

# BEIJING REVIEW

北京周報

A CHINESE WEEKLY OF  
NEWS AND VIEWS

**China's Realistic  
Population Policy**

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**Railways in the  
Modernization Drive**



## SPOTLIGHT



The fertile farmland on the former course of the Huanghe (Yellow) River in Suqian County, Jiangsu.



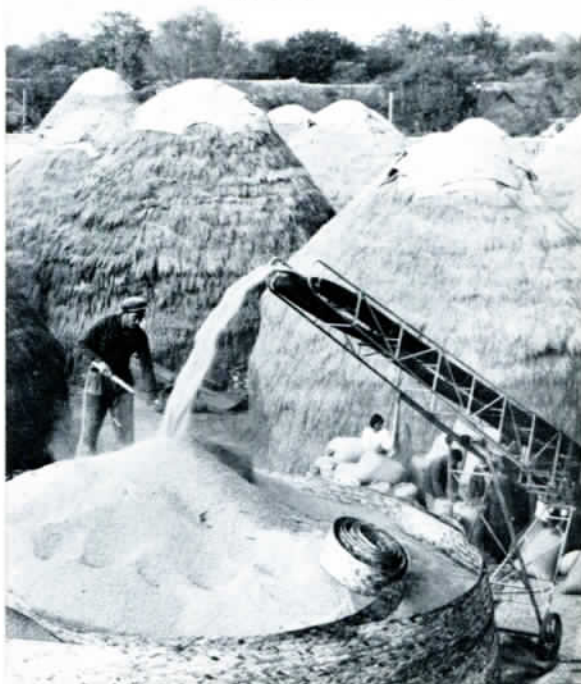
The first-stage of construction on the Huaian double-course ship lock, part of the project to divert water from south to north.

Geese raised by Ji Yunxiang, who specializes in raising domestic fowl.



Old peasants lead a peaceful life.

Peasants in Sihong County selling surplus grain to the state.



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<b>COVER:</b> Celebration as two sections of the Beijing-Qinhuangdao Electrified Railway are joined.		
Photo by Luo Dawei		

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK

### *China's Realistic Population Policy*

In 1980 China adopted a policy encouraging one child per couple for the next three or four decades, particularly for the next two. This policy is suited to China's conditions and is carried out through publicity. The way to achieve this is through the conscious action of the people, who use contraceptives or sterilization, not forced abortion as a few people abroad have alleged (p. 4).

### *Soviet Foreign Policy Getting Tough*

Soviet President Konstantin Chernenko has adopted counter-measures against the deployment of US missiles in Western Europe and is acting cool towards US proposals for arms talks. As well, a new Soviet offensive has been launched recently in Afghanistan, Chernenko supports Viet Nam's opposition to China, and Soviet anti-China propaganda has escalated (p. 12).

### *Viet Nam Attacks ASEAN Meeting*

The Vietnamese authorities have groundlessly attacked the 17th ASEAN foreign ministers' conference held recently, which reiterated its support for the Kampuchean people's struggle and called for a Vietnamese troop withdrawal from that country. This Vietnamese move is seen as part of its recent diplomatic offensive (p. 12).

### *Deng Xiaoping on Hongkong Issue*

A detailed report describing how the Chinese leader, in his meetings with Hongkong business leaders and prominent figures, defined the Chinese Government's position, principle and policy towards Hongkong (p. 16).

### *Railways, the Mainstay of China's Transportation*

Railways in China were slow in coming. But in the 35 years since the founding of New China, great progress has been made in railway construction. A basic network has been formed, 50,000 kilometres long, making China fifth in the world. China's railways are playing an increasingly important role in the ongoing modernization drive (p. 23).

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## A Realistic Population Policy

by **XIN LIN**  
Social Editor

It is internationally understood that family planning practised in China, with nearly one-quarter of the world's population, serves the interests of the country and the rest of the world as well. However, a few people abroad think differently. Basing their ideas on some isolated incidents, they accuse China of following a barbarous, cruel population policy which allows even for forced abortion. They have even tried to turn world opinion against China under this pretext.

To clarify the matter, it is necessary to explain China's population policy in detail.

Family planning in China is predicated on a policy suited to actual conditions and carried out through publicity and the use of contraceptives and sterilization.

Various kinds of publicity have appeared nationwide in the last few years. In rural areas, for example, repeated comparisons of facts and figures have brought home to many villagers that because of limited farm acreages, the excessively rapid growth of the population has seriously stunted the growth of China's per-capita grain output, in spite of the continuous rise in per-unit grain yield. The significance of family planning has sunk in, and the peasants have likened the state to a big boat which, if loaded with too many passengers, will move slowly or even capsize.

Understanding prompts action, and there have been marked successes in population control. The population's natural growth rate

dropped from 26 per thousand in 1970 to 11.54 per thousand in 1983. At present, 124 million of the 180 million women of child-bearing age have, of their own accord, been practising contraception.

According to a policy adopted in 1980, the watchword will remain "one couple, one child," probably into the next three or four decades, and particularly into the next two.

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***Family planning in China is predicated on a policy suited to actual conditions and carried out through publicity and the use of contraceptives and sterilization.***

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The government provides family planning guidance to different areas in light of their economic and cultural development, the composition of their population and the degree to which the local people accept the population policy. For example, the requirements for the rural areas are less strict than those for the cities, and a flexible policy is adopted for ethnic minorities.

In enforcing today's relatively strict population policy, China is actually paying the price for its past long-term mistakes, which saddled the country with too many people too quickly. Due to these mistakes, the Chinese population multiplied from 540 million in 1949 to 830 million in 1970.

In a recent effort to improve the practical guidelines for family planning, the Chinese Government has allowed some leeway in stipulations concerning second births.



For example, a couple whose first child is disabled due to non-congenital factors and has no hope of growing up healthy may have a second child. Second births are also allowed in families where only one of several brothers is able to father children.

Particularly worth noting is the policy that couples of only children can have two children. Because only children will become the majority of people at child-bearing age 20 years from now, the practice of one child per couple prevails only for a single generation.

But after all is said and done, China's goal of keeping the population below 1,200 million by the turn of the century remains unchanged. The same is true of the basic principles and practices of the family planning policy, including encouraging each couple to have only one child. This is because if each of the 220 million families in present-day China has just one more child, China's population will expand by 220 million, which is as large as the population of the United States. That would be a heavy burden for both China and the rest of the world.

China's family planning principles and policies are correct, and most places in the country are doing a good job. But problems of one kind or another will crop up in some places, because China is so large. These problems are not relevant to the state policy. The government is opposed to any coercion or force in family planning, and never hesitates to correct such problems the moment they are discovered.

### China's Population in 2000

"Prospects for China's Population in 2000" in issue No. 14 makes five estimates of China's population growth rate by the year 2000. Your accurate data and intelligent exposition make me understand your efforts to solve a long-standing problem in China.

Your policy of one child per couple often astonishes and puzzles people in the democratic countries. Now the article has cleared their minds of doubts. China does not enforce the one-child policy indiscriminately, but hopes to develop its productivity and socialist construction.

Just as the article pointed out, the five requirements for family planning work set by the state are an important guarantee to solving China's population problem.

**Tsuyoshi Seki**  
Chiba, Japan

### China Needs Modern Science & Technology

I had subscribed to *China Pictorial* for a long time. Last April, I was attracted by the colour cover of *Beijing Review* and began to subscribe to it. I hope you add more colour pages to your weekly.

Reading "China Expands Flexible Policies" in "Notes From the Editors," issue No. 19, I notice that you are paying more attention to importing new technology, using modern management methods and training competent personnel.

I worked in a mine in Miyun County, northwest of Beijing, 40 years ago. At that time I thought China could be strong and the living standards of its people be improved only when it developed its science and technology. Being a courageous and upright young

man, I could not endure the ruthless war of aggression and the atrocities committed by the Japanese troops, and determined to withdraw from China to Korea before the due date.

Understanding New China is the most significant thing in my later life. I would like to contribute my 30-year administrative experience to China's modernization drive.

**Junji Funahashi**  
Osaka, Japan

### More Articles on Tourism

I would like to read more articles on tourism — places of interest in China and the history associated with them. The feature on Shaanxi is a good illustration. It would be of great interest to people who have been to China or who are going. It might also act as a good advertisement for people to go to China as tourists.

I think the colour cover is an excellent innovation which makes the magazine more attractive and interesting. The "Spotlight" inside the front cover provides interesting information on Chinese topics.

**Walter Fung**  
Derby, England

### Suggestions for Articles

In my opinion, the "Spotlight" and "Art Page" should also be in colour, like your colour cover. I think most of your photos are not very clear. However, I do appreciate your layout and design as a whole.

**Joel Ngoma**  
Congo

I hope you write more articles on North Africa's politics and economics, and leave a space in your

magazine to describe southern Africa's literature, revolutionary activities and social systems. I also hope to read more articles on the history of the Chinese revolution.

**Youssef Mezzi**  
Casablanca, Morocco

I have been in love with China since my youth. I enjoy reading articles on politics in China. The column "From the Chinese Press" is always interesting. I hope you'll continue to publish articles on the Hongkong issue and on the reunification of the mainland and Taiwan.

**Ray Eaton**  
Missouri, USA

### Report on Patent Law

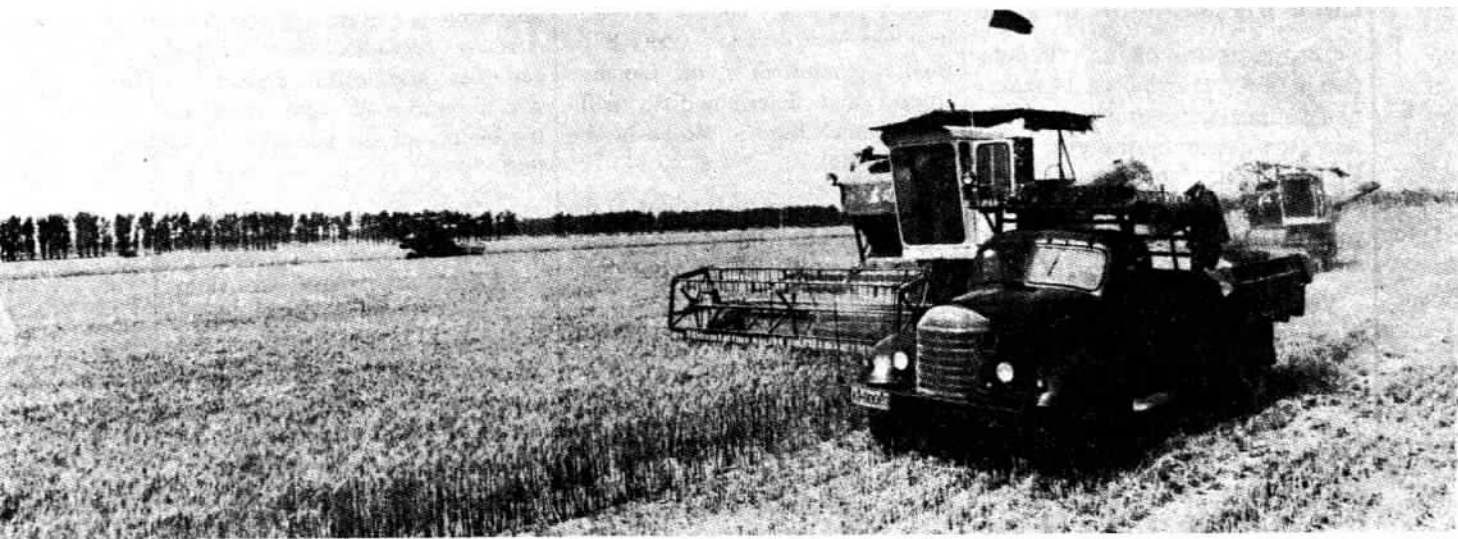
China's patent law had been reported in the Japanese press, but in a vastly different way from your report in the *Beijing Review*. You have provided me with more precise information about the document, whose contents I shall spread among my friends and fellow intellectuals.

The colour covers are very good and make it easier to keep your magazine. I usually look over a new issue quickly, and then save it until I have the time to read it more thoroughly.

**Tamotsu Nakai**  
Nagano, Japan

It's a pity that you merely gave the articles of the Patent Law of the People's Republic of China in issue No. 17. In my opinion, there should have been an introduction describing the registration methods, registration fees and the names of organizations one must pay to apply for a patent.

**Akimori Baniwa**  
Aichi, Japan



Despite serious drought, peasants in Henan Province bring in a record wheat harvest.

## Another Grain Record This Summer

China reaped another rich grain harvest this summer, despite adverse weather and other natural disasters.

This is the fourth consecutive year that grain output has hit a record.

The summer grain harvest in 12 provinces and one autonomous region in the south increased, while only one or two provinces suffered a small decrease. The output in the main wheat-producing areas in the north was near or surpassed that of last year. Big increases were reported in Hubei, Zhejiang, Xinjiang, Ningxia, Shanghai and Jiangsu.

This year 30 million hectares were sown to summer grain, most of it wheat. Throughout the growing season, north China suffered serious drought, low temperatures and storms, while rice-growers in the south were affected by rain. Some areas were also plagued by plant diseases and pests.

But these natural disasters did not stop the peasants' efforts to reap a good harvest. With their initiative sparked by the production responsibility system, improv-

ed irrigation, better topsoil and strengthened field management, they increased the number of spikelets per blade of grain by 5 per cent to 10 per cent.

## Restructuring the Building Industry

A system of public bidding and investment responsibility will be introduced for all large and medium-sized construction projects this year or next. This is an important step towards restructuring China's building industry.

So far, one-third of the nation's 123 major projects have been contracted on the investment responsibility system and the practice of public bidding is under way across the country.

For years, China's large and medium-sized projects have been granted funds by the state. The departments in charge would then assign the construction tasks to the designing and building depart-

ments, all through administrative measures. As there was no competition, the project was often completed behind schedule at a higher cost than estimated. Sometimes, the quality of the work was not good.

Under the new responsibility system, designing and building units will sign contracts with departments in charge, in accordance with budget estimates approved by the state. The money saved by quicker construction, economical use of building materials and reducing other costs will be divided among the departments involved, according to fixed proportions.

All large and medium-sized construction projects may invite public bids. Any building department or company may enter a bid. This may help the construction companies — which depend on the higher authorities for jobs but pay little attention to improving their technology and management — to change their style of work. It will also effectively quicken the pace of construction, avoid waste and raise the quality of the work.

In a report, *Gongren Ribao* (Workers' Daily) said that a construction company specializing in chemical plants signed an investment responsibility agreement this past April for the Qilu Ethylene Factory, a major national project with a production capacity of 300,000 tons a year. According to the contract, the project, which cost 170,000 yuan, would be finished within two months. The bonuses would be divided according to the work done. Those who finish their work early, while maintaining standard quality, would get their bonuses earlier. In fact, the company completed in 32 days what it usually did in three months. The construction company thereby raised its output value by five times daily, and the average bonus of the workers increased 50 per cent.

At present, the process of inviting and entering bids is going on smoothly in Guangdong in the south and Jilin in the northeast. The Beijing Exploration Corporation has recently invited public bids for the first time to build a 100,000 square-metre residence.

## Cultural Exchange Centre Founded

A centre to promote international cultural exchanges has been founded in Beijing with 120 scholars, artists and noted public figures on its council.

The China International Cultural Exchange Centre (CICEC) is a non-governmental institution, with a foundation to raise funds at home and abroad. It hopes to establish co-operative ties with cultural, artistic, scientific, technological, academic and economic organizations and scholars and public figures abroad and to further world peace and promote mutual understanding and friendship with people of other countries through various forms of activities, such as visits, studies, performances, exhibitions, reports and forums.

Construction of a large modern building in northeastern Beijing to house the centre will begin this month. Upon its completion in 1986, the complex will include a 1,500-seat theatre, a 700-seat concert hall, an exhibition hall with a floor space of 1,000 square metres as well as offices, apartments, restaurants and other facilities.

The CICEC is not China's only apparatus for international cultural exchanges. Others include the China PEN Centre, the China National Committee of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Cultural Exchange Committee under the Ministry of Culture. There are also some similar mass organizations in culture and journalism circles, such as the All-China Association of Journalists.

Ai Qing, one of the most accomplished and influential contemporary Chinese poets, was elected Vice-Chairman of the CICEC Council. In 1982 at the UNESCO-sponsored Asian Writers' Symposium in Japan, he told his fellow writers: "The Chinese people value highly not only their own culture, but also the cultures of other nations. They are always ready to and good at communicating with other extraordinary cultures, so as to enrich and develop their own."

## Employers Eager For Local Grads

More than 7,000 local university graduates are being eagerly snapped up by employers this summer, many of whom are willing to pay large fees to hire these educated youths.

China's 52 local universities have been established by municipal authorities since 1980, to make up for the serious shortage of graduates from regular state and provincial universities. While students from regular universities are assigned jobs by the state, local university graduates are employed through the recommendation of their schools.

Every one of the 600 graduates from Shenyang University in northeastern China has a choice of four jobs this year. The units which hire them are asked to pay 2,000 yuan for each graduate as an investment in the university.

The 200 graduates of Jiangnan University in Wuhan were all hired within a week.

Eight hundred students will graduate from the colleges of management, literature, industry, foreign languages and art at Shanghai University. Those who majored in computers, radio, accounting, law and museum sciences are in especially great demand.

These graduates are so highly valued because their specialties, such as management, secretarial skills, machinery, construction and foreign languages, meet the needs of local economic and social development.

Local universities have also paid great attention to teaching their students practical skills. For example, the foreign languages department of Jiangnan University cancelled its foreign literature

courses and replaced them with classes on the language of science and technology, typing and correspondence.

Unlike regular universities where tuition is free, local university students pay 40 to 50 yuan a year for their courses. The fee is small, but the operating costs of these universities are also much lower. Most students live at home, and many teachers are invited from other universities, greatly reducing the investment in food and housing which has hindered the development of some regular universities. A graduate from Shenyang or Jiangnan University needs only one third to one half the funds of a graduate from a regular school.

The operating funds for local universities come mainly from allocations provided by provincial and municipal governments, and from fees paid by the units who employ graduates. The Ministry of Education has also allocated US\$35.5 million from World Bank loans to subsidize some local universities.

## Old People Work To Educate Young

One day in July, in a hall of the office building of the Beijing Committee of the Revolutionary Committee of the Kuomintang, several hundred young people gathered, listening attentively to a young man on the platform. On either side sat six white-haired old people, who were also listening and taking notes.

The scene was an English-speaking competition held recently by the Zhongshan Spare-Time School. The students' fluent English reflects their remarkable achievements in this school.

In recent years, in addition to regular universities and colleges, various schools for advanced

studies have been set up for workers, staff members and unemployed young people. These schools include evening universities, correspondence universities, TV universities, workers' and staff's universities and other spare-time schools.

Among them, a large number are run by social organizations and democratic parties, which have become a noticeable force in education. Without a penny from state funds, these organizations offer a variety of courses, according to what subjects are in demand. They have trained quite a number of qualified people needed for the country's economic construction.

The Zhongshan Spare-Time School, named after Dr. Sun Yat-sen, is run by the Beijing Committee of the Revolutionary Committee of the Kuomintang. With no special teachers or classrooms of its own, the school has to borrow classrooms from the middle schools nearby and give classes in the evenings. In spite of that, it has gained quite a reputation for its high educational quality.

Since its founding in September 1980, the school has expanded its subject matter from the original three English classes to 160 courses, including Japanese, German, Chinese, Cantonese, accounting, calligraphy and art. About 7,000 students attend every year.

In the past three years the school has trained more than 4,400 students in specialized majors. In 1983 it was cited as one of the advanced spare-time schools in Beijing.

A group of old professors and retired workers manage the daily affairs of the school. In their old age of 60 or 70, they have given up ease and comfort and devoted their efforts to training competent personnel for the country, without any thought of personal gain or fame.

Chen Jiuqing, 75, vice-principal of the Zhongshan Spare-Time School, is typical of the 11 staff members. She obtained her master's degree at Columbia University in the United States in her youth. Shortly before liberation, she and her husband returned to the mainland from Hongkong, giving up the chance of going abroad. Since then, Chen has been making her contribution to meeting China's need for better educated young people.

In the last few years she and her husband went to Singapore twice to see their son, who got married there. When they were invited to settle down in Singapore with their son's family, they felt they were so attached to their homeland that they couldn't bear to leave it. They returned after a short stay.

"I can't give up my career. I have so many students to teach, how could I not return?" Chen said. "I must do my best to train qualified personnel for the motherland. It is my duty as well as my life-long wish. I feel so happy that I can do my bit for the country. That is even more precious than gold."

## National Concern For Singles Over 30

Many people and organizations in China are making great efforts to help people over 30 find a spouse. Dance parties, outings, tours, lectures and discussions have been organized in Beijing, Shanghai and other cities to bring young singles together.

According to statistics, there are between 120,000 and 160,000 young people around the age of 30 in Shanghai and Beijing who haven't gotten married; the number in other cities is also quite large. Some have been concentrat-



ing on work or study, others were sent to the countryside for years when they were younger, where they refused to consider marriage, and still others have failed to find suitable partners. They have missed the chance to think about love affairs in their youth.

The Chinese people have always taken marriage very seriously and opposed rash marriage and divorce. For this reason, the problem of these young people has aroused widespread concern.

To help them find congenial partners, the trade unions, the Communist Youth League and the women's federations across the country are making efforts to create chances for them to meet and get to know each other. At a forum on marriage, Hao Jianxiu, Alternate Member of the Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee, called on these organizations to put this problem high on their agendas and regard it as part of their work for the masses.

The social circles of the young people tend to be very narrow because of the influence of traditional ideas and the lack of social contacts. This holds true especially for young women. They lack the courage to initiate friendship with men and rely on parents, relatives and friends to make introductions.

Hao suggested organizing various friendship activities to provide chances for singles to meet. She said they should be guided to hold correct ideas about marriage, so that this social problem can be solved.

## More Pensions For Old Peasants

About 600,000 Chinese peasants from 9,000 production brigades in Jiangsu, Shanghai and other provinces and cities are receiving old-age pensions.

According to the regulations of many production teams, all male commune members over 65 and females over 60 who have taken part in collective labour for more than 10 years are entitled to old-age pensions. The costs are shared by production brigades and teams according to what each can afford. The money mainly comes from the profits and public welfare funds of township enterprises run by communes and production brigades.

In recent years, with the development of the rural economy, more and more communes and production brigades have begun retirement plans. According to statistics from Jiangsu Province, where the economy is well-developed, 118,000 peasants are now collecting pensions.

The retirement system is a good form of social insurance in the socialist countryside. It has not only freed the childless peasants of the worry that they may be helpless in their old age, but has also helped eliminate the old idea that having more children ensures happiness in old age and has helped strengthen family planning work in the countryside.

## Peasants Develop Local Tourism

A hotel built by peasants with their own money to accommodate foreign tourists recently opened its doors in Huaxi village in Jiangyin County, Jiangsu.

The hotel, costing 300,000 yuan in all, has three single-storeyed cottages, which are connected by a 300-metre colourful veranda. The guest rooms are furnished in the local rustic way, and are supplied with standard sanitary equipment. The hotel has a large and a small restaurants, as well as a fish pond for avid anglers.

A while ago, the hotel was pa-

trized by the first batch of foreign guests from Japan. During the day they strolled on the criss-cross footpaths through the fields. Some even tried their hands at turning the waterwheel renovated specially for the hotel as an entertainment. They planted plum trees as remembrances and met with the villagers. During the night the guests called at the peasants' families, where they were treated to some local flavour. The guests and hosts chatted over glasses of sweet rice wine.

Travel agencies in quite a few countries will soon be arranging for their customers to stay at the peasant-managed hotel.

Huaxi village has benefited from the rapid rural economic development in recent years, and has become rich. Last year, its per-capita income was more than 1,000 yuan, the highest in the country.

Following suit, Yanqiao township in Wuxi County, near Jiangyin County, raised 500,000 yuan from both the township government and the local peasants to set up a tourist company specializing in organizing peasants to tour the country. The company has 10 coaches, cruising Shanghai, Hangzhou, Suzhou and Mount Huangshan in Anhui Province.

## Crime Rate Nears Lowest Level Ever

Since the beginning of this year China's crime rate has been near the lowest ever since the founding of New China, according to Yang Yichen, Chief Procurator of the Supreme People's Procuratorate. He said China's national crime rate is currently about 0.04 per cent, which is near the lowest-recorded rate of 0.03 per cent in the 1950s.

In the past few years, China's crime rate has been between 0.07 and 0.09 per cent.

This sharp drop in crime and the turn for the better in the social order is attributed largely to the campaign to crack down on serious crimes which began last August. A large number of criminals were given prompt and heavy sentences under the law, including capital punishment for crimes such as murder and rape.

However, further efforts are needed to keep the crime rate dropping steadily, with the concentration on uncovering hidden offenders.

Yang said he believes China's social order will fundamentally change for the better in two years' time. The crime rate may actually go lower than the lowest recorded rate.

China now has 140,000 procurators. They have played a positive role in helping crack down on criminals, combating economic crimes and supervising the implementation of the law.

## Parliamentarians Encourage Links

The NPC Standing Committee played host to two foreign parliamentary delegations in the first two weeks of July in an effort to promote understanding between parliaments.

A delegation from the Zaire National Legislative Council, led by its President Kasongo Mukundji, arrived in Beijing July 6 for a 10-day visit; and a delegation from the Spanish Congress of Deputies, led by First Vice-President Leopoldo Torres, arrived July 9 for an 11-day visit.

While in Beijing, they talked with Chinese NPC and government leaders. All sides saw a reciprocal advantage in this.

Meeting with the Spanish delegation, NPC Standing Committee Chairman Peng Zhen said both

China and Spain want and need to develop political, economic and cultural contacts, but know little about which areas are best for co-operation and how to supply each other's needs.

Parliamentary leaders of China and Spain met for the first time since the two countries established diplomatic relations in 1973. Torres said his visit provided a useful opportunity for promoting mutual understanding between

the two parliaments and for furthering the friendship between the two peoples.

The National People's Congress is the highest body of state power in China. Its Standing Committee has invited 14 parliamentary delegations to visit China this year and sent three NPC delegations abroad with a view to promoting mutual understanding and co-operation between parliaments. More such visits are expected.

## Hu Meets Leader of Peruvian Party

General Secretary Hu Yaobang has told the leader of Peru's second largest political Party that China wishes to develop ties with his Party because it is "standing in the van of your country's historical development."

Meeting on July 11 with Alan Garcia, General Secretary of the Popular American Revolutionary Alliance (Apra) Party, Hu said: Our relationship is based on mutual support and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. There are bright prospects for friendly contacts between the Chinese Communist Party and the Peruvian Apra Party and also for friendly relations between China and Peru.

The two Parties could also work to promote the development of trade and economic relations between the two countries, he said.

Garcia said he and his delegation were very satisfied with their talks with Chinese leaders. "The socialist road followed by China and her efforts to build socialism are important examples for us," he said.

President Li Xiannian met Garcia and his delegation a day earlier, at which time he drew attention to the bright prospects for economic and technical co-operation, trade, and co-ordination in international affairs between the two countries.

General Secretary Hu Yaobang meets Alan Garcia, General Secretary of Peru's Apra Party.



Li said he was sure that the delegation's visit would not only increase the friendship between the Chinese and Peruvian Parties but would also contribute to friendly co-operation in various fields between the two countries and the two peoples.

Garcia said the Apra Party wished to strengthen the friendship and co-operation between the two Parties and the two peoples.

"In our talks with the Chinese comrades over the past few days," he said, "we have found an identity of views on a wide range of issues."

## Ulanhu Calls for End to Gulf War

Vice-President Ulanhu has called for an early end to the Iraq-Iran war through peaceful negotiations.

Ulanhu said this at a banquet honouring Sayid Thuwainy Bin Shibab, special representative of the Sultanate of Oman, and his party on July 10. Thuwainy arrived in Beijing on the same day for an 11-day state visit at Ulanhu's invitation.

Ulanhu said the war has lasted nearly four years, causing great damage to the two countries, offering opportunities for external interference in the affairs of the Gulf region and endangering the peace and stability of the area.

Ulanhu also praised Oman's vigorous efforts to develop its national economy under Sultan Qaboos Bin Said. The country's gross national product has increased almost 20 times within 10 years.

He paid tribute to Oman's neutral and non-aligned policy and its stand for unity and strength in the Gulf and Arab countries, and

praised its support of the Palestinian people and the struggle of the Kampuchean and Afghan peoples against foreign aggression.

Thuwainy said in his toast that people all over the world are living under tension and unrest; and his country is willing to work with all peace-loving people to establish a stable and harmonious world.

While in Beijing, Thuwainy met with President Li Xiannian, who expressed his satisfaction with Sino-Omani relations.

## News in Brief

**Minnih Visits Beijing.** China and Mauritania signed an agreement to establish a mixed committee for economy and trade in Beijing on July 8.

Two days before the signing, Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang met Lieut. Col. Ahmed Ould Minnih, Mauritanian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Co-operation. Zhao expressed satisfaction with the friendship and co-operation between the two countries. He also said the two countries share similar views on international issues. Talking about Mauritania's foreign policy, Zhao said it is both favourable to maintaining world peace and security and beneficial to the interests of Mauritania and other third world countries.

**Wu Meets OAU Delegation.** At a banquet for Angolan Vice-Foreign Minister for External Relations Venancio Da Silva Moura and his delegation from the Organization of African Unity Liberation Committee, Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian reaffirmed China's firm support for the African people in their just struggle.

Speaking on the current situation in southern Africa, Wu said China well understands the circumstances Angola, Mozambique and other frontline African coun-

tries find themselves in, and is greatly sympathetic towards them. He also said China supports the other African countries in their struggle, based on their respective national conditions, to safeguard national independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. He hoped that peace and stability will come to this region and the national economies of the countries will recover and develop rapidly, so that the living standards of their people will improve steadily.

He went on to say that the South African authorities, under the aegis of some foreign support, turn up their noses at the UN resolutions concerning Namibia's independence, while practising apartheid at home. Whatever they do, Wu said, they can never stop the African continent from marching to complete liberation.

**Economic Minister Visiting Japan.** Zhang Jingfu, Minister in Charge of the State Economic Commission, said in Japan that economic co-operation between the two countries should be advanced to the degree their political relations have achieved. He was there on a goodwill visit at the invitation of Hikosaburo Okonogi, Minister of International Trade and Industry.

Meeting with Okonogi on July 11, Zhang outlined China's plans for major projects and said he hoped the two sides could explore possibilities for co-operation in these fields.

Okonogi praised China's economic policy of opening to the world, saying: "The different economic structures in Japan and China are complementary. It is our fixed policy to co-operate with China economically and in its construction."

The following day, Zhang and his party met with Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone.

## Viet Nam

### Groundless Charges Against ASEAN

by LI MING

THE 17th foreign ministers' meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) held recently in Jakarta has explicitly reiterated its support for the struggle of the Kampuchean people against the Vietnamese and has once again called for the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea.

However, right after the close of the meeting, the Vietnamese newspaper *Nhan Dan*, the propaganda mouthpiece of the Vietnamese authorities, carried an article, alleging that the ASEAN call for a Vietnamese troop withdrawal was an "absurd demand" and an attempt to seek a "unilateral" withdrawal by Viet Nam. *Nhan Dan* also accused the ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting of distorting the situation in Kampuchea and confusing the genuine source of the threat to peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

It is notable that prior to the Jakarta meeting, Viet Nam had launched a new round of "diplomatic offensives," convening the ninth conference of the so-called foreign ministers of the "three Indochinese states" in Vientiane earlier this month. The Vientiane conference put forward a proposal for "dialogue" with ASEAN and Viet Nam had expected the diplomatic offensive to yield positive results. But the ASEAN states soundly rejected the proposal and once again exposed Hanoi's troop withdrawal hoax. It is small wonder that *Nhan*

*Dan* has venomously abused the ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting.

In reality, the facts about Kampuchea are crystal clear. The charges against the ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting by the Vietnamese authorities are totally groundless.

Viet Nam claims that ASEAN's demand for the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea is a call for a "unilateral troop withdrawal." This is not true. It is common knowledge that apart from some 200,000 Vietnamese occupation troops, there is not a single soldier from any ASEAN state or any other state in Kampuchea today. Only Vietnamese troops can be asked to withdraw from Kampuchea.

The Vietnamese authorities have also accused the ASEAN states of distorting the situation in Kampuchea, when the foreign ministers' meeting pointed out that Viet Nam's aggression in Kampuchea poses a grave threat to peace and stability in the Southeast Asian region. But no other state has been killing people and destroying property in Kampuchea. No one else has launched repeated military offensives, making hundreds of thousands of Kampuchean refugees in other Southeast Asian countries. No

## Soviet Union

### Toughness in Diplomatic Postures

by WANG ZIYING

SINCE the leadership change in the Kremlin last February, Soviet foreign policy has been the

other state than Viet Nam has made a series of intrusions into Thai territory. Clearly, it is Viet Nam that has brought all the trouble and unrest to Southeast Asia.

Hanoi is very much annoyed by the ASEAN states' rejection of its proposal for a dialogue. Nevertheless, it claims that the door remains open and it is ready to enter into dialogue on the basis of the proposal put forward by ASEAN last September.

However, Hanoi has evaded the crucial point of the ASEAN proposal, which is that Viet Nam must first withdraw its troops from Kampuchea before any talks about seeking a political solution to the Kampuchean problem on the basis of the UN resolutions. Obviously, the Vietnamese proposal for dialogue merely asks the ASEAN states to sit at the negotiating table with Viet Nam while its military occupation of Kampuchea continues, which would give de facto recognition to the Vietnamese invasion of that country. It is only natural that ASEAN should categorically turn down such a proposal.

Hanoi's charge against the foreign ministers' meeting of the ASEAN states is completely untenable. It will not in any way shake the firm stand of the ASEAN states on the Kampuchean issue, but only serve to expose the true features of the Vietnamese authorities.

focus of international attention, with observers generally concluding that the Soviet Union has toughened its stance on many important international issues.

US President Ronald Reagan's repeated calls for improved US-Soviet relations and a resumption of the Geneva talks and his proposal for talks on a ban on chemical weapons and an arms cut in Central Europe have all been turned down by Moscow, which insists that the Geneva missile talks can not be resumed unless Washington withdraws all its missiles from Western Europe.

On June 29, the Soviet Union proposed talks with the United States on preventing the militarization of outer space. While accepting the proposal, Washington also stressed the need to resume the Geneva talks. In a matter of 36 hours, the Soviet news agency TASS, in an authorized statement, "resolutely rejected" the US proposal.

Since the end of June Reagan has expressed his willingness to hold a summit meeting with the Kremlin leaders and discuss the non-use of military forces in Europe. Moscow has turned a deaf ear to his statements.

In recent months, the foreign ministers of Italy, Federal Germany, France and Britain have gone to Moscow with the hope of easing the tension. They reported that the Soviet leaders have become "very tough" whenever the nuclear arms issue was mentioned.

British Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe told a Moscow press conference on July 3 that he was disappointed at the negative attitude of Soviet leaders in their talks. Western diplomats in Moscow believed the Soviet's hardened attitude in the British-Soviet talks "may point to a long freeze in the East-West relations."

Moscow's recent efforts in Asia have also aroused world attention. In Afghanistan, the Soviets have launched a large-scale offensive in the Panjshir valley against the Afghan resistance, the biggest

operation since the Soviet invasion in 1979. The Soviets do not seem prepared to yield an inch over the Afghan issue despite repeated UN resolutions demanding a withdrawal of Soviet troops.

Moscow has also increased its support for Hanoi in its invasion of Kampuchea. The Soviets and the Vietnamese held a joint military exercise of the three armed services near Hai Phong at a time when Viet Nam was carrying out the dry-season offensive against Kampuchean resistance forces along the Kampuchean-Thai border and launching new border provocations against China.

Also, Moscow's anti-China propaganda has escalated noticeably in recent months. Its anti-China

articles have distorted and attacked China's foreign policy and counterattacks by Chinese frontier troops against the Vietnamese military provocations. Soviet President Konstantin Chernenko said in a meeting with Vietnamese leaders Le Duan and Pham Van Dong on June 11 that "the Soviet side resolutely condemned the hostile actions of the Chinese authorities" against Viet Nam, Laos and the Heng Samrin regime in Kampuchea. On June 26 he again attacked China during a meeting with Laotian leader Kaysone Phomvihane.

International public opinion is divided on these postures of the Soviet foreign policy. One must wait and see how it will develop.

## Syria-PLO

# Damascus Visit Warms Relations

by GONG ZHENXI

THE sub-zero relations between Syria and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) have warmed up a little recently and shown signs of further progress towards normalization.

This turn for the better is largely due to the mediation efforts of Saudi Arabia, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, the Yemen Arab Republic and Algeria.

Farouk Al Kadoumy, head of the PLO's Political Department, visited Damascus from July 4 to 7 at Syria's invitation and discussed Syrian-PLO relations, inter-factional talks within the PLO and other issues with President Hafez Assad. It was the first time Assad had received a Fatah leader since June 24 last year, when Syria ordered the PLO leaders, including its chairman Yasser Arafat, to leave the country at once.

During their meeting, Assad assured Kadoumy of Syria's support for the dialogue between the Fatah Central Committee and the democratic alliance composed of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Palestine Liberation Front and the Palestine Communist Party. The president stressed that "it is a matter for the Palestinians" to decide whether Arafat should remain the chairman of the PLO's Executive Committee. "Syria will not interfere with this," he said.

Upon his return to Tunis, Kadoumy described his Damascus visit as "positive and successful." It was reported that the Fatah Central Committee would send another delegation to Damascus to continue the discussions on future relations with Syria and ways to bridge the factional differences within the PLO, in preparation for their complete normalization. Should the discussions prove suc-

cessful, they could lead to an early renewal of good relations with Damascus.

Recently the Fatah Central Committee reached a political and organizational agreement with the democratic alliance at the third reconciliation talks in Aden. Later, the democratic alliance held consultations with the Syrian-backed Palestinian nationalist alliance on several occasions in Damascus to persuade it to accept the Aden agreement so they could hold the Palestine National Council meeting before September 15. No substantial headway has been made so far. The nationalist alliance has persisted in demanding that Arafat be removed as chairman, and opposes the moderate line he pursues.

The Syrians and Palestinians had long supported each other in the struggle against Israeli aggression and expansion and to recover their lost territories. Syria has made some important contributions to the Palestinian cause. It took in 200,000 Palestinian refugees. Many organizations of the PLO, including the Popular Front, Democratic Front, Al Saeka and the Palestine National Council, have set up their offices in Damascus. The Syrians and Palestinians are comrades-in-arms and brothers. Unfortunately, their relations soured in the past two years, owing to some differences arising in the course of the struggle.

When Israel invaded Lebanon in June of 1982, the armed forces of the PLO were forced to withdraw from Beirut and southern Lebanon, losing the most important bases from which to launch an armed struggle. The main faction of Fatah, led by Arafat, believes that Palestinian issues will be solved through the political and diplomatic means in the future. They want to develop relations with all Arab countries and particularly with Jordan, and have held several talks with Jordan on the

establishment of a Jordan-PLO federation.

Syria and some factions of the PLO charged Fatah with making a unilateral settlement and pursuing a capitulationist line. In May of last year Syria supported some factions of the PLO which opposed Arafat and his position. The open split with the PLO subsequently arose.

On June 23, 1983, Arafat went to Damascus to discuss the problem, but the Syrian authorities told him to leave immediately. In August of last year Syrian-backed factions attacked Arafat's troops stationed in Tripoli, who were forced to

withdraw from northern Lebanon. Under these circumstances the relations between Syria and the PLO nearly froze over.

Now, having decided to seek closer ties with Jordan and some other Arab countries, Syria is taking a greater interest in patching up its relations with the PLO. The Arafat-led Fatah feels the same need in its efforts to mend the split within the PLO and reactivate the crippled organization.

All this has heightened hopes that Syrian-PLO relations may become normal in the not too distant future.

## Africa

# Conference Tackles Refugee Issue

by ZHONG TAI

THE second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa has ended with the unanimous approval on July 11 of a "Declaration and Programme of Action," which affirms that improving the conditions of African refugees is the general responsibility of the entire international community and should be shared equally by its members.

The three-day conference in Geneva, which was sponsored by the Organization of African Unity and various UN bodies and attended by about 1,000 delegates from 100 countries, was held to heighten international concern over the African refugee problem and raise more aid. In less than 10 years, the number of refugees in Africa has increased from fewer than 1 million to about 5 million, or half of the world's refugee population. Most of them are old people, women and children.

The final document pointed out

that if there is to be a lasting solution to the problem, then assistance should be directed towards economic development, which would ensure refugees long-term employment and self-sufficiency. The conference decided to provide assistance for strengthening various countries' social and economic infrastructures, so as to enable them to resettle large numbers of refugees.

The first conference, held in 1981, raised more than US\$560 million in aid, but the results were not entirely satisfactory and many programmes have yet to be implemented. The second conference proposed raising another US\$517 million through international donations, of which US\$155 million would be raised this year to help 4 million refugees in 14 countries.

There are a number of factors responsible for the rapid increase of refugees. Many have fled their native lands because of border conflicts left over from colonial rule, and civil and regional wars caused by tribal conflicts. Others

have been forced to leave because of the serious droughts that have hit Africa in recent years, resulting in widespread famine. And large numbers of South African and Namibian blacks have fled the Pretoria regime's policy of aggression and racial discrimination.

The head of the Chinese delegation, Vice-Foreign Minister Gong Dafei called in his July 10 speech for the international community to make great efforts to solve the refugee problem, thereby strengthening the continent's stability and promoting its economic development. He pointed out that the pressing task facing the world today is safeguarding peace and promoting development.

This "development in peace"

represents a widespread desire in all developing countries, he said, and therein lies the hope for a fundamental and proper settlement of the African refugee problem. The proper settlement of the refugee problem will in turn promote the development of the African economy and strengthen stability, furthering the cause of "development in peace" throughout the world.

He said China warmly welcomes the proposals put forward by the second conference and expressed the hope that the developed countries will provide more humanitarian development aid and help alleviate the situation. He stressed that China is concerned about the refugee problem and would offer as much assistance as lay within its capacity.

come normal, because the present freeze cannot be kept up indefinitely.

Jackson also said that he and Castro shared some viewpoints on international issues, such as holding a moral peace offensive in the Western Hemisphere. Both support the Contadora Group in Central America and its efforts to find a solution to the problems of El Salvador through political negotiations. They also support the independence of Namibia under UN Resolution No. 435, and demand that the South African authorities stop their threats and invasions of Angola, which would provide the conditions for Cuba's troop withdrawal from the area.

Castro said he invited Jackson as an indication of "Cuba's expression of friendship and amity with the American people."

The White House, however, has responded coolly to Castro's gesture. Although welcoming the release, officials regarded it as "essentially a humanitarian accomplishment" rather than "a politically significant event."

The long-term tensions between Cuba and the United States have been caused both by bilateral and international factors, including the great differences between the two nations on problems in Central America and southern Africa. The conflict, particularly in Central America, is seen by the United States as part of the East-West conflict, while Cuba views it as a North-South clash. Washington has called on Cuba to withdraw its troops from the region, and Castro reaffirmed during Jackson's visit that Cuba has only military advisers there.

Diplomats and observers in Havana judged that Castro's concessions to Jackson are more a long-term political investment. Cuba hopes that the thinking Jackson represents is influencing the United States.

## Cuba-US

# 48 Men Out of Jail in 48 Hours

by YAN WEIMIN

**J**ESSE JACKSON, black US civil rights leader, successfully won the release of 22 Americans imprisoned in Cuba and brought back to the United States 26 Cuban political prisoners after just 48 hours in Cuba.

At a joint press conference on June 27 soon after his five hours of talks with Cuban President Fidel Castro in Havana, Jackson, candidate for the Democratic Party nomination in November's presidential elections, put forward a 10-point proposal which he said had been offered to Castro. It included normalizing relations between the two countries, immediate exchange of ambassadors "with no preconditions," immediate release of Americans jailed in Cuba, who would be allowed to return to the United States with Jackson, release of

Cuban political prisoners who had served the United States before their sentences expire, and an arrangement by Castro to visit the United States.

Castro finally agreed to release the American prisoners when Jackson stressed that it would be handled as an exception. Considering the present strained Cuban-US relations, Castro later said the release of the Cuban political prisoners was a special gesture. He also hoped to discuss the possible return to Cuba of several thousand immigrants who came to the United States during the Mariel Boatlift in 1980.

The results of Jackson's visit show Cuba's increasing flexibility in its policy towards the United States and its sincere hopes for the normalization of bilateral relations. Castro, answering a question from an American reporter, said relations must eventually be-

# Deng Xiaoping on Hongkong Issue

*On June 22, Deng Xiaoping, Chairman of the Central Advisory Commission of the Chinese Communist Party, met with a group of Hongkong business leaders — H. C. Tang, chairman of the Federation of Hongkong Industries, Jack Tang, chairman of the Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce, and Ngai Shiu-kit, chairman of the Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hongkong — in the Great Hall of the People. The next day he met prominent Hongkong figures Sze-yuen Chung, Lydia Dunn and Q. W. Lee. During their talks, Deng reiterated China's position on the Hongkong issue.*

**W**HEN asked whether China's policy on Hongkong will change, Deng told his guests that the Chinese Government's position, principle and policy are firm.

"We have said it on many occasions that Hongkong's current socio-economic system, its lifestyle and its position as a free port and an international trade and financial centre will remain unchanged after China resumes the exercise of its sovereignty over Hongkong in 1997," Deng said. "Hongkong's law will also remain basically unchanged. Hongkong can go on to maintain and develop economic relations with other countries and regions. We have also stated repeatedly that, apart from stationing troops there, Beijing will not dispatch cadres to work in the government of the Hongkong special administrative region. This policy will not change either. We will station troops there for the purpose of defending our national security, and not for interfering in the internal affairs of Hongkong. Our

policies towards Hongkong will remain unchanged for 50 years and we mean what we say."

China has worked hard to overcome "Left" mistakes in recent years, he said, and after five and a half years some results have been achieved. "It is under these circumstances that we proposed to solve the Hongkong issue and the Taiwan problem by allowing two systems to be practised in one country."

"We have talked about two systems in one country for some years," he stressed. "The policy has been adopted by the National People's Congress. Some people are still worried whether the policy will change. I say it will not. The key factor is whether the policy is correct or not. If it is correct, it will not change. If it is not correct, it might change. Is there anyone who can change China's current policies of opening to the outside world and invigorating the domestic economy? If they are changed, the living standards of 80 per cent of the Chinese population would be affected and we would lose the support of 80 per cent of the people. Therefore, the decisive factor is whether the policies are correct or not. If we have adopted correct policies, the people will support us and the policies will not be changed."

He elaborated the "one country, two systems" policy, saying the policy has been adopted in line with China's realities and it has caught international attention.

"China not only has the problem of Hongkong; it also has the problem of Taiwan," Deng said. "What's the solution to this problem? Is it for socialism to swallow up Taiwan, or for the

'three people's principles' preached by Taiwan to swallow up the mainland? The answer is that neither can swallow up the other. If the problem cannot be resolved peacefully, then it must be resolved by force. This would harm the interests of everyone.

"Reunification of the country is the aspiration of the whole nation," he continued. "If it cannot be reunified in 100 years, then it will be reunified in 1,000 years. As I see it, the only solution to this problem is to practise two systems in one country. In the world, there are a number of problems which raise the question: how should they be solved — through peaceful means or non-peaceful means? Anyway, they must be solved. New problems must be solved by new means."

Deng said China's efforts to solve the Hongkong problem through the policy of "one country, two systems" proceed from reality. "It does not mean that we are being carried away by our emotions or we are playing tricks," he said. "The successful settlement of the Hongkong issue may serve as an example offering useful clues to solving many international questions."

"We can take a look at world history to see if any government has ever pursued such an enlightened policy as China's. What Western country in the history of capitalism has ever done so?"

"Not to believe in the ability of the Chinese people to administer Hongkong well is a mentality left over by the old colonialists," Deng pointed out. "Over the past century and a half, the Chinese people were looked down upon and insulted by foreigners. But China's



image has been remoulded since the founding of the People's Republic. The image of China today was not created by the government of the Qing Dynasty, not by the Northern Warlords, and not by Chiang Kai-shek and his family, but by the People's Republic of China."

"All Chinese at least have a sense of pride in the Chinese nation, no matter what clothes they wear or what stand they take. The Chinese residents in Hongkong have this sense of national pride too."

Deng said the people of Hongkong have the ability to administer Hongkong well and they must have confidence in themselves. The prosperity of Hongkong has been achieved mainly by Hongkong residents, most of whom are Chinese. The Chinese are not inferior to foreigners in terms of wisdom and are by no means short of talents. One should not hold the belief that only foreigners can do well. Instead, one should be confident that the Chinese are capable of doing just as well.

"It is not a true reflection of the circumstances to say that people of Hongkong lack confidence," he said. "The contents of the Sino-British talks on the Hongkong issue have not been disclosed yet, so many Hongkong residents do not

understand the policies of the central government. Once they have a full understanding of these policies, they will have confidence."

"Our policy on the settlement of the Hongkong issue was made known by Premier Zhao Ziyang in his government work report and approved by the National People's Congress. It is a serious matter. If there are still people harping on about the question of confidence and lacking faith in the People's Republic of China and the Chinese Government, then other things will be out of the question. We believe that the people of Hongkong are capable of administering Hongkong well and will not let foreigners go on ruling Hongkong. Otherwise, the people of Hongkong will never agree."

Asked about the implication of "gangren zhigang" (Hongkong people administering Hongkong) and who will exercise the power of administration, Deng pointed out that it is true there is the question of a demarcation line and criterion for the Hongkong people to administer the region. The criterion is that patriots must form the major body of administrators.

He said that although patriots will form the main elements of the Hongkong government, other people can also be included, and

foreigners can be invited as advisers.

"Who are patriots?" he continued. "The touchstone of a patriot is respect for his own nation, earnest and sincere support for the motherland's resumption of its sovereignty over Hongkong and refraining from harming the stability and prosperity of Hongkong."

"So long as they meet these requirements, they are patriots, no matter whether they believe in capitalism or feudalism or even the slave-owning system."

"We don't require them all to favour China's socialist system, but only ask them to love the motherland and Hongkong," he said.

Deng also elaborated on the question of the transition period. "There are 13 years to go, from now up to 1997. The problems in the transition period should be solved well step by step from now on. First, major fluctuations or setbacks must be avoided and the prosperity and stability of Hongkong maintained. Second, conditions must be created for Hongkong residents to take over the government smoothly."

He expressed the hope that people of all walks of life in Hongkong will make efforts towards this end. □

## Hainan - A Treasure Island (4)

by HAN XI  
Our Correspondent

WITH its per-capita industrial and agricultural output value a little more than half the national average (in 1982, it was 438 yuan, against 816 yuan nationwide), Hainan's economy is far from the level it should be. Construction proceeds slowly.

What accounts for this situation?

First and foremost, it is because Hainan's potentials in the cultivation of tropical crops have not been fully realized. For many years, the islanders followed the policy of taking "grain as the key link," and strove for self-sufficiency in grain. That goal was never achieved, because the island's humid weather is unsuitable for growing grain.

But in the effort, the production of tropical crops was affected, and the local people's livelihood suffered.

In Dingan County alone, the annual sugarcane yield plummeted from 110,000 tons to 60,000 tons, that of pepper dropped from 150,000 kilos to 10,000 kilos, and the total catch of pond fish shrank from 300,000 kilos to 200,000

kilos. Even at this huge cost, the increase in grain production was only marginal.

For centuries the peasants of Jianhuashan Village in Wenchang County have earned their living growing coconut palms. They trade their coconuts for food and clothing, and use coconut tree trunks and fronds to build houses and furniture. Today, earnings from coconut sales account for 80 per cent of Jianhuashan's total income. However, 12 years ago the peasants had to demolish many coconut plantations to make way for the cultivation of sweet potatoes. They never got a high potato yield; instead, the drop in coconut output brought in its wake continuous reductions of the villagers' incomes.

In its post-liberation heyday, Hainan's state farm had 33,300 hectares sown to sisal hemp, coffee and essence-bearing crops. But only 10,656 hectares were left intact after the decade-long "cultural revolution" (1966-76). By 1979, tropical crops made up only 36 per cent of the whole island's agricultural output value. Today, 800,000 hectares on Hainan are still waiting to be reclaimed.

Hainan Island's slow development is also attributable to its lopsided, weak industry. A lot of factories were hastily built in the 1950s, but many of those were shut down due to lack of raw materials and power. The few surviving ones are losing money. Ironically, the processing industry is extremely backward, making it impossible for the islanders to process and utilize the tropical crops.

Coconuts, for example, can be used extensively. In some countries the juice is being studied as a possible glucose substitute in medicine. The Hainan people, however, do not know very much about the use of coconuts and every year they throw 3 million kilos of coconut juice into the sea.

The Haikou Cookie Bakery is the best bakery on Hainan, but only half of its products are up to standard — burning charcoal in the ovens has made it difficult to control their temperature.

Coconut shells' inner linings are a choice material for stuffing mattresses and upholstered armchairs, but the lack of processing workshops has forced the local people to leave them to rot.

Qionghai County is rich in a kind of pepper known for its pure and especially hot taste, but the county does not have a single pepper-processing factory. The rubber processing industry, too, can hardly match Hainan's position as China's leading supplier of natural rubber. Its rubber factories can only make low-grade products such as tyres and hoses, with a combined annual processing capacity of just 4,000 tons.

Hainan's wood-processing industry is hardly compatible with its rich timber resources. The islanders chop down several hundred thousand cubic metres of low-yielding rubber trees every year to make way for young saplings. However, the island's only rubber tree processing factory can handle just 3,000 cubic metres a year. As a result, most of the left-over rubber trees are burned in kitchen stoves.

Hainan was the centre of a technical innovation in textile industry in ancient China. But today, it has not one modern textile factory, and the local people have to depend on the rest of the country for clothing.

Building materials abound, but Hainan produces only 300,000 tons of cement a year, which can hardly meet the growing needs of economic development.

To date, Hainan's two ilmenite-dressing factories are still exporting the iron and titanium oxide as powdered ore, although they could earn more if they processed the rich deposits into sponge titanium before shipping them to other countries.

The discovery of oil and gas in the surrounding Beibu Gulf and Yinggehai Oilfields and on the island itself augurs well for the development of the petrochemical industry. But so far not a single factory has been built.

Peasants burning grass on wasteland near a reservoir, a practice that is being discouraged.

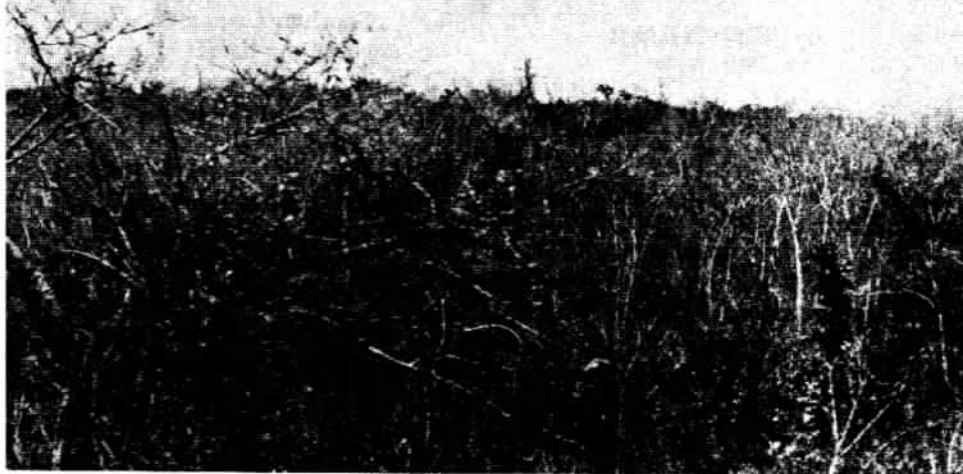


The major lesson learnt over the past three decades, however, is not so much what has not been developed as what has been overdeveloped. The major example is the serious damage to Hainan's tropical forests.

More than 1,000 years ago Hainan Island was covered with virgin forests. But long years of human activity have taken their toll. The dense forests shrank to 862,470 hectares in 1956, and further fell to 240,000 hectares by the end of 1978. This means the island's forest cover was reduced from 27.7 per cent to 7.05 per cent. Even when man-made forests and rubber plantations are added, only 15.44 per cent of the island is wooded today, far below what is considered ecologically safe. The deforestation has considerably weakened the island's ability to retain soil and water, led to reduced runoffs during the dry season, and caused unwanted changes in the climate.

The changes in the Qicha Commune in Changjiang County are illustrative. Nestled in a wooded ravine, the area was known in the early post-liberation days as the county's granary, thanks to a pleasant climate and abundant rainfall. But the good old days disappeared with the establishment of a lumberyard in 1957, which began felling trees in the virgin forests all the year round. Gradually, the water level in the streams and rivers dropped. In 1980, when a major drought hit Qicha, the wells in 15 villages dried up, 5,000 villagers couldn't get drinking water, and the turbine of a 200-kw hydroelectric power station stopped running.

Another example is Baisha County. In the 1950s, 45.5 per cent of the county's land was covered with forests, and despite frequent rainstorms the local people never experienced a landslide. Today, the forest covers 13.2 per cent of the county's total area. In



Wanton felling of trees changed a once luxuriant forest into a scrubland.

July 1977, when the precipitation reached 442 mm during a three-day typhoon, landslides occurred on one-third of the denuded mountains, and 333 hectares of farmland and 600 water conservation projects were inundated or clogged with silt.

The examples of Qicha and Baisha show the punishment nature can inflict for carrying things too far.

The severe deforestation has robbed many animals of their natural habitat, and their numbers are declining. Some 100 species of birds have virtually disappeared. Precious trees, too, are becoming scarce.

Wanton deforestation went hand in hand with the destruction of offshore marine resources. Many coral reefs have been quarried for lime production, leaving many valuable sea creatures homeless, such as kelp, agar-agar, sea cucumbers and some rare fish.

The decline of the ecosystem was not only caused by the drive

to achieve self-sufficiency in grain and the wanton felling of trees while neglecting reforestation. It was also caused by the primitive "slash and burn" farming system and the practice of burning trees to obtain charcoal. Today, yellowish patches dot many lush green hills—ugly marks left by some islanders who burnt the precious trees to make way for the cultivation of a low-yielding dry rice.

But after all is said and done, Hainan remains to this day a green island. The local people owe much of this to the frequent typhoons. Though destructive for agriculture, rainstorms have brought one-third of the rainfall needed to keep the island a perennial paradise for all kinds of animals and plants. It is, in fact, China's centre for tropical studies.

The most important way to preserve the beauty of Hainan for ever, according to a visiting scientist, is to protect the environment in the course of future development. The local people should be urged to abide by the laws of nature when they tap the island's rich natural resources. □

# Retired Army Surgeon Serves the People

by **JIAN CHUAN**  
Our Staff Writer

**M**ORE than 40 years ago, Norman Bethune, a famous Canadian doctor, crossed thousands of miles to help the Chinese people in their War of Resistance Against Japan. He healed the wounded and rescued the dying, but unfortunately died a martyr at his post. His spirit of utter devotion to others without any thought of self is deeply engraved on the hearts of the Chinese people, even today.

Zhou Chao, a retired cadre, passed up a leisurely and carefree life in the big city. Instead, he has returned to his hometown five times in the past three years, treating more than 7,000 patients in the 380 days he visited. Zhou is called by local peasants "a living Bethune among us."

Not long ago, the PLA Air Force leadership issued a general order recognizing Zhou's merit and calling upon people to learn from him.

## Old But Not Idle

Zhou Chao, vice-president of the Jinan PLA Air Force Hospital, retired in February 1980 at the age of 58 in accordance with regulations. When the hospital leader asked whether he had any problems or requests, Zhou answered firmly, no difficulties but one request. A Communist Party member may be old, he said, but he should not live an idle life. "I volunteer to return to my hometown to practise medicine, so that I can pass on the medical skill which I have gained over the past 40 years to my townspeople," he said.

Gaochun County, Zhou's hometown on the border of Jiangsu and Anhui Provinces, was once the base area of the New Fourth Army, led by the Chinese Communist Party during the War of Resistance Against Japan. Since liberation, although much progress has been made in medical and health work in the countryside,



Zhou Chao.

transportation here remains very poor and people find it inconvenient to see doctors.

Zhou has been practising surgery for many years and has rich clinical experience. During the War of Liberation (1946-49), he enjoyed a good reputation among the east China army units. But he knew that knowledge of surgery alone could hardly meet the medical needs of people in the countryside. He had to master different skills to treat common and frequently occurring diseases in the villages. With the support of his leadership, Zhou spent some time after his retirement learning dentistry at the army hospital, and gynaecology and obstetrics from the municipal child-care and health

centre, all at his own expense. He also collected about 130 recipes and secret prescriptions for Chinese medicine, and gathered 599 types of medicinal herbs.

Corns on the toes are a common problem in rural areas. Zhou heard that there was a doctor in Jinan, Shandong Province, who specialized in treating foot troubles. This doctor could cure a corn without performing an operation nor causing any pain. Zhou immediately went to see him.

At first, the doctor flatly refused to teach Zhou his skill. But Zhou was not discouraged. He visited the doctor repeatedly, fetched water, swept the floor and helped treat patients with corn troubles. The doctor was deeply moved that Zhou, veteran cadre and doctor though he was, condescended to do all the dirty and tiresome work. He said, "I have trained many apprentices, but none of them learnt this skill because they felt it dirty work. This is the first time I have taken on an old apprentice like you." He finally passed on his secret prescription and skill, handed down from his ancestors, to Zhou.

## Dedicated to His Hometown

In October 1980, Zhou returned to his hometown, carrying 16 boxes packed with medical equipment and books.

The news of his intention to practise medicine quickly spread to neighbouring villages. Patients swarmed to his house for treatment, about 20 to 60 a day. Everyone was given the same warm reception and was treated with the best of care, no matter who they

were. Zhou got up at daybreak and was busy late into the night. Whenever there was an emergency, he never refused; he would set out with his medical kit in foul and fair weather. The villagers said with feeling, "Doctor Zhou's door is open to us round the clock."

One afternoon when it was raining and very windy, an old man hurried in, asking Zhou to visit a patient at home. It turned out that the old man's wife had been ill for three years and had been confined to her bed for more than seven months. Worse still, she had not eaten anything for seven days and was now at her last breath.

When the old man wanted to send for Dr. Zhou, his son stopped him, saying, "Zhou is a senior army officer. I think he won't come." But the father answered confidently, "He is a PLA man, but he tended cattle with me when we were young. He will certainly come if I go to ask him."

As the man expected, Zhou accompanied him. When he went into the house, he found the patient in bed, her eyes unmoving, her face pale and her breath shallow. The whole family was crying and making arrangements for her funeral. Zhou immediately went to work to save her.

After half an hour, some colour returned to the old woman's face, while Zhou looked pale from fatigue. He wrote out the prescription and helped his patient drink the medicine.

Afterwards, Zhou visited the old woman every three days for further treatment. Thanks to Zhou's meticulous care and treatment, the dying woman regained her life.

Last year, besides helping her old husband cultivate their contracted land, she raised five pigs and 80 chickens and ducks, which earned them more than 600 yuan



Zhou Chao praised by people in the stricken areas for giving them medical treatment.

at the end of the year. They have bought a tractor.

Zhou was warmly welcomed by the villagers for his good service. Whenever he left his hometown for Jinan, hundreds of people went to see him off reluctantly at the harbour. Several young peasants said, "We have never seen Norman Bethune, but Zhou is a Bethune living among us."

### **Sharing Joy and Sorrow With the People**

Last July Zhou's hometown was threatened by the worst floods in a century. Many old and feeble people were evacuated to safe areas. The villagers tried to persuade Zhou to go to Jinan for a while, but he firmly declined. He

said, "I have grown up here and I am a veteran Party member. I should go through thick and thin together with the people, and never leave when the masses are faced with danger and difficulties."

He was active in helping the people in the disaster area. Early every morning he toured the embankment with his medical kit, a water bottle and some biscuits. Some days he walked for more than 10 hours, covering dozens of kilometres. Whenever he found a dangerous area, he reported to the flood controllers, so they could take preventive measures. When Zhou found the water level was 2.6 metres above the security line, he took a big risk investigating the situation. Twice he rowed out in a boat to observe the flood control measures, and reported his find-

ings to the departments concerned for their reference on rebuilding water conservation projects.

During the month-long battle against the disaster, Zhou, acting as he did as a medical orderly in the New Fourth Army during the war years, cured diseases and healed wounds for the masses fighting the flood.

Knowing that after the flood subsided, people in the villages worst hit would have a hard time and might become sick easily, Zhou walked with 15 kilos of medical equipment to the neighbouring villages, going from one thatched shack to another.

Before the flood hit, Zhou had treated a man named Li Shujin. Now, after the flood, he was concerned about Li. But the village was long-deserted. Where to look for him? While making his daily rounds, Zhou asked about Li, and eventually found him. When Li saw this white-haired army doctor, still worrying about his illness after the flood, he was deeply moved and said gratefully, "The new society, the Communist Party and the PLA are really good."

During the flood-control battle, no one counted how many times Zhou had visited the stricken villages, how far he had travelled or how many people he had treated. But Zhou left a deep impression in the heart of every flood victim. He was highly praised by the local leadership for his meritorious service. After the flood, a local authority personally pinned a memorial badge on Zhou's chest.

### **Wholehearted Dedication**

People may ask why Zhou, a retired cadre of over 60, gave up his favourable living conditions in the city to do medical work in the rural areas. It is certainly not for personal position and fame.

For nearly 30 years since 1953,

Zhou had been vice-president of the Jinan Air Force Hospital. Though he had not been promoted during this period, he never complained. Instead, he was always diligent and conscientious in his work. As a veteran revolutionary cadre and Party member since 1938, he would have been able to enjoy an affluent retirement and spend his remaining years in comfort.

Zhou is also not working for the money. He posted an eye-catching notice on the door of his house, "No money or gifts will be accepted." Many patients offer Zhou their special products as a token of thanks, but he invariably declines. If he cannot turn down a gift, he pays for it at a fair price. If he does not know who has stealthily left him a gift, he gives it to a patient who needs nourishment or to the young school children or childless old people of the brigade.

When patients come from afar, he treats them free and then puts them up in his home. When patients are seriously ill and cannot afford to buy medicine, he helps them generously. Zhou has spent more than 900 yuan on medicine, medical equipment and financial aid for his patients.

The eight-year-old daughter of Xu Guoyuan, a worker in Yixing County, Jiangsu Province, suffered from osteomyelitis on her right leg four years ago. She had been brought to eight hospitals for treatment and been operated on five times without success, which cost Xu more than 3,000 yuan (about US\$1,500). In China the average monthly wage of an ordinary worker is about 50 yuan, so that sum is about five years' income. The child could not go to school because she could not walk. When her parents heard that Zhou had cured a patient suffering from the same disease, they immediately wrote to him for help.

This past January, when Zhou returned home the fifth time, he notified them to come for treatment. Because Xu's home village was 100 kilometres away, Zhou received Xu's family of three to his home so that it would be easy for him to treat Xu's daughter. Xu and his family stayed in Zhou's home for four days. Before leaving, Xu felt sorry for giving Zhou so much trouble, and was anxious to repay him. So he secretly left 10 yuan and a package of sweets inside the quilt. When Zhou discovered this, Xu and his family had already gone. Zhou immediately went to the post office and sent the money and gifts back to Xu.

Zhou does not work for fame, position or money. Then what kind of ideology governs his actions? We can get the answer from his words and deeds. As Zhou sees it, retirement only means a change of jobs. His work for the Party has not been completed.

"Every Party member is a cell in the body of the Party," Zhou said. "We should have the spirit of a red blood cell, work hard day and night and infuse nourishment incessantly throughout the body of the Party. We should also have the property of a white blood cell, bravely eliminating the poisonous bacteria and protecting the body of the Party from damage." □



## China's Railways

## Its Role in the Modernization Drive

by LI HAIBO  
Our Correspondent

*In today's world, the railways in many developed countries are giving way to higher-speed and new types of transportation. However, railways in China still play an important role in the ongoing modernization drive and their construction is in full swing. Why so much emphasis on building the railways? What is the best way to develop them? Is it convenient for passengers to take trains? Our correspondent set out to find the answers to these questions. — Ed.*

## Major Means of Traffic

"How many railway lines does the train from Beijing to Kunming pass through?"

"Which is the longest trunk railway line from south to north?"

These questions often appear on the geography examination papers of Chinese primary school children. They show how vital rail-

way transportation is to the economy.

Railways are the mainstay of China's transportation network, carrying 70 per cent of the freight and 60 per cent of all passengers.

They link up most parts of the country, symbolizing the unity of all the Chinese people.

The Anhui-Jiangxi Railway opened to traffic last June, easing the busy transportation from coastal China to the interior.

## Slow Progress

The prosperity of railway transportation in Western countries stemmed from the rapid progress of the Industrial Revolution. But railways in China were slow in coming.

In 1917, Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), the leader of China's bourgeois revolution, listed railways as the first need of the nation in his book, "Plan for National Reconstruction."

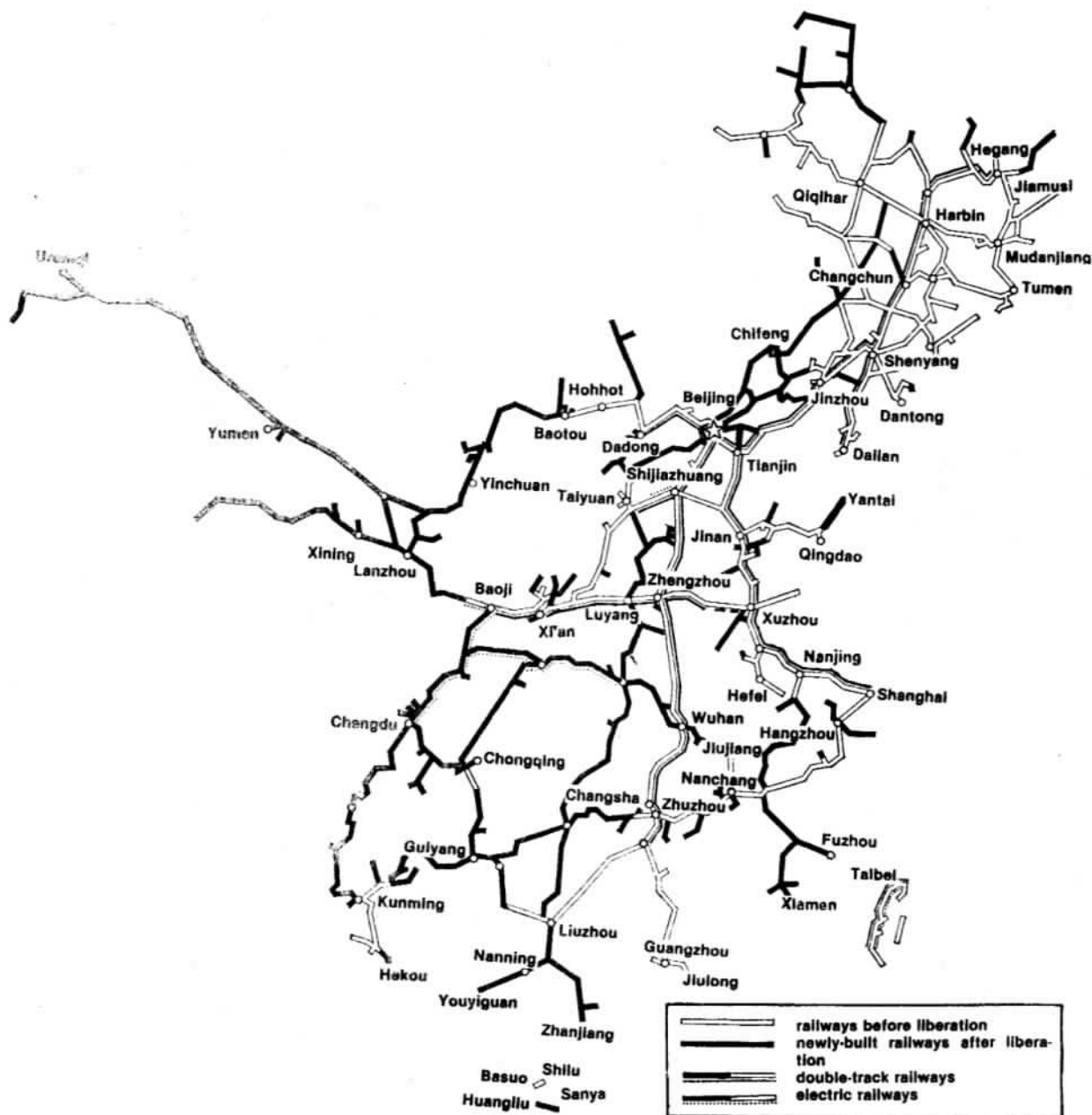
Zhan Tianyou (1861-1919), a noted Chinese railway engineer, earnestly applied himself to building China's first railway line from Beijing to Zhangjiakou and training the first batch of Chinese railway engineers.

However, they did not live to see the development of the Chinese railways, which developed at a snail's pace in old China.

During the 73 years from 1876, when Britain built the first railway in China, to 1949, only 22,000 kilometres of track were laid. By the time the People's Republic was founded, about 11,000 kilometres of track were usable, which are one-fifth of all the railways open to traffic today. These old train systems were not only built with backward technology, at different standards, but were also poorly distributed, the majority being concentrated in north-eastern and coastal China.

Although there were many reasons for the backwardness of railways in old China, imperialism





and deep-rooted feudalism were the main ones, holding back much of China's industrial development.

### Weaving a Network

In the 53 years since the founding of New China, great progress has been made in railway construction. The railways in eastern China are reaching towards the west, and separate lines have been linked together.

Sichuan, in southwestern China, is the most populous province. In ancient times it was called "Heaven's Kingdom." However, the "kingdom" is surrounded by high mountains, making access difficult. The great Tang Dynasty poet Li Bai said, "It is easier to climb to Heaven than to take the Sichuan road." Nothing changed until the 1950s.

After liberation, China built its first trunk railway linking Cheng-

du, the provincial capital, with Chongqing. In the following 20 years several other railways connecting with Sichuan were also laid. Now, a passenger spends less than two days and two nights on the train travelling from Beijing to Chongqing. It was said that in the reign of Qing Emperor Tong Zhi, about 100 years ago, a tourist named Wu Tao walked two months from Beijing to Chongqing.



Like Sichuan Province, Guizhou, Shaanxi, Ningxia, Qinghai, Gansu and Xinjiang, which cover 41 per cent of China's territory, had practically no railway lines before liberation. But now 11,400 kilometres of track have been laid in these areas, or 22 per cent of the total length of railways on the mainland.

At present, with the exception of Tibet, all the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions and even important production bases have their own railway lines. A basic network of railroads has been formed (see sketch map 1), with a total mileage of more than 50,000 kilometres (not including the railways in Taiwan Province), ranking fifth in the world.

### Backward and Forward

More than 120 countries and regions have their own railways. Calculated on the length of track per 10,000 people, China ranks 102nd. Clearly, China does not have enough railways. It also has backward delivery systems and facilities. For example, 71 per cent of the locomotives run on steam, which consume far more energy

resources than diesel or electric engines.

China built its first electrified railway from Baoji to Chengdu in 1975. There are now five electrified lines, running more than 2,500 kilometres. But this accounts for just 5 per cent of the nation's total.

Ru Yuankai, a high-ranking engineer with the Ministry of Railways, said, "In comparison with developed countries, China is backward in railways, although not in all aspects. For instance, the freight turnover time is the shortest." The freight turnover time refers to the interval between when a car is loaded and when it returns empty for reloading. The less time spent, the faster the freight turnover, the higher the efficiency. Now the freight turnover time in China is approximately 3.3 days, the most efficient in the world.

Ru said some countries use trains mainly for carrying passengers, while others use them to transport goods. But China uses its railroads for both. A fairly strict dispatching system has been established, and as a result, the rate of use is high.

Higher speed trains are not the only goal, he said. The ministry wants trains to carry more and run more often, so that capacity can be raised.

High speed trains are only suitable for passenger lines. Developing them is bound to be at the expense of freight traffic. "We can't imagine what would happen if trains only carried passengers, not cargo," Ru said.

### Key to Revitalizing the Economy

In China, railway transportation is called the vanguard of the national economy. However, the vanguard was not really in the lead even in the early 1980s.

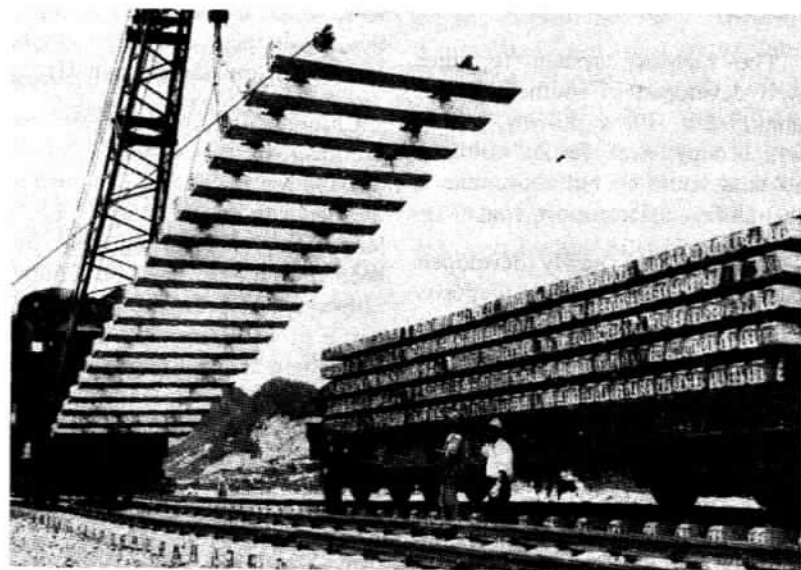
Chen Puru, Minister of Railways, said the reason is that people are not well aware of the distribution of railway lines, which is not suited to the development of the national economy. The expansion and upgrading of railway lines along the eastern coast should have started earlier.

The areas east and northeast of the Beijing-Guangzhou Railway have 77 per cent of the nation's population, and 87 per cent of the industrial and agricultural output value. But the existing railways are only capable of handling 50-70 per cent of the traffic.

Railway construction has been listed as a strategic concern in national economic development since the 12th National Party Congress in September 1982. The minister said that this will play an important role in helping accomplish the goal of quadrupling the 1980 total output value of industry and agriculture by the end of the century.

In 1983, state investment in railway construction went up 30 per cent from the previous year. During the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1981-85), of the 93 large-scale

The Guiyang south station on the Guiyang-Kunming electrified railway is expected to be completed in 1985.

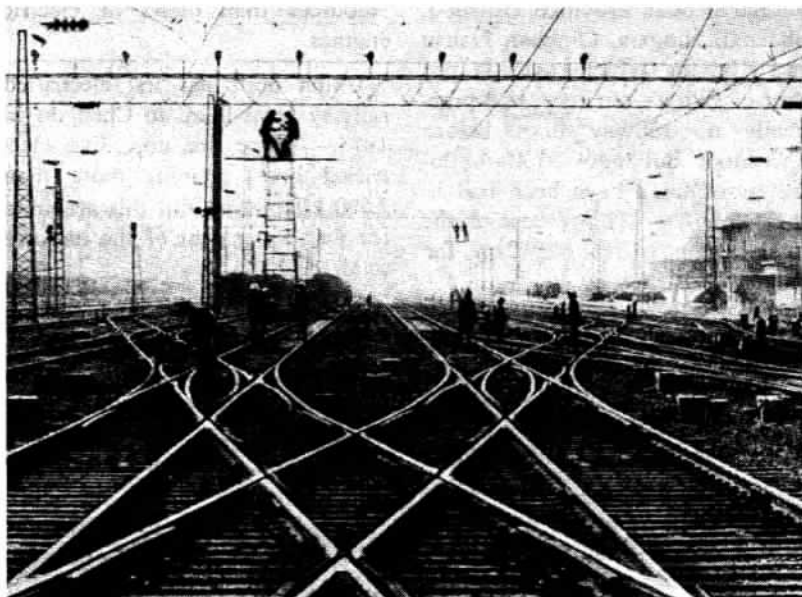


projects under construction, 19 are for railroads.

It is estimated that the total length of railways open to traffic will increase from 51,600 kilometres today to 60,000 in 1990, and to 75,000-80,000 in the year 2000. At the same time, China will work hard to develop production of diesel and electric locomotives.

By 1991, China will complete the construction of a double-track heavy-duty electrified line from Datong to Qinhuangdao, 630 kilometres long. On heavy-duty lines, double or higher powered diesel or electric locomotives are used to pull heavy freight in more carriages. The entire line is equipped with computer-controlled dispatching facilities. In addition, advanced optical fibre communication systems will be used for some of the signalling.

Railway specialists consider that in 10 years and more, railroads will still be the mainstay of Chi-



Railway workers prepare to open the Tianshui-Lanzhou electrified line.

na's transportation system, although civil aviation, navigation and highway transportation are expected to develop considerably. I decided to see for myself how these vital lines are developing.

reached its saturation point and cannot take on huge trainloads of coal.

In fact, the new railway will also open a marine route for coal transportation. Coal mined in Yanzhou will be shipped to coastal cities or abroad through the seaport of Shijiusuo. More importantly, the railway will be linked with Shanxi, China's largest coal producer, carrying its coal to the shores of the Yellow Sea through Jiaozuo, Xinxiang, Heze and Yanzhou. The Xinxiang-Heze Railway, which is also under construction, will be completed at the same time (see sketch map 11).

China is the third largest coal producer in the world. But its distribution is uneven: one-third of the deposits are in Shanxi. For a long time, transporting coal has been the major task of China's railways. At present, although 43 per cent of all railway freight is coal, there are still large quantities of coal in Shanxi waiting to be shipped. At the same time, many enterprises in east and south China are not in full operation because of coal shortages.

To solve this problem, railway

## A Vital Line for Coal Transport

I visited Yanzhou this spring. It took me 11 hours by train from Beijing to arrive at this small town in southern Shandong.

An ordinary county seat, several years ago tourists only saw Yanzhou on their way to its two neighbouring counties — Qufu and Zouxian, the hometowns of the two great ancient Chinese thinkers, Confucius (551-479 BC) and Mencius (372-289 BC).

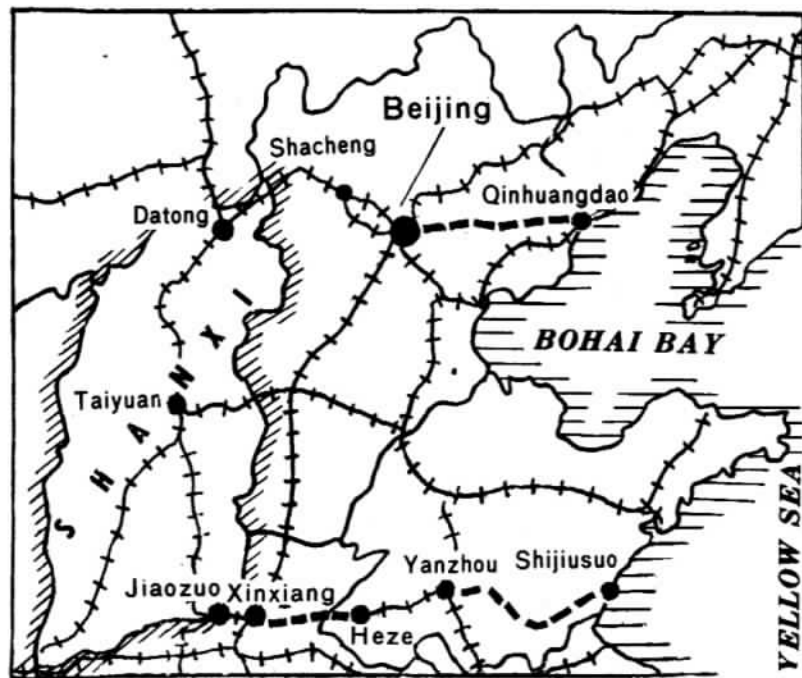
However, Yanzhou has become famous since it was chosen as the starting point of the 308-kilometre Yanzhou-Shijiusuo Railway, a major state construction project and one of the first two railways to be built partly with foreign funds. (The other is the Beijing-Qinhuangdao Railway.)

The Yanzhou-Shijiusuo Railway, started in April 1981, will be put

into operation in 1985. The project is designed and will be built by the Chinese, and the state will provide more than two-thirds of the investment. The rest will be loaned by Japan.

The highway system is quite well developed in southern Shandong. But still a railway, which will occupy much fertile, cultivated land, must be built to enhance the ability to transport coal.

Yanzhou is a newly developed coal field, with verified deposits of 9 billion tons which may last for more than a century. The exploitation of this coal mine will help relieve the fuel shortage in east China, where most of the country's industries are concentrated. The existing Beijing-Shanghai Railway, which links Yanzhou with east China, has already



Yan Jiujiang, the chief engineer, told me, in 1978, 43 per cent of his construction bureau was mechanized. In 1982, it went up 52 per cent, and in 1983, the figure reached 75 per cent.

"The most mechanized work is laying the roadbed," he said. "If you had been here last year, you would have seen a magnificent view. All the work—excavation, moving the earth, loading and unloading, transportation and rolling the surface—was done by machines, which were very efficient."

The main line of the Yanzhou-Shijiusuo Railway is 308 kilometres long. Because the track laying was also mechanized, 2 kilometres were completed a day.

### Coastal City Grows

The completion of the railway will bring benefits to towns and cities all along the line. Shijiusuo, its end point, is a good example.

Situated by the Yellow Sea, Shijiusuo used to be a small fishing town of only 10,000 people. But now, China's first deep-water coal wharf is under construction there.

I saw no remains of the old village. Instead, what caught my eyes were high buildings, giant cranes, rumbling trucks, and the big railway station wide enough for 32 tracks. At the port, the scene was even more exciting, with welding flames dancing and all kinds of machines humming.

A 1,100-metre-long jetty extended far into the sea, on which a conveyor belt will be installed. At the far end of the jetty, two berths are being built, one for 100,000-ton ships and the other for 25,000-tonners. After completion next year, the berths will be able to handle 15 million tons of coal a year.

Shijiusuo is a fine natural harbour, where 27 berths may be built for 10,000-ton vessels. It is slated for multiple-use development.

### Mechanized Work

As my car rumbled across the Southern Shandong Plain, I saw the roadbed, high and endless, like a giant dragon creeping towards the east until it meets the horizon.

I stopped at Linyi, the largest station, in the middle of the line. Construction of the station facilities, including a workshop for locomotive repairs, was under way.

There were few people working on the construction site. Instead, a new truck-crane was lifting slabs of reinforced concrete. Each of the components, including 100 pillars, beams and roof arches, weighed dozens of tons, but the crane picked them up easily as a child playing with his toy bricks.

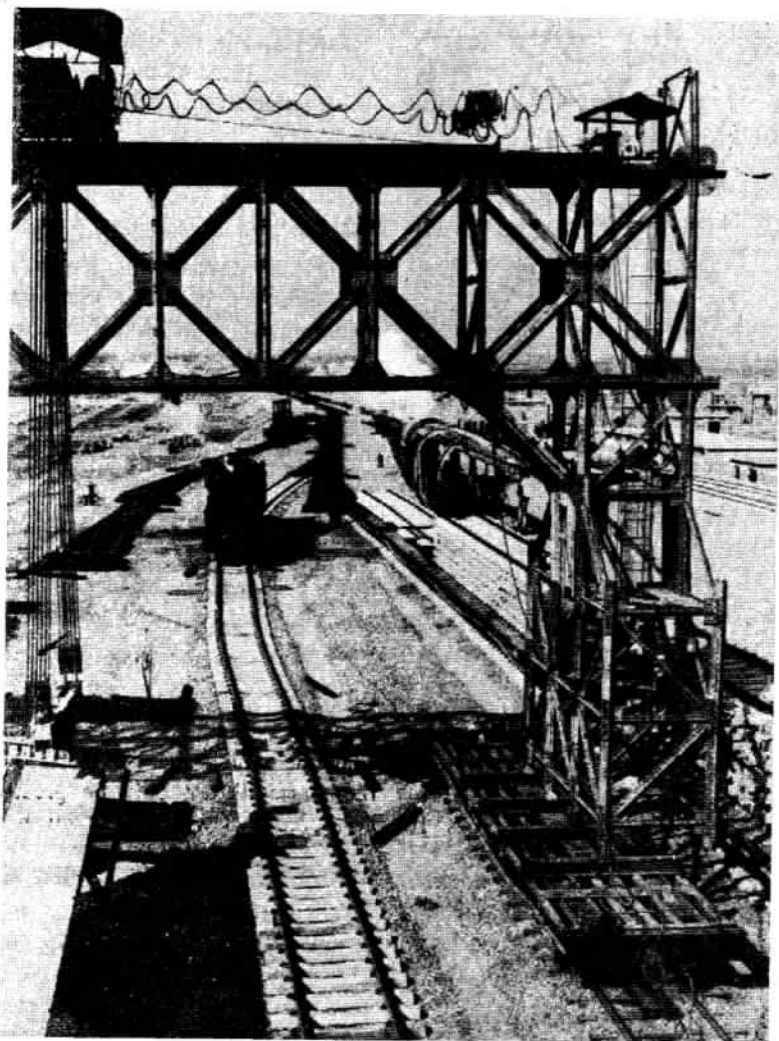
The giant cranes, excavators and other heavy machines rattling on the construction site made me think of the tools used in the past—bamboo baskets, shoulder-poles and handcarts in the 1960s, and mini-trucks and other light machines in the 1970s. Tools are the most important symbol of the development of productivity.

construction in the 1980s will stress the increase of coal freight. Four double-tracked, six electrified and 10 other new railways will be built, among which the Yanzhou-Shijiusuo and Beijing-Qinhuangdao lines are the most important.

The 281-kilometre Beijing-Qinhuangdao Railway will be the first in China to be built with double tracks and electrification at the same time. All the track had been laid by last December, and the transportation of coal will begin in 1985.

When it is finished, the coal produced in northern Shanxi will be carried by the Datong-Shacheng-Beijing double-tracked electric railway, and then the Beijing-Qinhuangdao Railway to the port of Qinhuangdao (see sketch map II).

According to design, the Yanzhou-Shijiusuo Railway will carry 18 million tons and the Beijing-Qinhuangdao, 45 million tons of coal a year. If all of the coal were sent to the industrial areas in east China from the sea, the state would receive an extra annual revenue of 26 billion yuan from the rise in production of industries in these areas.



Work continues on the Yanzhou-Shijiusuo railway.

Along with the construction of the railway and the port, the city itself is growing. With mountains, waters, historical remains and a 6-kilometre-long beach added to its mild weather, the city will become an ideal resort and scenic spot.

By the end of the century, Shijiusuo is expected to grow into a city of 300,000 people, spreading over 100 square kilometres. By that time, or even sooner, it will probably become another special economic zone open to the outside world.

## On the Beijing-Nanjing Train

A middle-aged man sitting opposite me in the restaurant car was enjoying his food and liquor idly and contentedly, when an attendant came, saying, "Excuse me, but it is lunch time. Will you please stop drinking here?"

"Why?" the man asked.

"Because I'm afraid you'll drink for too long a time, while hundreds of passengers are waiting for lunch. There are only 43 seats on the dinner, you see."

Obviously the attendant was reluctant to do this. There really were too many passengers on the train.

The total volume of railway passenger transportation has increased by six times since 1950. In recent years, following the growth in the number of tourists and peasants who do business away from home, the crowding on trains has become even more serious.

"We can do nothing but overload," said Zhu Fuquan, head of the crew on Express 125 which runs from Beijing to Nanjing, one of the busiest lines in the country.

Usually a train of 10 carriages (six with hard seats, three with hard sleepers and one with soft berths) should carry 920 people. But in fact, it takes an average of 1,500. Sometimes the figure may be as high as 2,000, with passengers crammed in corridors.

All the extra passengers are crowded in the hard seat cars, while the numbers for the sleeper cars are controlled by their seating capacities. A hard sleeper car is divided into 10 parts, with six sleepers in each, stacked in two rows of three. The bed is just big enough for an adult to lie down. A soft berth carriage contains eight compartments, each with four larger berths.

Though most of the hard sleeper and soft berth cars do not have air conditioning, they are much more convenient than the hard seats because they are clean and uncrowded. Naturally, the prices for tickets in these carriages are more expensive. For example, a ticket from Beijing to Nanjing (1,157 kilometres) costs 19.9 yuan (about US\$10.00) for a hard seat, 32.1-33.7 yuan (about US\$16.50) for a hard sleeper (the costs vary according to the tier of the sleeper), and 66.40 yuan (about US\$33) for a soft berth.



An attendant helps a Miao passenger with her bundle.

### Public Service

While the crowding is not easy to improve, the service on the train is.

Most passengers want to drink boiled water or tea during the trip, a habit of the Chinese. Therefore, the first task of a train attendant is to supply boiled water. If passengers complain, "There is never any boiled water on the train," it means the service is too awful to

imagine. Fortunately, few trains receive this complaint.

Other services include supplying food, soft drinks and travel necessities, lending books and newspapers and cleaning the carriages. If you are lucky enough, the attendants will treat you to singing, guessing riddles and small magic tricks.

The exercise of "democracy on the train" effectively promotes im-

proved service. A notebook is hung in every car inviting criticisms and suggestions. Any passenger may write his or her recommendations about the service. The passengers' opinions are often the main means authorities use to judge the service in a car or a train.

Before a train reaches its final station, the work in each carriage is appraised. The most excellent will be cited as a Red Banner car, and is awarded a silk banner. Apart from taking into account the criticisms and suggestions in the notebooks, a special group including a representative from the passengers will also solicit opinions from the riders.

An attendant usually gets a bonus of 8.5 yuan a month (one-fifth to one-sixth of his or her wage), if all the work is done well. The one who wins the most Red Banners will not only be greatly honoured, but will also be given a higher bonus.

The passengers also often write to higher authorities or newspapers, criticizing the service on the train. When I was on Express 46, Sun Na, head of the train

### Statistics

#### China's Railways

	Length of Track Open to Traffic (km)		Passenger Volume (million persons)	Passenger Mileage (million persons/km)	Freight Volume (million tons)	Freight Mileage (million tons/km)
	Total	Electrified Lines				
1949	21,800		103	13,000	56	18,400
1952	22,900		164	20,100	132	60,200
1957	26,700		313	36,100	274	134,600
1962	34,600	100	741	85,700	346	172,100
1966	37,800	100	408	60,400	540	201,600
1976	46,300	700	705	95,500	821	386,100
1978	48,600	1,000	807	109,100	1,075	533,300
1983	51,600	2,500	1,049	177,300	1,151	663,400

crew, told me a story. Last year, an old peasant wrote to *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily), describing how an attendant on the train blocked him from getting on and threw his baggage on to the platform, saying the train was too crowded. As a result, the train was not recommended for a Red Banner.

Although what the peasant said was probably an exaggeration, Sun said, it is true that sometimes the service on the train is not good enough. "We welcome all criticisms. We'll correct our mistakes if we have made any, and we'll guard against them if we have not. As for suggestions, we'll do our best to adopt them if possible. For those which cannot be adopted, we'll give explanations."

For example, Sun said, a Canadian passenger suggested that the radio, which is turned on at 6:25, begin after 9:00 in the morning. She said that it was hard to satisfy him because most of the Chinese wake up early and would like to listen to the news at 6:30. Furthermore, in the soft berths the radio can be turned off if the passengers all agree, but in the hard sleepers and the hard seats, it is impossible to satisfy all the dozens or hundreds of people. So the attendant makes the decision. When the majority of the passengers have woken up, the radio is turned on.

### Dedicated Attendant

In her dark blue railway workers' suit, the attendant, about 27, looked tall and lean. As soon as the train left Beijing, she started serving boiled water, wiping the tables and mopping the floor.

After three of four stations had passed, she began to check tickets. She was starting from between the cars, when three young men squeezed their way in from the neighbouring carriage

"Your tickets, please," she stopped them.

"Don't think that we have no tickets. We're not that kind of guys." The answer was rather impolite.

"I didn't mean that. I . . ."

"What did you mean by checking our tickets specially?"

"We check everyone's ticket to prevent people from boarding the wrong train or taking a train without buying a ticket. I hope you'll be co-operative."

There was silence. But the attendant did not give in. "Will you please let me know if you are on the right train?" she asked quietly and kindly. Her sincerity succeeded. The men let her check their tickets.

The scene interested me. I asked why the young fellows did not want their tickets checked.

"It was not that they didn't want their tickets checked." She seemed to understand them well. "They were unhappy because they could not find their seats. When I asked them for tickets, they thought they had found a good chance to express their anger."

"Oh! How experienced you are!"

"No. I am not experienced. I've been working here for only less than two months," she said. "But because I have also been a passenger, I know their psychology."

Gu Rongli, the attendant, is a demobilized soldier. Because she used to do some medical service in the army, she is also the doctor on the train.

There are actually no professional doctors on any of China's trains. Usually when a passenger falls ill, the loudspeaker system

asks those who are doctors to go to a certain carriage.

Gu told me that it was not unusual to end up with a patient on a train. On her express, there was a girl suffering from a bad stomach ache. "I have given her some medicine and let her rest in my small cabin," she said. "But I must be careful because she has a history of appendicitis. If she doesn't get better, she'll be sent to a hospital at the next station."

The old, the sick and the handicapped receive special concern on the train. They may buy a hard sleeper ticket ahead of others. If it is possible, they may ask the cooks for their favourite dishes.

"What we have done are all small things, such as serving soft food to tooth-ache sufferers. But the passengers thank us a lot. This is very encouraging," said Gu. "Now, since China has too few trains to serve its people and the facilities on the train are still rather backward, the only way to make the passengers feel at home on a train is to improve our service." □



### Longer Careers Urged for Women

from "GUANGMING RIBAO"  
(Guangming Daily)

A PROFESSOR of medicine has urged authorities to avoid fixing a rigid retirement age for women intellectuals, so as to allow them ample opportunities to pursue their careers and contribute more.

Professor Yan Renying, the honorary president of the No. 1 Hospital attached to the Beijing Medical College, said she believes career women, like their male counterparts, are most mature and at the height of their power in their fifties and sixties. Women in their fifties may compare unfavourably with able-bodied youths in manual labour, but in scientific research, designing, teaching, artistic creation and management, they are superior.

"Women's 'second puberty' is another prominent advantage," said Yan. "Their golden age comes with menopause because certain physiological features that create so many troubles for them are disappearing. Also at that age women have much more time off from housekeeping and child care, which for a long time binds them hand and foot."

Yan, who is also a deputy to the National People's Congress, notes that the state has shown its concern for women by setting an earlier retirement age for them than for men. "However, to a great degree," she said, "This policy pays attention to only their physical characteristics while ignoring their mental age. An intellectual—a senior intellectual in particular—can't achieve something

without years of accumulating knowledge and practical experience.

"Since the Third Plenum of the 11th Party Central Committee, women specialists have thrown themselves into the modernization drive," she said. "Undoubtedly, their early absence from the workplace will mean losses for the country."

"One of the drawbacks of the policy is that people can't possibly be all the same. Some women grow senile prematurely when still

### Colleagues Loyal in Times of Woe

from "WENHUI BAO"  
(Wenhui Daily)

WHEN the family of Sun Guiying, a worker in Shanghai, was struck by medical tragedies, her colleagues at the No. 16 Woolen Sweater Factory stuck by them through thick and thin.

In January 1981, Sun learnt she had uraemia, a kidney disease that cannot be cured with drugs. A kidney transplant was the only way to save her life. The leaders of her factory lost no time in consulting doctors at the Shanghai No. 1 People's Hospital about the operation.

On learning that medical expenses would be 10,000 yuan, which had to be paid in advance, factory Director Shen didn't hesitate to sign the authorization, saying "saving lives comes first."

The operation was performed

young, while others remain vigorous in their twilight years."

Yan herself is a good example of the second type. She has worked in medicine for 40-odd years since graduating from the Peking Union Medical College.

After examining a number of case studies, Yan concluded that today's authorities concentrate too much on promoting middle-aged intellectuals and protecting those over 60. Those experts on the sunny side of 50, especially women are likely to be forgotten. In fact, there are many women who have fine political qualities and are professionally competent and would make worthy successors to senile experts.

the following June and proved fairly successful. After spending half a year in the hospital recovering, Sun returned to her family.

However, misfortunes often don't come alone. While Sun was resuming her happy life with her husband and daughter, another shadow fell upon the family. In June 1983, it was found that her husband had cancer of the liver.

For a second time, Sun was overwhelmed with agony. Her husband had been doing all the household chores, even after she left the hospital. Who would look after the fragile mother and her child with him in hospital?

Lao Pan, Party secretary at Sun's factory, on the very evening when Sun's husband was taken to hospital, hurried to her house to discuss how to deal with the household chores, even ignoring his supper. He assured Sun that the

factory would help her in every way.

The following day a canteen worker brought Sun meals. Some Party and Youth league members cleaned her rooms, carried away the dirty laundry and brought back the clean several days later.

While Sun's husband was in

hospital, the heads of his unit, the Shanghai No.1 Rubber Product Factory, sent several comrades to wait on him hand and foot day and night up until he died that September. After his death, colleagues at both the rubber and the sweater factories collected money to help Sun and her daughter arrange a new life.

young man soon spread throughout the hospital as well as Yu's village.

Finally, on February 10, Yu Ming saw the young man while visiting his son. He turned out to be Li Guoqing, a sociology freshman at Beijing University. The story of that night in January came out. He had been visiting his sister's child. When he heard of Yu's crisis he rushed home and told his mother, and she, moved by the child's plight, helped him gather the necessary money.

With hospital care, Yu's son improved day by day and is now a healthy boy again.

## Student's Help Saves Child's Life

from "BEIJING RIBAO"  
(Beijing Daily)

EARLIER this year, in the emergency ward of the Beijing Children's Hospital, Yu Ming, a peasant from the village of Zhangjiazhuang in Hebei Province, was frantic. His son, who had suddenly felt an ache in his chest in January, was showing no sign of recovering, despite preliminary medical treatment.

The doctor announced his diagnosis. The boy had blood poisoning, complicated by tuberculous meningitis and pyothorax — all extremely dangerous ailments demanding immediate treatment in hospital, which would require 500 yuan paid in advance. However, all Yu had with him was 200 yuan. Apart from sending somebody home to get the rest 300 yuan needed, he could do nothing but stare at his son, who was delirious.

Just then a young man of about 20 walked towards Yu and asked about the child's condition and how much money Yu was short. Upon hearing the perilous state of affairs, the stranger, who looked like a student, assured Yu that he could pool together the other 300 yuan by the next day.

Sure enough, the young man turned up the following day with the money and helped arrange everything for the child. Then he left without leaving his name or address.

It was now the eve of the Spring Festival, and Yu Ming waited all day, hoping the young man would turn up again. He didn't. The story of the helpful

## Early Societies of Stamp Collectors

from "GONGREN RIBAO"  
(Workers' Daily)

THE first organization of stamp collectors in China was the Shenzhen Philatelic Society, founded in 1922. Its formation was followed by others, the Zhonghua, Xinguang and Jiaxu Philatelic Societies probably being the best-known.

The Zhonghua Philatelic Society, established in 1925, centred its efforts on introducing and studying China's stamps. It published four journals, which served as a window to the world for Chinese stamp collecting. Its Chairman, Zhou Jinjue, won a special bronze medal at the 1926 International stamp exhibition in New York, the first Chinese to win an international award in this field.

The Xinguang Philatelic Society was started in 1926 with branches in Qingdao, Shanghai and Suzhou. Its journal *Xinguang Stamps* (altogether 15 issues) was included in the World Philatelic Publications Association.

The Jiaxu Philatelic Society, founded in Zhengzhou in 1934, moved to Xian in 1938, to Kaifeng in 1945 and settled in Liuzhou in 1948. In its first issue of *Jiaxu Youkan* (Jiaxu Philatelic Periodical) it clearly advocated the cultivation of this enjoyable recreation and encouraged scholarship in the area.

The society was devoted to the proper training of stamp collectors and stressed strong ties between them.

With nearly 2,600 members at its peak, the Jiaxu Philatelic Society established correspondent branches in a dozen cities.





# Film Awards Pick New Stars

The summer seemed to come earlier this year as a galaxy of directors, actors and actresses and other film workers gathered in Jinan, the city of fountains. The awards ceremonies for the 1984 Golden Rooster and Hundred Flowers — two yearly film awards — were held in the capital of Shandong Province.

The focus of the film goers' enthusiasm was naturally on the best female and male leads Gong Xue and Yang Zaibao, both winners of the fourth Golden Rooster, which was sponsored by the China Film Workers' Association, and the seventh Hundred Flowers, which was sponsored by *Dazhong Dianying* (Popular Cinema) and from a viewers' poll.

Dong Xingji, a late drama actor, also received a Golden Rooster as the best male lead for his excellent performance in *Liao Zhongkai*.

The best feature film Golden Rooster went to *Country Couple*, produced by the Zhujiang Film Studio. Winners of the Hundred Flowers were *Our Niu Baisui*, *Ward 16*, and *A Story that Should Not Have Happened*.

Yang Zaibao, a big tall man, made a deep impression on film fans when he played Qiu Hu, a valiant peasant in *Open Country*. This time, for his role as Luo Xingang, a factory director who is determined to restructure the economy in *Blood Boils*, he was not only selected the best male lead for the Hundred Flowers, but also won the Golden Rooster title, an honour which had been vacant for two years.

In real life Luo Xingang is an ordinary man — a quality Yang portrayed in his low-key performance. Yang said: "I understand the character of my own generation. While obstacles lie in the way of reform, Luo is eaten by bitterness and contradictions inside. I tried to grasp the psychology supporting his every word and action."

Yang Zaibao, who grew up in the countryside and studied in the Shanghai Theatrical Institute in the 1950s, has played more than 10 characters on the screen, including a brave cavalry captain, a devoted member of a geological pro-

specting team, a slave-turned general and a peasant who suffered bitterly and smoldered with hatred. While each role is distinctive, they share the common characteristic of being fearless and unyielding.

Yang's success lies in the real and believable feelings of these "iron men." His acting is simple, natural and subtle, with no trace of overacting. "Yang Zaibao is always full of enthusiasm when he plays his roles. He is good at exposing the inner world of the characters, and has thus given artistic power to the images he portrays," said a film critic.

### Gong Xue: New Star

Gong Xue is a pretty Shanghai woman. Her deep understanding of her character and increasingly mature acting techniques paved her way to the crown as best actress.

Qin Nan, the heroine she played in *Under the Bridge*, is a typical oriental woman, industrious and virtuous. While working in the countryside she falls in love with

Left: A scene from "Country Couple."  
Right: Qin Nan and Gao Zhihua in "Under the Bridge."



a young man and gives birth to a son. But he forsakes her.

Penniless and forlorn, Qin Nan sets up a seamstress' stall on a Shanghai street to earn a living. A new life begins for her when she meets Gao Zhihua, a young bicycle repairer.

To play such a woman is not easy for Gong Xue, who did not have a difficult background or the experience of being a mother. To obtain a better understanding of the character, she visited young people who run their own businesses. She also took to park the little boy who played her son and told him stories, trying to foster warm feelings between them.

Gong Xue herself is hardworking. In 1967, she went to settle in the Jiangxi countryside after graduating from a Shanghai middle school. She wanted to be an actress, but failed in several enrolment examinations until 1973, when she was recruited into a PLA art troupe. In 1979, her first role as two girls who have grown up in different societies impressed the film goers with her fresh style, though her technique was far from mature at that time.

Thereafter, she played various characters in 10 films, including the misunderstood daughter of a senior official, a vainglorious young lady, a prostitute, a blind girl and an ancient woman. "The beauty I am trying to portray is realistic, simple and characteristic. In acting, I try to be subtle," Gong Xue said.

### A Veteran Director

Tang Xiaodan won the Golden Rooster for best director for his work in *Liao Zhongkai*, which was highly praised by the recommending committee. "The film has realistically conjured up a picture of what happened during the first-round co-operation between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party (1924-27). The image of

Liao Zhongkai is successful. The composition is rigorous and the style is straightforward and fluent...."

The film tells the heroic story of Liao Zhongkai, a dedicated Left-



Dong Xingji as Liao Zhongkai.

Wing Kuomintang member and sincere friend of the Chinese Communist Party, who did his best and died for following Dr. Sun Yat-sen's three great policies of alliance with Russia, co-operation with the Communist Party and assistance to the peasants and workers.

Tang Xiaodan did some serious study before he began the film. Although he was familiar with the background, he read and checked a lot of historical references, visited veterans who took part in the revolution during that time and interviewed relatives of Liao. Tang combined the reality of history with the reality of art by meticulously dealing with historical events and carefully arranging the details of Liao's life.

Tang Xiaodan, a native of Fujian Province, was born in 1910. Since he began his career in 1931, he has directed more than a dozen feature films.

Tang is especially noted for his military and historical films. The historical scenes in his films are always realistic and full of tremen-

dous momentum. The images he has portrayed are all three-dimensional, unique both in appearance and characteristics.

### 'Country Couple' Controversy

*Country Couple*, Golden Rooster winner for the best feature film, won the audiences' hearts, but gave rise to controversy as well.

The story is simple and prosaic. An ordinary peasant couple lives in a mountainous village in south China. The husband ferries people across the river. His wife, gentle and soft, always gives him great attention. The wife wants to go to a rural fair with their neighbours to see a train coming to the mountains for the first time. The husband does not agree, and she obeys him. She saves the money earned from selling pigs to buy a coat. But the husband opposes the purchase and she obeys again. Finally, the wife is found to be suffering from cancer. Her husband suddenly awakens. He deeply regrets his coldness. The film ends, with him carrying his wife in a wheelbarrow to see the train.

The film, directed by Hu Bingliu, is tragic and thought-provoking. It lays out a number of theories about human behaviour and explores a universally significant theme. It also exposes the potential influence of the yoke of feudal ethics.

*Country Couple* was discussed heatedly after it was shown. Some critics said the wife is tragic and pitiful. Although she is industrious, good-hearted and obedient — virtuous as an ordinary peasant woman — she is only an old-style model of "good wife and kind mother." As a contemporary woman, she lacks both spirit and ethics. Others said that the beauty the wife reflects is one which is losing its reality and running against the times. It is not full of vigour and is not worth following.



Fisherman.



Yi Minority Singer.

## Sculpture by Chen Guilun

Born in 1936 in Haifeng County, Guangdong Province, Chen Guilun now works in the sculpture department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing. Most of her works are based on the life of China's minorities.



Dai Girl.

Mother and Son.



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