the quick progress of the vast enterprise of which all were part. In those last days, when shock work was called for, company after company volunteered to raise its quotas and cut rest periods to get the dam up ahead of time. With the target for finishing the earth work set for only five days after we were due to leave, we asked to stay to the end, because we felt that new replacements, not yet hardened or able to organize themselves, might slow things up. The camp leader gave up a night's sleep to rush to Peking after this, to get the consent of the various offices to which the workers belonged. When he came

back with word that the next batch was ready to come and insisted on doing so, even those who had complained most of fatigue earlier on, who had most carefully "counted the days" to the end, shared the common disappointment.

All through our fortnight on the job, the Communist outlook on labor was stressed. People talked of how army and cadres had produced their own food and clothes to beat the Kuomintang blockade in Yen-an. There was a great lift of enthusiasm on the day 64-year-old Chairman Mao Tse-tung, 70-year-old Vice-Chairman Chu Teh, with Liu Shao-chi, Chou En-lai and other leaders came to the Ming Tombs by common public bus, rolled up their sleeves, and went to work. What better proof could there be than these men, mostly intellectuals in origin, that Chinese intellectuals could indeed become one with the working people, that the fires of toil and hardship would not break and dull but on the contrary steel and sharpen them, if their spirit was patriotic and revolutionary?

The Past's "Five Bad Airs"

During that half-month there was no room at all for what the Chinese call the "five bad airs" inherited from the old, exploiting society.

1. Bureaucracy—who could be a bureaucrat with no rank taken into account, digging the earth or pushing it uphill under the clear eyes of comrades?
2. Extravagance—this was excluded by the fact that we lived chiefly on corn buns, with the whole fortnight's food for each person costing about \$2 in U.S. money.
3. Apathy, the senile, passive "twilight air"—this could move no earth,

and everyone could see how achievable and crucial was the "morning air" of optimism, comradeship, ease of mind, good talk and rousing songs, the stirring of the future that the Chinese Party calls for and tries to cultivate everywhere.

4. Conceit—this could survive a little longer than the others but not through the whole two weeks of heavy labor as part of a vast collective and frank criticism and self-criticism.
5. Delicacy and self-pampering—this just didn't go with sitting on the ground and such enterprises as watering the crops with our face basins. Everyone saw, in the course of them, not only the great results of working together but that he had exaggerated his own limitations. Take the simple question of physical capacity, of the fears of many that the unaccustomed labor would make them ill with fatigue. In fact, of the 356 of us, of all sorts, ages and conditions, not one missed a day on the dam from illness or injury; our health and safety record was 100 per cent, better than if we had stayed at our desks. Some, in fact, were cured of their ailments, at least temporarily; the insomniacs slept like logs without their pills, the neurasthenics relaxed, lost their twitches and irritations.

Of course, the brief spell of labor could not wipe out the "five bad airs" forever. But certainly it exposed and shook them, and helped everyone to see how they looked from the standpoint of China's working people—and the entire emphasis in the whole rectification movement, of which regular physical labor for all cadres has been part, is on "seeing things from the angle of vision of the 600 million." The

earth is in morning, our whole experience cried. China and mankind are at the beginning of their true history. . . .

Soon, too soon, our last day came. We turned out, bronzed, lean and clear-brained, to meet our replacements who looked as pale and soft to us as we must have done to our predecessors. Again both contingents lined up. Again the camp leader made his speech on what the "old soldiers" had done, on what the "new soldiers" could do. We handed over the Ministry banner, more tattered and battlestained now, to the new recruits and, swinging our bedrolls on to the trucks, started for home. We sang all the way.

In Peking, we joined the hundreds of thousands, easily spotted in street and office for their lean brownness and high spirits, who wore, clearer than any badge, what was called the "Shihsanling look."

Man Rebuilds Himself and His Home, the Earth

Postscript: Soon after participating in this work, I left China for Europe where I spent four months. Returning in October, I found the "Shihsanling look" on all Peking faces. Everyone in the city was putting in time on the land and on the

myriad small furnaces that are speeding China's "big leap" in steel. The people, building socialism en masse, were doing so all the faster, and with youthful vigor, because in spirit and attitude they were already beginning to be attuned to the next goal, communist society.

To make socialism work to its full potential, the Chinese believe, one needs not only a socialist economic and political system but socialist people—bringing elements of the future, at all times, into the present.

Molded by the Communist Party, man the all-sided—worker, farmer, student, artist and soldier if need be at the same time—is coming into being here. He is building what Thomas More, William Morris, Marx and Engels foresaw as the coming human condition. But this is no distant utopia. Their initiative liberated from all narrowness, the people are creating a civilization which, in our own lifetime, will produce new, untold wealth, based on the latest achievements of science and industry, for common enjoyment. Here man is simultaneously rebuilding himself and his home, the earth, the two interacting in a creative explosion on a scale hitherto unseen.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST ON CHINA

"THE EXCLUSION of the effective government on the mainland of China, currently the People's Republic of China, from the international community is in many ways a disadvantage to that community. . . . It keeps our people in ignorance of what is taking place in China. It hampers negotiations for disarmament. It limits the functioning of international organizations. We have a strong hope that the resumption of relationships between the people of China and of the U.S. may make possible also a restoration of relationships between their churches and ours." *From a resolution passed at World Order Study Conference.*

New York Times, November 22.

The Afro-Asian Writers Conference

by RALPH PARKER

IT MUST have been about midnight (local time) when we flew over the Amu-Darya—the classical Oxus. Down there, 35,000 feet below the silver belly of the TU-104, the remains of ancient Chorasmia lay half-buried in the desert sands: great brick-walled Zoroastrian cities, monasteries, stupas and colossal Buddhist images, enigmatic ruins that may be of Indo-Scythian, Turkish, Sassanid or Mogul origin. And here and there in this graveyard of Asian civilization the tents of archaeologists and the new settlements of the Kara-Kalpak Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic.

We were flying eastward, "losing" time, flying almost as fast as the night was racing across Europe behind us, as we crossed one of those great blanks on the map of the world that most Europeans carry in their minds, an area conveniently labelled the "steppes of Central Asia," and forgotten. Doubly a blank, for the historical record takes leaps of four or five centuries and leaves the imagination little to feed on in its attempt to bridge the gaps.

And then suddenly there was

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Tashkent where we had come to meet the writers of Asia and Africa, gathering for the first time. A new airport, its waiting rooms vaguely oriental, a smiling reception committee, the drive into the city along avenues of acacia and poplar hung with colored lamps and banners lettered in Chinese, Arabic and Hindi, grapes and melons heaped in bowls in our hotel rooms.

The invitation to hold a meeting of African and Asian writers in the capital of Soviet Uzbekistan, (October 5-10, 1958) was issued by the Uzbek poetess Zulfia in the name of the Soviet Asian writers who attended the Asian Writers' Conference at Delhi in 1956. The Delhi conference, the first of its kind, proved to be a useful stimulus for a rapprochement between writers of lands whose contacts with each other had been broken by centuries of foreign occupation, or had simply not developed because of material difficulties, mass illiteracy or language barriers.

The organizers of the Tashkent conference thus found their work facilitated by the growth of an idea planted in India, though the seedling may be said to have been carried from Bandung. Many countries formed preparatory committees and some twenty lands, including six African lands, participated in the

preparatory work started in Tashkent during the summer of 1958.

To define that idea would require an analysis of the ideological principles behind China's Big Leap Forward, India's gradual advance towards a "socialistic pattern," the United Arab Republic's particular form of national revival, the Algerian people's struggle, and the national aspirations of the people of the Cameroons, the Somalis, Indonesia, the Philippines. . . . Could the organizers of the Tashkent conference, in short, hope to find a common platform on which the 150 delegates from almost 50 lands could work together?

Both the Indian (the largest) and the Japanese parties were made up of men and women of widely differing political affiliations. The Indian delegation was selected on the principle of representation of each of the fifteen main languages of the sub-continent and included Congress members of parliament, university professors and writers closely connected with the Indian branch of the Congress for Cultural Freedom. The representatives of Ghana included men and women who stood close to Nkrumah. On the other hand, many of the literary representatives of colonial Africa were political militants (not necessarily Communists) who believe that it is the duty of the writer to enlist in the struggle for independence. Could one hope for tolerance from such a gathering?

The organizers, of course, were alive to the danger and had worded the agenda in a way that took into account the wishes of those who envisaged the conference as primarily a literary event, but which met the majority view that it should serve

as a contribution to the struggle for national independence still in progress in many parts of the two continents. True, a misunderstanding that arose in the drafting of the final agenda resulted in a flurry of agitation among the Indians on the eve of the opening, some of them maintaining that too harsh a political note had been struck; but, as it turned out, this concern proved groundless for all delegates were free to discuss their culture in any way they liked. And anyway, most of the problems that were found to face writers in Asia and Africa have their origin in the political condition of colonialism, whether national independence has been won or remains to be won.

The agenda ran: 1. The development of literatures and cultures in different Asian and African countries and their role in the progress of mankind, for national independence against colonialism, for peace and freedom throughout the world. 2. The cultures of the peoples of Asia and Africa and their ties with the culture of the West.

The meetings took place in what is probably the finest modern building in Soviet Asia, a theater designed by a Russian and decorated by old craftsmen brought from all over Uzbekistan, who had been reared in the traditions of Bokhara and Samarkand. The Navoi theater proved to be quite capacious enough to house not only the plenary sessions but also the five commissions formed to discuss the writer's role in various media, such as theater, radio, juvenile literature, etc., as well as a large book exhibition to which most delegations contributed.

No speaker, however eminent his

own standing, however large and powerful the land he represented, had the temerity to try to impose a single aesthetic formula on the writers of other lands; no one, however grievous the experience of his people at the hands of western colonialists, went so far as to suggest that African or Asian literature should try to sever its ties with Western culture. True, there was general agreement that writers should respect and abide with the cultural traditions of their peoples, that they have a duty towards society, and that in the world today they cannot remain indifferent in the anti-colonial struggle. But little or no time was spent in discussing the limits of the writer's commitment, the exact nature of his obligations to the state, and kindred questions relating to the freedom of the intellectual. In fact most of the writers present were, by the very nature of modern Asia and Africa, so intimately linked with their peoples' struggle for independence that they did not even question the conception of the writer as one committed to a political cause.

With this said, one must nevertheless make the point that the main feature of the Tashkent Conference was its variety. This was assured not only by the immensity of the physical territory represented, not only by the fact that alongside representatives of nations that, despite everything, have preserved their literary language were others from lands where a literary tradition has yet to be created, but also because the road to independence is not a single road. The experience of China differs from that of India, that of Indonesia from that of

China, and so on. And it is understandable that the writers from these newly-liberated lands, who have often been prominent in the struggle, have different outlooks today.

Perhaps the best way of illustrating this variety is to quote briefly from some of the main contributions to the conference.

Sharaf Rashidov. He is chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Uzbek USSR, a suave, grey-haired, beautifully-poised figure, one of those statesmen-writers frequently to be found in Asia. Speaking at the opening ceremony he referred with pride to the contributions made by Asia and Africa to world civilization:

We live in an age when man has learned to change the course of rivers, to cope with the atom, to take a leap boldly into outer space. But mankind will never forget that the unfading dawn of civilization was first lit in distant antiquity by the Eastern peoples in the valleys of the Tigris and the Euphrates, the Yangtse and the Ganges, the Indus and the Amu-Darya. . . . The Great Silk Road, the road of peaceful co-operation, the road along which the material and spiritual values of the culture of the peoples of Asia and Africa were exchanged, will never fade in the annals of history. . . . Numerous devastating wars unleashed by foreign invaders and, in the past few centuries colonialism, hindered the advance of the culture and literature of the peoples of the East, broke their traditional friendly ties, dismembered the peoples of Asia and Africa and constrained the development of their material and spiritual forces. But the peoples of the East, who have courageously passed through all tests, have proved able to preserve the beauty and wealth of their original and unique culture. . . .

Nikolai Tikhonov. The only Russian, indeed, the only European, to address the conference, Tikhonov has done much as a poet and translator

of poetry to popularize non-Russian verse among the readers in his own country, and has travelled widely in Southeast Asia. Like Rashidov he stressed the universal significance of this conference:

We cannot imagine further progress (i.e. of progressive mankind) without a contribution from the writers of Asia and Africa into the common treasure-store of humanity. . . . We must properly appreciate our cultural heritage, break down the barriers that divide us, strengthen personal sympathies, deepen our friendship, get a better knowledge of one another's work and seek new ways of further consolidating our unity. We must restore the former glory of the people of the East as the real bearers of world culture, as its heirs and successors. In the light of the world situation today, international cultural relations constitute a new task for all the writers and cultural workers. . . . In this respect we should not only speak of cultural contacts among Eastern countries but also of cultural contacts between West and East. . . .

Efua Theodora Sutherland, representing the Ghana Society of Writers:

Today is for us a day of fulfillment not only because for the first time we are meeting on common ground with the writers of Ghana's sister nations, but also because this is a step towards the reunification of the disrupted soul of mankind. It is up to us to seek practical ways and means of strengthening our cultural links. There is a need to channel to our continent some of your best literary contributions. We need to know the works of Asian and African writers, to be in touch with the wider horizons which those works represent, and which have hitherto been unavailable in our country. . . . We are naturally looking into our own time-honored traditions and institutions for inspiration in our cultural development. Only when we reach down into our roots can we know ourselves, and be fortified to express our African personality. In this exciting venture, the whole field of knowledge of the past civilization of

our African continent is our treasure-store.

Chou Yang, critic, vice-chairman of the Union of Chinese Writers, and one of the two principal spokesmen for the 21-man delegation from the People's Republic of China. Referring to the past, Chou Yang said:

Despite all difficulties in the way and great differences in language and customs, the peoples of East and West made every effort to come into cultural contact. . . . After coming to the East, the Western colonialists by political oppression and economic exploitation undermined the economic base of Eastern countries and the national cultures built on this base. Sometimes they even undermined the national language, retarding its development. . . . And only when we have a genuine national culture of our own can we talk of cultural exchange with other lands. We have absorbed much of the best of other cultures—including those of the West. It is possible and necessary for us today, on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, to establish normal cultural relations with the Western peoples and have a genuine cultural exchange with them.

Benjamin Matip, twenty-six-year-old Cameroons publicist, reminded the conference that of the forty-one lands, with a population of 140 million, that constitute Black Africa, only five enjoy their national sovereignty:

Imperialism seeks to deny the authenticity of the culture of the colonized peoples. The African writer has a mission to re-establish the truth. In his works, in his life itself, he must establish the specific elements of his own culture. He must, cost what it may, and working in the strictly cultural field, snatch his right to exist from the colonial system. African literature can assert itself only in opposition. The African writer has the mission of removing the poison from the system of his people; he must be the doctor who admin-

isters the antidote Africa needs to recover from the cancer of colonialism. Thus he must be both doctor and soldier.

Don Carlos Pereira Beneragama, a journalist from Ceylon, General Secretary of the Ceylon-Africa Buddhist Association:

I venture to say that the center of gravity of world politics is now in Asia. . . . Contacts between the writers of Asia and Africa should be established to make co-existence a reality and assist in improving the relations between different nations.

Tara Shankar Bannerjee, eminent Bengali novelist:

History has charged us, writers of Asia and Africa, with a special responsibility, for we possess the experience of civilization and have gone through the worst. We have personally experienced exploitation of man by man. We are convinced that love, tolerance, co-operation and good-will must replace hate and ambition for power. The experience of the last two hundred years, and even thousands of years preceding them, was our baptism of life. Whether we want it or not, this makes us the bearers of new, bold ideas which can completely change man's world outlook.

Some of the speeches contained interesting information. It was, I feel sure, news to many that Philippine writers were working for a renaissance of their Tagalog language. Nazim Hikmet, the Turkish poet in exile, brought the conference surprising news of the vigor of modern Turkish literature, and illustrated with a quotation from a contemporary Turkish magazine, which is worth repeating: The Turkish writer, Samin Kojagez, describes a conversation with a critic.

"'What would you do if suddenly your house caught fire,' I asked.

"'I would try to extinguish it,' he replied.

"'What if the whole house is enveloped in flames?'

"'I would call my neighbors to help me.'

"'And what if they couldn't do anything to help you?'

"'I would call the fire brigade.'

"I beg your forgiveness for making this comparison, but this is precisely how I replied to my critic when he asked me what I was trying to achieve in my writing. Any blind alley my country and my compatriots find themselves in, any obstacles that rise on our path towards humanism and civilization, any difficulty that prevents us from leading our country to prosperity and well-being is a fire so far as I am concerned. And I must shout that there is a fire at the top of my voice. If that is not literature then I am no writer."

America was fittingly represented by the eminent Negro historian, Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, his wife, the well known writer Shirley Graham Du Bois, and Cedric Belfrage, deported editor of the *National Guardian*. Dr. Du Bois, speaking for the writer's duty to help bring about the freer America for which his own ancestors had fought, drew the only standing ovation to an individual at the conference.

In a formal sense the main results of the Tashkent Conference are to be found in the plans to establish in Ceylon a permanent bureau for the encouragement of Asian and African literary contacts, to publish a periodical, found a publishing house, and undertake translations. A further conference is to be convened in Cairo in two years time.

But that is not the whole Tashkent story. More important than what was said and planned was the fact that this conference took place at all, that writers more or less representative of their people came together to tie up the broken threads, to bridge the gaps. There was no straining for a unity that does not exist except in the broadest sense that all writers who have the welfare of mankind at heart are united. There was little or no talk of schools of literature, of literary theory. Least of all was there any hint of racialism in this gathering of Asians and Africans. But, underlying the whole proceedings was a note of what I can only describe as exultation, arising from the knowledge that such a conference could not have been held a few years ago, that it was a new assertion of the emergent forces of peoples hitherto held in restraint or tutelage.

And, finally, one must speak of the Uzbek people and their Soviet Asian neighbors, the hosts of the conference. They provided a living example of peoples who have become fully literate during the spell of one generation. Tashkent lies in the heart of an area traditionally poetry-conscious, but until recently that tradition was an oral one. Tashkent lies near the "great silk road" over which ancient cultures contacted and fructified one another; but those cultures belonged to an elite.

How things have changed since general education was introduced into Soviet Asia was demonstrated to the delegates each time they crossed the square between the Tashkent Hotel and the Navoi Theater. During the conference this square became a book mart and from

dawn till dusk there were crowds of humbly dressed people around the stalls. A Tatar vendor told me he was doing business to the tune of over 10,000 rubles a day in books for his fellow-countrymen. I saw Uzbek students from the Tashkent institute of foreign languages buying Leipzig editions of Heine and Goethe; an anthology of modern Egyptian poetry was on sale in five of the languages of the little mountain land of Daghestan whose population is little over a million; the Uzbek State Publishing House offered a selection of poetry translated directly from nine of the languages of the Indian sub-continent.

It was at this book market that I met the 60-year-old Kazakh writer, Mukhtar Auezov. "My father was a nomad of the Kazakh steppe," he told me. "It was in his tent that at the age of six I discovered that the poems our people sang or declaimed could lie silent on paper. In those days the verses of our great poet Abai were written down on paper but were known only in the auls of our own land. Today the whole of the Soviet Union knows Abai through books in translation. I wonder how much fine poetry and prose still exists only in oral form among the peoples of Asia and Africa?"

Whatever the reservations some delegates may have had about the canons of socialist realism or the principle of the writer's complete commitment, they could not but be profoundly impressed by the status of the printed word and its creator in these Asian lands of the U.S.S.R. In this sense Tashkent was more than a meeting place, it was an ideal.

Visit to a Commune

by TALITHA GERLACH

A SOARING spirit and contagious enthusiasm are welling up among the people, surging throughout China today. There is complete confidence that all problems can be solved and the desired goal of a prosperous and happy life for all can be achieved in record time. The daily newspapers frontpage accounts of super-bumper harvests, of steel production leaping beyond anything dreamed of even six months ago, of new techniques and machines never before produced in this country and the rapid spread of "people's communes" in the countryside. In fact the organization of communes—heralded as the prototype-in-bud of the future communist society—is sweeping through the country at an unprecedented rate. A recent visit to the Pai Mao Commune, two hours by car from Shanghai, gave us a first-hand picture of this dramatic historical development.

Pai Mao Commune, organized September 15, 1958, drew together 14 agricultural producers' cooperatives and one fishing cooperative, synchronizing the area and the administration with the former county

boundaries. Now the total population embracing all walks of life—peasants (agriculture), workers (industry), students and teachers (education and intellectuals), traders (commerce and exchange), militia (military affairs)—altogether 21,530 people and 4,950 households, constitutes this commune. The life of the commune is carried forward through eight departments covering industry, agriculture, mechanics and water conservancy, internal affairs, people's militia, education-culture-health, commerce and finance, and side-line production such as livestock, fisheries, etc. The Delegate Congress elected by the members of the commune is the highest governing body.

Our host, himself a former poor peasant and now Head of the Commune, described the ever-rising standard of living of the peasants since liberation in terms of grain, the Chinese staple food, and cash. In this area, where originally 7 or 8 persons out of every 100 were landlords or rich peasants and the remainder poor peasants and but a few middle peasants, today the average income per person is better than that of the pre-liberation well-to-do peasant. Whereas in the past most of the people were merely existing on the brink of starvation, after agricultural producers' cooperatives were

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organized the average income per working adult rose to 42 yuan annually and now in 1958 the average is 480 yuan (a yuan is about 35c.) of which each commune member has 107 cash in hand and 373 in the collective fund for the joint welfare of the people. In addition to this, the per capita rice distribution is 700 catties (One catty equals 1.1 lb.) and 700 catties in reserve.

"Why then," we queried, "with the standard of living steadily going up and up, were the people so eager to change from agricultural producers' cooperatives—to the commune form of organization?"

"Because the people are determined to make their dreams of a richer, fuller life come true sooner," responded our host with emphasis. "They have already experienced that all difficulties can be overcome when many people are working together toward a common goal. We have a saying which expresses this thought: 'When the tree is big and deeply rooted, the wind cannot blow it down.'"

"It was not all as easy it sounds when I tell it," our host continued. "We had plenty of problems in the past—sometimes our crops rotted in water-logged fields, we still were threatened by floods two years out of every three, insect pests flourished and 80 per cent of our people had schistosomiasis (a wasting liver disease carried by small snails infesting the rice fields). Last spring we studied the Program for the Development of Agriculture proposed by the Communist Party and approved by the National People's Congress and with this as our guide, we got crop yields never before dreamed of. We set to work

with deep plowing, using only selected seeds, close planting, intensive fertilizing, spraying, digging drainage ditches and irrigation canals. And now that our ordinary fields have been harvested, our rice yield proves to be 4-fold that of 1957, while on the experimental plots (still to be harvested) we estimate the yield will be 30 times the best crops ever raised in this county. With this concrete evidence of the successful results of our work together under the leadership of the Party, we knew that our fondest dreams of creating a new life for us all could be fully realized if we joined together in a commune."

We pressed our host for the details of plans for the future. He described for us the urgent need to mechanize now that all the fields were joined together into continuous broad expanses of land, the plans for building a large hydroelectric power plant further to facilitate adequate irrigation, to provide electricity in every home, and to make possible the development of modern, local industries. He commented on the complete emancipation of the working power of the women now that public service restaurants, tailoring, shoemaking, community laundries, had relieved them of much household drudgery, while nurseries and kindergartens freed them of anxiety about their small children as they worked. He pictured for us the determination of the peasants and townspeople alike to have more schools for their children, technical education for adults, more recreation and sports, more films, more plays, a richer cultural life and new modern homes to replace the thatched-roofed, bamboo-slat walled cottages

we saw everywhere. "In three years our Pai Mao Commune will be entirely new, maybe even in less time," he concluded.

We were taken to see the future Pai Mao Commune three years hence plotted out in miniature in the Exhibition Hall—the nerve center with zoning for factories, power plant, administration, schools, hospitals and clinics, theaters, athletic grounds, the park; and residential areas in three outlying districts connected with the center by wide highways and water-ways. The little creek now flowing through the commune and providing the main artery of transportation to Shanghai, save for the highway, we were told would be widened and deepened within one year to permit navigation by 3,000 ton steamers. Today only junks and hand-poled boats ply the creek, though the commune has already purchased one motor boat and others will be added.

"But where will all the money and materials come from to enable the commune to build everything new in such a short time? This represents a tremendous investment," we, the skeptical visitors, asked. Our host quickly reminded us that the collective ownership of local resources now meant that the commune itself was self-sufficient in all materials needed for construction except steel which would be purchased from Shanghai. "And of course we have the manpower and will build all of these things ourselves."

As we went back to the headquarters of the commune, the Head told us of the benefits which are already available at no cost to the members—free, completely free: food

(700 catties of grain per head, also vegetables, meat and fish); clothing including tailoring and shoes; medical service and hospital care when needed; education from nursery and kindergarten through middle (secondary) school, while students ready for university or technical studies will be sent elsewhere at commune expense; theater and cinemas; barbering, shampoos, baths, daily necessities such as toothpaste, tooth brushes, soap and cosmetics for women from 16 to 45 years of age.

We could not refrain from asking our host why the limit of 45 years for cosmetics to women. He replied laconically, "Well, our older women in the country are not accustomed to using cosmetics. By the time the younger generation grows up the age limit will doubtless be changed."

He described other free services also: a grant of 30 yuan to every couple getting married to entertain their friends, a grant of 50 yuan for every funeral and then the latest item voted just the night before by the Delegates' Congress after three days and three nights of work to complete harvesting their bumper crops: maternity leave of 40 days with full pay for expectant mothers and additional nourishing food such as more eggs, chicken, meat, extra sugar—an unheard of thing in the countryside before. We learned that housing was rent free even before the commune was organized. "But what about repairs?" we asked. "We don't bother to repair houses," replied the Head, because in three years time everyone will have a new house." "Fantastic" we, the incredulous visitors, murmured.

We also learned that this community had rid itself of schistoso-

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miasis and we saw the last few cases undergoing treatment in the hospital. The medical service in the commune, we were told, is provided by 52 medical people of which 27 are doctors and the others nurses and midwives. A series of clinics and health stations spreads over the countryside while the 30-bed hospital treats the more serious patients.

We paid a quick visit to the old people's home called the "Home of Happiness" which cares for the over-sixty old men and women who have no relatives to look after them. One toothless old lady with a weather-beaten parchment-like skin, her face wreathed in smiles, told us that she owed her happy old age with no worries about food-shelter-clothing and a decent burial to the Communist Party. "For 45 years I was left to eke out an existence for myself as a widow. I had no children. Nobody cared whether I lived or died, whether I ate or starved—and I almost starved several times. And now I have a comfortable happy home for the rest of my days." The director of the "Home of Happiness" said some old people living with their sons or daughters almost envied those in the home because they had so much better care. We also saw that some of the sixty, seventy, even eighty year old cronies were doing simple handicraft work, spinning yarn and knitting gloves—a work of love for them for which they received regular wages!

Our visit took place on Sunday so that we could not see the schools in action. However, notable progress has been made in education. Universal primary school education has already been introduced with all boys and girls between 7 and 14

years of age in school—a total of some 3,000. In addition the regular middle school has 180 students and the agricultural middle school 139 in attendance. Students majoring in agriculture work part-time in the fields and study part-time in class. The commune is proud that illiteracy has been fundamentally wiped out—the only illiterates left being over sixty years of age.

Before leaving Pai Mao Commune to return to Shanghai, our host insisted that we visit the kindergarten, the public service restaurants, the experimental plots of late rice with such heavy heads of grain and such dense close planting that only by an ingenious network of ropes could the grain be kept standing shoulder-high until it was harvested. We did not have time to see the livestock and fisheries sidelines nor could we stay for a performance of the commune's own opera troupe, but we could not help noticing the murals, cartoons and poems decorating the many walls in the village—expressions of the new cultural upsurge in the countryside.

Our host said as he bade us farewell, pointing toward the horizon, "There is the first building of our new Commune Center going up." And there it was before our very eyes, the red brick walls of the auditorium rising above the thick, heavy-headed stands of rice in the experimental plots and the stacks of grain on the threshing floors surrounding the village. Yes, we were agreed that the people of Pai Mao Commune and thousands of other communes throughout the country would realize their dreams in three years or more than likely—even sooner.

SOVIET 7-YEAR PLAN TARGETS

We publish below in somewhat condensed form, the main target figures of, the new Seven-Year Plan for the development of the National Economy of the USSR in 1959-1965. This material is taken from the Theses of the report by Nikita Khrushchev prepared for the Twenty-First Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which is to meet in January, 1959. The Theses were published in the Soviet press (Nov. 14) for broad pre-Congress discussion.

GROSS industrial output in 1965 will increase by about 80 per cent as compared with 1958, including an increase of 85 per cent in the production of the means of production and of 62 per cent in the production of the means of consumption. In the coming seven-year period the annual average increase in industrial production will be about 135 billion rubles as against 90 billion rubles in the previous seven-year period.

Plans For Heavy Industry

In 1965 it is planned to produce 65-70 million tons of pig iron, or 65-77 per cent more than in 1958; steel—86-91 million tons, or 56-65 per cent more; rolled metal—65-70 million tons, or 52-64 per cent more. To secure iron ore supplies for the expansion of the iron-and-steel industry, it is envisaged to develop new iron ore deposits—mainly open-hearth workings—and to build powerful ore-processing enterprises. It is envisaged to produce 150-160 million tons of marketable iron ore (230-245 million tons of crude ore).

New productive capacities are to be built and commissioned in 1959-1965; for the production of 24-30 million tons of pig iron, 28-36 million tons of steel and 23-29 million tons of rolled metal.

As regards the expansion of the non-ferrous metal industry, it is envisaged to increase the output of aluminum about 2.8 times and refined copper by 1.9 times, compared with 1958. The output of nickel, magnesium, titanium, germanium, silicon and other non-ferrous, particularly rare metals will be substantially expanded.

A powerful aluminum industry is to be built up in the Krasnoyarsk Territory of Siberia to use the large nephelite reserves and obtain as by-products cheap cement and soda products.

The output of diamonds will increase in 1965 about 14-fold as compared with 1958.

The target figures for 1959-1965 envisage a fast expansion of the chemical industry whose over-all output will be increased almost three times. The large-scale production of new synthetic materials (synthetic fibers, for instance, 12- to 14-fold) will make possible a sharp rise in the output of top-quality and cheap consumer goods.

During the seven-year period the output of mineral fertilizer will increase threefold. More than 140 large chemical enterprises will be built or completed in the seven-year period and more than 130 modernized.

Oil production is planned to be brought up to 230-240 million tons

in 1965, or more than double the amount in 1958. The extraction and production of gas is to be increased in 1965 to 150 million cubic meters as against the 30 billion cubic meters in 1958. Some 26,000 kilometers of trunk gas pipeline and derivation lines for cities are to be laid in the next seven years.

Power, Machine Building

By 1965 electricity production will have increased to 500-520 billion kilowatt hours, that is, 2.2-fold as compared with 1958. The rated capacity of electric power stations will have more than doubled. The priority construction of thermal electric power stations will increase the total power station capacity to be installed in the next seven years by about ten million kilowatts through a reduction of capital investment in hydropower development.

Along with the commissioning of powerful thermal electric power stations, it is planned to complete the building of the Stalingrad, Bratsk, Kremenchug, Votkinsk, Bukhtarma and other hydroelectric power stations.

Single power grids will be created in the next seven years in the European part of the USSR and in Central Siberia, and unified power grids will arise in some regions of the Northwest, the West, the Transcaucasus, Kazakhstan and Central Asia. It is planned to increase 2.5 to 3-fold the length of power transmission lines with voltages ranging from 35-500 kilovolts.

Far-reaching measures for the peaceful application of atomic energy will be carried out during the next seven years. A number of nuclear power stations with different

types of reactors will be completed.

A nearly twofold increase is planned in the output of the engineering and metal-working industries. In 1959-1965 the machine-building industry will ensure the manufacture of up-to-date equipment for all the sectors of the national economy, the creation and production of machines incorporating the latest achievements and discoveries in science and technology, particularly in radio-electronics; the theories of superconductivity, ultrasound, radioactive isotopes, transistors, nuclear energy; the further development of industrial specialization and cooperation, etc. At least 1,300 automatic lines are to be put into service.

The output of metal-cutting machine tools is expected to increase about 50 per cent, that of automatic and semi-automatic lines by 1.9 to 2.1 times, that of turbines by 2.8 to 3 times, and that of automobiles by 1.7 times.

Light Industry

The gross output of light industry will increase about 50 per cent between 1959 and 1965. The proposed rates of increase in the production of fabric, clothing and footwear will enable the USSR to come close to the United States both in the general volume of production and in per capita production by the end of the next seven-year period.

Some 156 major light-industry establishments are to be built and the construction of the 114 projects started before 1959 are to be completed. In the per-capita production of a number of staple foodstuffs the USSR will catch up with and pass

the most advanced capitalist countries in the next seven years period.

The output of household goods is to be doubled.

The proposed program for the further development of agriculture will be accompanied by an improvement of the socialist relations of production and by the reduction of the gap between the two forms of socialist ownership—collective farm and public property. As collective-farm production develops, the material and every-day needs of the collective farmers will be met to a fuller extent by social production, and therefore their personal husbandries will gradually lose their significance.

Agriculture, Transport

The total volume of agricultural production will increase in 1965 by about 1.7 times as compared with 1958. By the end of the seven-year period an annual grain harvest of 10-11 billion poods (one pood equals 36.113 pounds) is to be ensured. The production of raw cotton is to be brought up to 5.7-6.1 million tons, an increase of 35-45 per cent over 1957; that of sugar beet is to be increased to 70-78 million tons, a 1.8 to 2-fold increase.

The output of major farm products per one hundred acres of farmland will exceed the present respective figures for the United States. More than one million tractors, about 400,000 grain harvesters and large quantities of other machinery are to be manufactured for use in farming during the next seven years. Power consumption in agriculture will increase about four-fold.

To develop transport services and communications, rail-borne freight

turnover is to be increased 40-45 per cent during the next seven years. The length of railway lines to be changed over to electric and diesel power will reach approximately 100,000 kilometers. The network of electrified railway lines in the USSR will be roughly tripled.

The turnover of sea-borne freight will roughly double and that on inland waterways will increase about 1.6 times during the next seven years.

Air transport, with the introduction of high-speed, multi-seat turbojet and turboprop aircraft, will become one of the principal means of passenger travel and will increase about sixfold during the next seven years. More than 90 airports are to be built or reconstructed.

The volume of government capital investment will increase 1.8 times during the 1959-1965 period as compared with the preceding seven-year period to equal roughly the total volume of capital investment in the national economy throughout the years of Soviet rule. Industrial investment during this period will roughly double that of the preceding seven years.

The targets of the seven-year plan provide for a further specialization and comprehensive development of the economies of all the Union Republic as well as of the major economic and geographic areas, such as the Urals, Siberia, Central Asia and the Transcaucasus. The main shifts in the distribution of productive forces are meant primarily to ensure a stepped-up economic development of the eastern regions, including the Urals, Siberia, the Far East, Kazakhstan and Central Asia. The coal-mining industry of Siberia

and Kazakhstan, for instance, will be given priority over that of other regions. Changes are to be made in the distribution of the oil and gas industries which are to be given priority in the European part of the USSR and Central Asia.

Living Standards, Health

The targets of the seven-year plan provide for a big advance in the material and cultural standards of the population of the USSR. By 1965 the national income will have increased by 62-65 per cent as against 1958. The rate of consumption will have increased by 60-63 per cent. The number of factory and office workers in the national economy will have increased by approximately 11.5 million (21 per cent) to reach 66 million.

The real wages and salaries will have increased by an average of 40 per cent and the real incomes of collective farmers will have risen no less than 40 per cent. Further improvements are to be made in the pension scheme.

A five-day workweek, with two days off a week, is to be introduced to meet the wish of the majority of factory and office workers who find it more convenient to have a 6-7 hour workday with two days off a week than a 5-6 hour workday with a 6-day workweek. The change-over to a shorter workday and reduction of the number of workdays are to be made without resulting in any loss of pay. As a result, the USSR will have the world's shortest workday and workweek.

The volume of retail, state and cooperative trade will increase by 57-62 per cent (in comparable prices) in the seven years, with a

consistent policy of price production.

A program has been outlined for the further improvement of the health services. Capital investment in this field will amount to 25.4 billion rubles, an 80 per cent increase over the 1952-1958 total.

Education, Culture, Science

A considerable expansion of general secondary education is to take place in the cities and rural areas, and the facilities for secondary and higher specialized education in night classes and by correspondence are to be extended. The total school enrollment will have increased to 38-40 million by 1965 compared with the 30 million of 1958. The switchover will be made from seven-year to eight-year universal compulsory schooling.

Two million three hundred thousand specialists will be graduated from schools at the university level during the 1959-1965 period compared with the 1,700,000 of the preceding seven-year period.

In the field of science a large-scale program of scientific research is to be carried out, and research staffs and facilities are to be geared to major researches of theoretical and practical value.

There is a vast prospect for the development of the movies, the press, radio and television in the next seven years. Some 100 television centers and television stations will be built. The total circulation of books will have increased to 1.6 billion copies by 1965, that of magazines will be more than doubled, while annual newspaper circulation will increase more than 50 per cent. in the seven-year period.

The theses emphasize that the ful-

fillment of the seven-year plan will be a further important phase in peaceful economic competition of the two systems—socialist and capitalist. The principal objective of the seven-year plan is to ensure a further economic advance of the country and a rise in the living standards of the people, thus winning the peaceful competition with the capitalist countries. With the seven-year plan fulfilled, the Soviet Union will be able to produce more industrial output per capita than Britain and West Germany, the most developed capitalist countries of Europe, are producing today, and will move up to first place in Europe.

In 1965 the Soviet Union will surpass the United States as regards the absolute production of some of the key items and will come near the present-day United States' level of output of other items. The USSR will surpass the United States' present-day level of over-all and per-capita production of staple food-stuffs.

The Soviet Union's superiority in

the rates of increase of production, the theses state, provide a real basis for overtaking and surpassing the United States' level of per-capita production within some five years after 1965. By that time, or perhaps earlier, the Soviet Union will have advanced to first place in the world both in the absolute volume of production and in per-capita production which will ensure it the world's highest standard of living. This, the theses emphasize, will be a world historic victory for socialism in peaceful competition with capitalism.

Not only do the achievements of the Soviet Union and of the other socialist countries not threaten anybody, the theses state, but they are a guarantee of the preservation of peace and security of the peoples. The seven-year plan is the Soviet Union's concrete offer to the capitalist world to compete in the domain of peaceful economic activity, for the Soviet Union is opposed to any competition in the arms race which is conducted by the imperialist circles of the Western Powers.

HARRY SCHWARTZ ON SOVIET 7-YEAR TARGETS

"DURING THE POST-WAR years the Soviet economy has increased its output at a much faster rate than the United States, a phenomenon related to the relatively early stages of industrial development in which the Soviet Union found itself as compared with the mature economy of the United States. A recession in the United States, with particularly serious impact upon our heavy industry, has coincided with a new spurt in Soviet industrial and agricultural production. . . .

"The key question for the future is whether the Soviet Union can continue to maintain the swift rate of production growth which has marked the postwar years. Premier Khrushchev's new and increased goals for 1965 indicate his belief that this fast pace can be continued.

"Supporting Premier Khrushchev in this belief is the fact that the Soviet Union has abundant reserves of raw materials and a large educated population, and is master of modern technology in most important fields. These factors would seem to guarantee that significant economic progress will continue indefinitely."

New York Times, October 26

Soviet Proposals on Berlin

We print below a resume of the Soviet note of November 27 to the United States proposing a Free City status for Western Berlin. Similar communications were sent to Great Britain and France. In condensing the contents we have sought to adhere as closely as possible to the language and essence of the original.

THE DIVIDED city of Berlin, lying within the boundaries of the German Democratic Republic, but with its Western part severed from the G.D.R. and a part of the German Federal Republic, has, due to foreign occupation, become a dangerous center of conflict between the great powers who were allies in the last war.

German Militarism Main Problem

The Berlin problem had its roots in the pre-war days when, rejecting the proffered cooperation with the Soviet Union against Hitlerite aggression, the Western powers, as became particularly obvious in the period of the Munich deal, sought to turn Nazi aggression eastward. Only when Hitler turned westward instead was joint resistance to the fascist powers, which could have prevented the world war if established earlier, organized. The Soviet Government appreciates the cooperation that took place in the struggle against fascism; its people would like to preserve the sentiments of trust and friendship which marked their wartime relations with the United States, Great Britain, France and other countries.

At Potsdam a joint policy was agreed on the main core of which

was to prevent German militarism from unleashing another world war. To this end, the four powers pledged themselves to extirpate German nazism and militarism forever, and to destroy their economic foundations in the cartels, syndicates, trusts and other monopoly organizations. The Potsdam agreement provided that Germany was to be regarded as a single economic whole during the occupation period, with central German Administrative departments, and the Council of Foreign Ministers it set up was instructed to prepare a peace treaty. The final goal was a united, peace-loving, democratic German state.

But instead of continued fruitful cooperation between the USSR and the three Western powers, envisaged by the USSR and some leaders of Britain and the United States, in particular Franklin Roosevelt, "the outstanding statesman of America," a sharp deterioration in relations set in, signalized by Winston Churchill's Fulton, Missouri speech, in March 1946. The ideological struggle, in itself inevitable in view of the differing social systems, became aggravated to the point where the world was split into antagonistic military alignments, the atomic arms race began.

The situation deteriorated still more sharply as the Western powers instituted policies in Germany counter to the Potsdam agreement.

Violations included refusal to the USSR of the agreed amount of industrial equipment from Western

Germany as partial compensation for war destruction and damage; restoration of the military-economic potential of Western Germany; setting up a separate state, the German Federal Republic, in Western Germany under continued occupation by the troops of the three Western powers; establishing a West German Army and encouraging rearmament; including Western Germany in NATO; and now arming it with atomic and rocket weapons.

Only after the setting up of a separate state, the Federal German Republic, in Western Germany, was the German Democratic Republic set up in Eastern Germany. Only after the inclusion of the F.G.R. in NATO did the Soviet Union and the Eastern European countries which had been the victims of Nazi aggression, set up the Warsaw Treaty including in it the G.D.R.

Unity Through Confederation

Now two states exist in Germany with basically different social systems. "The Soviet Government considers that the settlement of the question of the social structures of both German states is the concern of the German themselves." The F.G.R., encouraged by the NATO countries and above all the United States, is fanning the "cold war," does not wish peaceful unification, and, hostile to the advance of the G.D.R. toward socialism, wishes to abolish it. The G.D.R. is unwilling to accept forced unification on terms that mean restoration of capitalism and militarism. Other peoples of Europe, too, oppose such a solution.

There is only one way of uniting Germany as a peace-loving and dem-

ocratic state. This is through setting up a German confederation without affecting the social bases of the G.D.R. and the F.G.R., by contacts and agreements between both German states. A gradual rapprochement and merger of the two states would thus be insured.

The Government of the USSR is supporting proposals of the G.D.R. to this end, but so far without results, since the NATO countries and the F.G.R. are directing their efforts toward militarization and are doing nothing toward concluding a peace treaty or uniting Germany and have prevented enforcement of the provisions of the Potsdam agreement dealing with these aims. The only Allied Agreement on Germany being complied with today by the Western powers is that on the quadripartite status of Berlin, whereby Western Berlin has become a sort of state within a state and a center for subversive activities against the G.D.R., the USSR and other Warsaw Pact countries. The three Western powers are freely communicating with Western Berlin through the territory and airspace of the G.D.R. which they refuse even to recognize. But since the occupation privileges relating to Berlin are based on the Potsdam Treaty, all other provisions of which have been violated by them, they have in fact lost their occupation rights in Berlin or any other part of Germany. Furthermore, occupation rights were specifically stipulated as of limited duration in the quadripartite agreements, and there can be no justification for maintaining them more than thirteen years.

The United States, along with Great Britain and France, in their notes of September 30, turned down

the proposals of the USSR and the G.D.R.,* still maintaining the unrealistic position that German unity is to be established by the USSR, the U.S.A., Great Britain and France, while avoiding negotiations with the countries concerned on drafting a peace treaty. Thus:

The result is a real vicious circle. The Government of the United States is objecting to the drafting of a German peace treaty by referring to the absence of a united German state, while at the same time hampering the reunification of Germany by rejecting the only feasible opportunity of solving this problem through agreement between the two German states.

The Soviet Government is ready to negotiate at any time on drafting a peace treaty, but the absence of such a treaty cannot be an excuse for attempting to maintain the occupation regime.

The Soviet Union maintains normal relations with both German states on the basis of equality, respect for each other's sovereignty and non-interference in each other's affairs. The Western Governments declared an end to their occupation regime in the territory of the F.G.R. when they signed the Paris agreements; this should also have been applied to Western Berlin as a part of the F.G.R. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union has scrupulously observed the quadripartite status of Berlin up to this time. But the very essence

of the quadripartite agreement has been violated in the arming of Western Germany and turning into an instrument against the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Treaty Allies. Neither the Soviet Union, the G.D.R., nor any other self-respecting power could be expected to support favorable conditions for hostile actions against itself.

Thus, acknowledging the real state of affairs, the Soviet Government notifies the United States Government that it considers as null and void the quadripartite agreement on Berlin and related agreements.

The Soviet Government will enter into negotiations with the Government of the G.D.R. "at an appropriate time" with a view to transferring to the latter the functions exercised temporarily by virtue of these Allied agreements.

The best way to solve the Berlin question would be through the enforcement of the Potsdam agreements. But this would be possible only if the Western powers, in common with the USSR, should resume a policy toward Germany in accord with the spirit and principles of that agreement. In the present circumstances this would mean the simultaneous withdrawal of the F.G.R. from NATO and the G.D.R. from the Warsaw Treaty Organization, and agreement that neither German state should have armed forces in excess of those needed to maintain internal law and order and guard the frontiers. If the United States is unwilling to reach such a solution "it will have no reason, either legal or moral, for insisting on the quadripartite status of Berlin."

The USSR has no territorial claims in Germany. It seeks only to end

* Reference is made to proposals of the USSR and the G.D.R. for representatives of the four powers and of the two German states to hold consultations on the drafting of a peace treaty with Germany, still lacking 13 years after the end of the war, while noting that the question of German unity is a matter for the competence of the two German states alone. The USSR and the G.D.R. have consistently opposed any settlement of the question of unification by the four powers, under conditions that would impose the system prevailing in Western Germany on the East, and include a united Germany in NATO.

the abnormal and dangerous situation in Berlin. The ending of the occupation regime would do no harm to the Western powers but on the contrary would improve the international atmosphere in Europe. It is on this basis that the USSR appeals to the United States as well as Great Britain and France to cooperate in relaxing international tensions, in ending the cold war and clear the way for the establishment of good relations with the USSR.

The "Free City" Proposal

The most correct and natural solution, of course:

Would be for the Western part of Berlin, virtually detached from the German Democratic Republic, to be reunited with its Eastern part and for Berlin to become a single city within the state on whose land it is situated.

However, the USSR recognizes the difficulties of any such solution for the West and does not wish to cause any painful disruption, thus:

The Soviet Government considers that upon the ending of foreign occupation, the population of Western Berlin should be given the right to establish a way of life of its own choice. Should the inhabitants of Western Berlin desire to preserve their present way of life, based on private capitalist ownership, it is up to them to do so. The USSR, on its part, will respect any choice the West Berliners may make.

The USSR therefore proposes that for the time being the question be settled by making Western Berlin an independent political entity—a free city—without any interference whatsoever from the existing German states or any other state, with its own government and complete

control over its economy, administration and other affairs. It might be possible to agree on the demilitarization of the free city. The four powers and both German states might agree to respect the status of Western Berlin as a free city as was done with respect to the neutral status of the Austrian Republic. The Soviet Government would have no objection to the United Nations also sharing in some way observation of West Berlin's free status.

Obviously some arrangement would have to be entered into with the G.D.R. for guarantees of free movement of passenger and freight traffic between the free city and the outside world, both eastward and westward, while West Berlin would have to commit itself not to tolerate on its territory hostile subversive activity directed against the G.D.R. or any other state. Under such conditions, West Germany could become a center for contacts and cooperation between both parts of Germany.

Free city status would make possible expansion of the economy of West Berlin through economic contacts with both East and West, while the USSR would undertake to place orders for manufactured goods and supply raw materials and foodstuffs on a commercial basis thus contributing to a rise in living standards. If the Western powers would agree to consider this proposal the USSR would undertake official contact with the G.D.R. on this matter, which has already been discussed with it unofficially, and to get its consent, although this would mean a definite sacrifice on the part of the G.D.R. for the sake of strengthening peace in Europe and the advance of the national interests

of the German people. The USSR has resolved to end the occupation regime and hopes the United States will take a realistic stand on this issue. The USSR is ready to open negotiations with the United States on this question, but:

If this proposal is not acceptable to the United States Government, there is no topic left for talks on the Berlin question by the four occupying powers.

The Soviet Union strives for the necessary changes to be affected in a calm and unhurried atmosphere, taking maximum account of the interests of all concerned. It realizes that some time will be necessary to reach agreement among the powers and that talks may be necessary between the respective city authorities and between the G.D.R. and the F.G.R. Therefore the USSR will make no changes in the present procedure for military traffic of the Western powers between West Berlin and the F.G.R. for six months. If this period is not used for reaching a relevant agreement, the Soviet Union will carry out these measures in agreement with the G.D.R., so that, like any other independent state, the latter will exercise its full sovereignty over its land, water and air space.

This means an end to all contacts still maintained between representatives of the armed forces and other officials of the Soviet Union in Germany and corresponding representatives of the armed forces and other officials of the Western powers on questions pertaining to Berlin. (In other words, they will have to deal directly with the G.D.R.) Advocates of a policy of force "should take into consideration that they as-

sume a very grave responsibility for its consequences."

The Government of the Soviet Union would like to hope that the problem of normalizing the situation in Berlin, which life itself raised before our states as an imperative necessity, will in any case be solved in accordance with considerations of statesmanship, of the interests of peace between the peoples, without any unnecessary nervous strain and aggravation of the "cold war."

If Western statesmen are guided in this and other questions by their hatred for communism, for the Socialist countries, no good will come out of this. The Soviet Union and other Socialist states will not deny their existence as Socialist States.

The note concludes as follows:

Any violation of the frontiers of the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Czechoslovakia, any aggressive actions against any member state of the Warsaw Treaty, will be regarded by all its participants as an act of aggression against them all and will immediately cause appropriate retaliation.

The Soviet Government believes that it would be sensible to recognize the situation prevailing in the world and to create normal relations for coexistence between all states, to expand world trade, to build the relations between our countries on the basis of the well-known principles—mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's affairs, equality and mutual benefit.

The Soviet Union, its people and Government, are sincerely striving for restoration of good relations with the United States, relations based on trust, which are quite feasible as shown by the joint struggle against the Hitlerite aggressors, and which in peacetime would hold out the advantage of mutually enriched spiritual and material cooperation between our peoples, and to all other men and women the blessing of a tranquil life in conditions of an enduring peace.

A New Soviet Novel

reviewed by RALPH PARKER

IN A country where people are still old-fashioned enough to read books, where they mob the bookshops to get their names on the subscription lists for the collected works of Rabindranath Tagore and gather at the foot of monuments to argue about art and literature, the publication of a new novel about their own lives, written with passion and punch, is bound to cause a sensation. To say that all Moscow is talking about Vsevolod Kochetov's *The Yershov Brothers* would be an exaggeration, for not every reader in Moscow has been able to get hold of a copy, though the cheap paper-back edition of 500,000 copies was sold out in a day and the copies of the Leningrad magazine in which the novel first appeared during the summer have become collectors' items.

The fact that *The Yershov Brothers* is what the Russians called a *sporny* (controversial) novel and also that it is in places a thinly disguised documentary on recent differences of opinion in the cultural field is enough to awaken interest in it. For the Soviet people are in an argumentative mood. During the last four or five years they have become more closely involved in policy debates; they have grown to feel themselves closer to the places where decisions are made and to those who make them; they are far better informed, and, above all, they are not afraid to open their mouths on a number of subjects.

The first thing, therefore, to be said about Kochetov's novel is that it deals with a far wider range of topics—delicate topics—than any Soviet novel published for a long time. The "personality cult," the fault that quite worthy Communist Party officials committed by living "apart from the masses," the problems of former collaborators in readjusting themselves to life after serving their prison sentences, the "Hungarian ques-

tion" and its repercussions, the heavy industry versus consumer goods controversy, all these and many more are handled frankly and freely.

This closeness to life is undoubtedly the feature of the novel that has counted most in winning for it the approval of writers in *Pravda* and *Kommunist*, though that feature alone would not have guaranteed the book's success in those quarters. The author's ideological position has to be taken into account. Kochetov would be the last to deny that his novel is tendentious. Indeed, he engages himself so completely on one side in this story of the clash between orthodoxy and revisionism that his writing cannot strictly be described as polemical. The ideas he puts into the minds and mouths of his "villains" are not held up to us for our reflective consideration, they are illustrations of the characters' villainy.

When this novel comes to be read abroad, readers will inevitably compare it with Dudintsev's *Not By Bread Alone*. There are, in fact, certain similarities, as there are between a negative and positive photographic print. Both books are built up around the story of an invention in an industrial process. Dudintsev's idiosyncratic, lone-wolf inventor Lopatkin, it will be recalled, fought an individual battle for his invention against an ambitious, time-serving manager, overcautious, conservative scientists, technologists, and a ministerial apparatus that had become hidebound. His attempts to rally public opinion through the press failed and it was only as a result of the efforts of a handful of individuals, aided by chance, that right and justice prevailed. Even so, at the end, the reader is left with an impression that the forces that stand in the way of progress, decent human relations, individual happiness remain uncurtailed. *Not By Bread Alone*

was interpreted, rightly or wrongly, as a challenge, tinged with a spirit of anarchy, to virtually the whole apparatus of state government, and the fact that it was written of a period several years before the 20th Party Congress did not weaken its impact on the Russia of late 1956.

The inventor in *The Yershov Brothers* bears a superficial resemblance to Dudintsev's Lopatkin. He too is something of a crank in his private life. But he is a pitifully weak character who criminally steals the credit for an invention. Moreover, in Kochetov's book the ambitious high-ranking time-server—the parallel to Dudintsev's Drozdov—is in conspiracy with the inventor. And as the plot unfolds we see justice done as the result of collective working-class action initiated by "iron," strong-willed old Communists who have stood firm during the difficult year of 1956, which is the setting for the action.

What, I believe, Kochetov is saying—his message—is something like this: If in these days after the 20th Congress people are to be found who are too free with their criticism of the Party and state apparatus and leading Soviet figures, and who champion "new" theories about the "freedom of the creative artist" and the need to revise the concept of socialist realism in the arts, and advocate a more tolerant attitude towards bourgeois ideology—the attitude of the "thaw"—then regard them with suspicion, for it may well be that they are potential if not actual enemies of Soviet society, using revisionist slogans to mask their own personal ambitions. Revisionism, in short, is equated with opportunism. Thaws are all very well but, the author reminds us, the season of thaw is when rot spreads and when the scum forms on the spring waters.

It was bound to come—this slashing, sarcastic onslaught on those who scrambled on to the bandwagon in early 1956, this blistering condemnation of all who demanded a "radical reform" of the system and who held in question many

fundamental tenets of the socialist state. It was foreshadowed by a series of uncompromising articles in the *Literary Gazette* by Alexander Safronov several months ago and by sharp-shooting in *Soviet Culture* aimed at those who had gone very far in attempts to discredit certain established figures in the cultural field and who had laid themselves wide open to counter-attack by an uncritical rehabilitation of others who had long been in the shade.

Has Kochetov himself gone too far? There are many here who think he has and who consider that he has over-generalized a conflict in the rather narrow literary circles of Moscow into one between the working class and the intellectuals that really does not exist. Something of this nature was suggested in the *Pravda* review of the novel, and at a five-hour discussion of *The Yershov Brothers* a considerable number of leading intellectuals suggested that the author had attached too much importance to a relatively brief period of hesitation and doubt among the Moscow literati.

This criticism may be valid. Nevertheless, for the student of Soviet affairs, Kochetov's novel (it will appear in English in the January issue of the magazine *Soviet Literature*) is a most illuminating document and much can be learned from the way it is received both officially and by the public here. It is the reflection of an attitude towards the "thaw" that is quite uncompromising. Ideas that were widely acceptable in 1956 are presented in it as evidence of weakness, lack of principle, even worse. There is a most significant passage in which a Party secretary argues with one of the Yershovs, a tough old Communist worker, about the conclusions to be drawn from the Hungarian events.

The Party official takes the line that what happened on the streets of Budapest in November 1956 "could not happen here." The worker agrees but argues that there are ominous symptoms and urges greater vigilance. "It is better to exaggerate the danger than to

underestimate it." And he draws a direct comparison between those Hungarians who assisted the "foreign interventionists" and the revisionists to be found in Soviet society.

This is sharp writing. Nothing like it has appeared in print here before. Hence the great interest, not unmixed with disquiet, in *The Yershow Brothers*.

RALPH PARKER

New Watches Needed

a review by MURRAY YOUNG

Journey to the Beginning, by Edgar Snow. Random House. New York. 423 pages. \$5.00.

EDGAR SNOW's invaluable *Red Star Over China* (1938) is still, along with the reports of Anna Louise Strong and Agnes Smedley, a basic source of information about the origins and earlier accomplishments of the leaders of the Communist Party of China.

The present book, an autobiography of sorts, fills out the background of the writing of *Red Star Over China* and describes in detail Snow's work in setting up the Industrial Cooperatives that at one time seemed to promise some solution for China's desperate need for industrial development. (It would be interesting to know if these earlier local industries influenced in any way the present drive in China to build each commune into a self-sustaining agricultural and industrial community.) Rewi Alley, whose articles and translations from Chinese poems have appeared in *New World Review*, was the leader and inspiration of this cooperative movement and Mr. Snow speaks of Alley's profound knowledge of China and steadfast devotion to the country's welfare with great respect—a respect not widely attributed to the famous figures whose names frequently appear in the book.

Respect is paid, however, almost with awe, to the fabled person of Soong Ching-ling (Madame Sun Yat-sen) with whom Mr. Snow had frequent contact during his years in China. As for the

rest of the Soong family—her sisters Madame Chiang Kai-shek and Madame Kung, and her brother T. V. Soong—only contempt is shown. The story of Madame Kung's manipulation of Chinese finances—one of the causes of the collapse of the Chinese monetary system—must be read to be believed.

The section of the book dealing with the author's wartime assignments, chiefly in Moscow, seem curiously thin and unimpressive. Happily he returns to Asia in his concluding chapters and drawing upon his rich and unique Chinese experience makes a number of penetrating observations about America's relations with the whole of the Asian continent.

Like his friend Vincent Sheean, Mr. Snow seems to have fallen—or seems to have wanted to fall—under the spell of Gandhi. This whole episode is a curious excursion into the mystique of personality in which rationality enters in the person of Prime Minister Nehru.

In a personal conversation, Snow tells Nehru how Sheean's watch had stopped during his first interview with Gandhi and how it had stopped again at the moment Gandhi was killed. He then relates how both his and Sheean's watches had stopped at the precise moment of their first joint interview with Nehru. What, Snow asked, did Nehru make of such mysterious stoppages? "Then this son of 'occult' Asia, whom his people called, Jewel of Asia, tilted his Gandhi hat to one side and smiled: 'What you need,' he said, 'are new watches.'"

Of the Republican's charge in 1952 that the Democrats had "sold China to the Russians" Mr. Snow says:

China was not, and could not have been, "sold out" by any Americans. China was never for a moment ours to sell. It was not ours to have and to hold in the 1940's any more than it is Russia's today. The Chinese revolution was not born in a vacuum unconnected with the outside world, but it was first and last a product of Chinese history, and only secondarily influenced by external phenomena.

From his wide acquaintance with Asia Snow sees the development of colonial and semi-colonial countries in perspective:

The old Asia was gone and a free Asia and a soon-to-be free Africa were rising to take their place beside the nations of the West, just when atomic power might offer mankind rich promises of universal release from slavery and want. New and imaginative thinking was needed to measure the swift changes in time-space relationships between the societies and continents of men, just as for the control and use of the dreadful and marvelous services of mass and energy being freed by fission and fusion.

The book concludes with what the author considers the real situation vis-a-vis the United States and the Soviet Union. He sees one long-range question of first magnitude:

This question is how much longer a still largely unplanned, uncoordinated, private-profit motivated economy can compete successfully against wholly state-planned socialized economies which (in Russia and China) have moved forward over recent years at three to four times the rate of growth in gross national production of the United States, and are at present more than doubling that rate of growth in contrast to an American production in recessionary decline.

Significantly Snow entitles the last chapter from which the above quotations are taken—"New Watches Needed."

Soviet Economics

Problems of Economics, English Translation of the USSR Journal *Voprosy Ekonomiki*. International Arts and Sciences Press. 33 West 42nd St., New York 36, N. Y. \$50.00 a year (12 issue); \$4.50 per copy.

THE SOVIET magazine "Problems of Economics" is now available in regular monthly translation.

The contents consists of three parts. First is what might be called economic engineering. This is the application of economic theory and analysis to particular production problems, with the purpose of achieving definite improvements. For example, P. Osada suggests measures for increasing utilization of existing iron and steel facilities through removal of bottlenecks, modernization and renovation of obsolete equipment, and application of the experience of the most successful enterprises. Certain features of the new seven-year plan are clearly related to these suggestions.

Second is theoretical discussion. Scores of Soviet economists have participated in a debate over pricing policy and its relation to the law of value, that has carried through for a number of issues of the magazine. There are also polemics against capitalist economic theories advanced in other countries, and answers to what Soviet economists regard as false evaluations of socialist economy in the capitalist countries.

Finally, there are articles on economic developments in other socialist countries.

The most forceful impression to an American reader is that Soviet economists are direct creative participants in socialist construction. Here economists are too often engaged in unrealistic theoretical abstractions, or in preparation of descriptive material and propaganda for corporate and government policy makers. These translations provide valuable information for economists and students of Soviet affairs.

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