People's China

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People's China

China's Revolution and the Struggle Against Colonialism

On February 21st, the progressive youth and students of all lands will join hands to demonstrate their irreconcilable opposition to a common enemy - to colonialism, a system which spells only war, unemployment and misery for all labouring people, regardless of whether they live in imperialist or dependent countries.

This date marks the third occasion when "The Day of International Solidarity with the Youth and Students Fighting against Colonialism" will be observed throughout the world. It was in 1948 that the World Federation of Democratic Youth, in the name of its 40,000,000 members, set aside this day for the world-wide commemoration of the anti-colonial struggle.

But this year's observance of the day of struggle against colonialism has greater significance than ever before. Today the national liberation movement of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples has attained a scope unprecedented in history. On top of the tremendous advances along the whole anti-imperialist and anti-colonial front, there has occurred the great victory of the Chinese people, who have now created their independent People's Republic. This gigantic achievement, signifying the liberation of nearly one-fourth of the world's population, will have decisive influence upon the future course of the liberation movement in all oppressed countries. The Chinese people's victory not only provides indirect assistance to all colonially-exploited peoples by laying down a proven pattern for successful struggle; it also provides direct and concrete assistance to them, for it has shaken the whole colonial system to its very foundations.

These great events in China, coupled with the increased world influence of the U.S.S.R. and the People's Democracies, as well as with the immense headway made by the world camp fighting for peace and democracy, have so substantially weakened the imperialist powers that the balance of world forces has been altered. Not since the colonial system arose have conditions been so favourable for the oppressed peoples to stand up and throw off the bonds that have been strangling them.

Inevitably, each success scored by the people's forces against their colonial or imperialist rulers has brought repercussions in the reactionary camp. In the face of their mounting defeats and set-backs on various fronts, the panic-stricken colonial powers have either increased their brutal repression or tried out new and more subtle devices for maintaining political and economic mastery. Probably never before in peacetime have American, British, Dutch and French troops been stationed in all the far flung corners of the world in such numbers as today, thus draining the national treasuries of their respective countries and placing an insupportable burden upon the people in their homelands.

The desperate plight of the various imperialist powers is also reflected in their frantic attempts to merge themselves into a "united front" against their subject peoples. With the U.S. as chief instigator, they are now busily engaged in trying to force their colonial puppets into a "Pacific Alliance" which can be used to suppress armed national liberation struggles anywhere in Asia. In order to make this prospective military alliance more palatable, the imperialists are moving towards their ultimate objective very cautiously, cloaking their initial manoeuvres in talk about "economic aid." But the world has already learned in Europe that Marshall Plans inevitably turn into North Atlantic Pacts — and the pattern in Asia cannot be different. Despite all of Acheson's "theories of parallel interest" which pretend that the interests of imperialists and subject peoples are identical, current imperialist activities provide ample evidence that they themselves never consider national independence for subject peoples to be in the interests of imperialism.
As an editorial in For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy! stated on January 27th:

"It would be a mistake to underestimate this feverish activity of the imperialists who are suffering defeat. However, the victory of the Chinese people has proved to the world that by following correct revolutionary lines colonial or semi-colonial peoples can defeat their imperialist rulers and gain true national independence.

The Chinese people have behind them a 110-year history of struggle against imperialism. Since the Opium War of 1840, they have had to fight against various types of imperialist encroachment—British "free trade" and "gunboat diplomacy," the American "Open Door Policy" and intervention by "mediation," Japanese military aggression; etc. Because of the Chinese people's extremely abundant and varied experiences in fighting colonialism, and because of the resounding victory that has crowned their efforts, they are in a position to present many valuable lessons from China's successful revolution to all oppressed peoples who are struggling against colonialism.

The victorious history of the Chinese revolution has proved, first of all, that in colonial and semi-colonial countries, the working class must take the initiative in moulding a vast national united front directed against the imperialists and their local henchmen. It must mobilize into this front all classes, political parties and groups, organizations and individuals who are willing to oppose the colonialists and their running dogs. The corner-stone for this united front must be the staunch alliance of the working class and the broad peasant masses. And in order to form such an alliance, the working class must formulate a revolutionary agrarian program, based on the concrete conditions of the given country and the demands of the peasantry; and the workers must then fight shoulder-to-shoulder with the peasants to put this program into effect.

The working class must simultaneously unite with the broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie (especially with the revolutionary intelligentsia) for this class is also bitterly opposed to imperialism. Since the national bourgeoisie in colonies and semi-colonies are also oppressed by imperialism, they too can constitute a revolutionary force during the period of anti-imperialist struggle and can ally themselves with the working class under certain conditions and to a certain extent. Only the feudal landlord class (especially the big landlord and comprador bourgeoisie, which both rely upon imperialism for their continued existence, are mortal enemies of the national liberation movement. Therefore, generally speaking, the working class can rally all people in such countries except feudal landlords and comprador bourgeoisie and then lead them in the common fight against the imperialists and their henchmen. But unless such a broad national united front is mobilized, the working class, which is always a small minority of the population in economically undeveloped countries, cannot possibly lead the liberation movement to victory.

However, this broad united front can only be successful when it is under the leadership of the working class and its vanguard, the Communist Party. While the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie can be allies of the working class in the anti-imperialist struggle, these classes have the qualifications for leading the revolution. The national bourgeoisie, although oppressed by imperialism, still have many ties with the imperialist rulers and feudal landlords. They therefore tend to vacillate between the revolutionary and reactionarv camps. Deep in their hearts they fear a real revolutionary movement of the people, and they are inclined to compromise with the enemy before the revolution has reached its final goal. The petty bourgeoisie are also unable to play a leading role in the liberation movement, for as a class they are irresolute and often inclined towards opportunistic extremism and adventurism. It is the working class alone that can remain brave, confident, faithful, steadfast, thoroughgoing, and unswerving in its unyielding revolutionary struggle to the revolution to its very end. This fact has again been conclusively proved in China, as it was earlier proved in other countries.

But while the working class can and must unite with all potentially revolutionary classes, it must also at the same time criticize, expose or struggle against any manifestations of the inherent weaknesses of the allied classes. It must skillfully thwart any efforts to wrest leadership of the liberation movement from its hands. It must also put forth suitable criticism of any wavering or compromising tendencies revealed by its allies.

In order to be able to assume leadership of the national liberation movement and to rally all these other classes around it, the working class and its Communist Party must be well-organized, well-disciplined and well-integrated with the masses. The Party must thoroughly master the theory of Marxism-Leninism and apply it to the concrete and objective conditions it confronts.

In colonies and semi-colonies, the Party cannot avoid drawing a high proportion of petty bourgeoisie elements into its ranks. Therefore it must conduct an unceasing ideological struggle against the disruptive trends inherent to this class, and especially against subjectivism, whether it takes the form of dogmatism or empiricism. This can only be done by skillfully employing criticism and self-criticism, an indispensable weapon in unifying the Party's own ranks, and by strengthening the leadership of the working class within the Party.

It is equally important for the Party and all revolutionary forces to comprehend that patriotism cannot be genuine patriotism unless it is integrated with proletarian internationalism. Their own experiences of struggle have convinced the Chinese people that only by leaning to one side, the side of the world democratic and peace-loving forces headed by the Soviet Union, can any country either achieve or maintain genuine independence.

This above point is of especial significance for the people of Southeast Asia, who are increasingly threatened by the conspiracies of Wall Street. American imperialism has taken to ranting with great noise and hypocrisy about "national independence" for the "backward countries," thus hoping to confuse the politically naive into thinking that independence is something which the imperialists can bestow upon them. But Titoism in Yugoslavia has already shown within the world that bourgeois nationalism can only lead one back into the clutches of imperialism, which is precisely why we find American spokesmen advocating this brand of 'nationalism.'

The history of the Chinese revolution has also proved that in colonies and semi-colonies, where the ruling classes are backed and armed by imperialist arsenals, the people cannot attain their liberation without an armed struggle. The people are faced with only one choice of organizing their own army to defend their interests or of being crushed by the mercenaries and traitors hired by the imperialists.

Now every body realizes that without the heroic People's Liberation Army the Chinese people could not have attained their national liberation. However, it cannot be overemphasized that the PLA would not have acquired its present invincible strength if it had not always been intimately linked with the broadest masses of the people and with all the anti-imperialist forces in the country. Had the PLA adopted a purely military outlook, had it not gained the wholehearted support of the people by fighting for the cause of the agrarian revolution and national independence, then the PLA could never have defeated the combined forces of domestic reaction and American imperialism.

This, of course, does not mean that armed struggle need not be co-ordinated with other forms of struggle. In those areas where the imperialists and their lackeys have a strong concentration of forces, it may not be possible to take up arms with any assurance of success. In such cases, the liberation movement should take on the form of legal and illegal mass struggles, which must, however, always be co-ordinated with the armed struggle proceeding in other more favourable environments.

These are the major lessons to be drawn from the great victory of the Chinese people. These lessons can, with judicious adaptation, be applied by all colonial and semi-colonial peoples in their fight against colonialism and for national independence.
The Road to Final Victory
A Survey of the Three and a Half Year War of Liberation
Tsai Ying-p'ing

The People's Liberation Army has just finished mopping up the last pockets of organized Kuomintang resistance on the islands and sections of China over which the Kuomintang can still claim even nominal control are Tibet, Taiwan Island, a part of Hainan Island and a few small coastal islands such as Kinmen and Matsu. Now 39 cities and county towns remain in Kuomintang hands.

The War of Liberation has reached a period of full swing before entering its final phase, in which Chiang Kai-shek's forces will be completely isolated and forced to retreat. The PLAs are now preparing its ranks for this last offensive, and the people of China are confident that 1949 will bring the revolutionary war to a successful close.

This confidence is founded upon fact and not upon wishful thinking. While it is true that the American imperialists are using every means at their disposal to reinforce the few remaining Kuomintang strongholds, the revolutionaries cannot help admiring that such efforts are futile. In the days when American aid flowed to Chiang in a far more generous stream than today, the PLAs were not prevented from creating a total of 4,746,000 square kilometers within the brief space of three and a half years. More than half of this area, or 5,511,700 square kilometers, was liberated in the year ending December 31, 1949. During this six-month period, a population of 181,256,000 was liberated, exceeding the entire population of the African continent. Over and above this were the gains they made in the 11,223,000 people still under Kuomintang domination, or to free the last 11,223,000 square kilometers of Chinese territory?

But in the midst of the widespread optimism that peace may soon be won in China, the people do not forget the heroic and self-sacrificing struggles of the past, without which such hopes of speedy victory could not have been entertained. The victory is due to the tireless efforts of the great masses of the people, who, in their turn, have been won over to the cause of the revolution.

Summing up the valuable experience of these many years of revolution, Chairman Mao has said:

“The essence of the experience consists of the following three factors:

1. A disciplined party armed with the theory of Marxism, Engelsism, Leninism and Stalinism, employing the method of self-criticism and closely linked with the masses;

2. An army led by such a party; and

3. A united front of all revolutionary strata and all revolutionary parties and groups, led by such a party.”

From Defensive To Offensive
At the start of the War of Liberation, in July, 1946, many observers thought the People's Army had no chance of victory, in view of the overwhelming superiority of the Kuomintang troops, both in number and in equipment.

One side, the side of the counter-revolution, had mobilized 4,300,000 troops equipped with US-made arms and the weapons of 1,000,000 Japanese soldiers who had been disarmed by the Kuomintang. Furthermore this side was backed by the arsenals of American imperialism.

The other side, the side of the revolution, had the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies (later called the People's Liberation Army), totalling only 1,200,000 troops.

The ratio of military strength was 3.5 to 1 in favour of the counter-revolutionaries.

Encouraged by this situation, the Kuomintang lined up 80 per cent of its troops on the battlefield and launched an all-out offensive against the Liberated Areas, trying to crush the people's forces once and for all.

But it is now obvious that Chiang and his American patrons incorrectly evaluated the military situation. Their statistical figures regarding the relative military strength of the two armies were correct enough, but they made the fatal blunder of forgetting to add in the strength of the people—a factor that upset all their calculations. They could not understand that the people solidly and wholeheartedly supported the PLA, because the revolutionary army had been inseparably linked with the agrarian revolution of the peasants, who made up more than 80 per cent of the population.

As the fighting gained momentum and spread along a vast battle-front, the reactionaries made an other grave blunder. Not yet realizing what it meant to fight against an armed revolutionary army, they kept to the orthodox military strategies that had proved victorious in previous imperialist wars. They began to trade off their troops in exchange for big cities, counting their victories only in the number of the enemy's positions they captured, while in many areas of sufficient renown to be mentioned by the world press.

In the first year of the war, from July, 1946 to June, 1947, the following numbers of cities and troops changed hands:

KMT: took over 335 cities and county seats and lost 1,120,000 men.

PLA: took back 288 cities and county seats and lost 55,000 men.

On the average, the Kuomintang paid one division for one city. And since “war is a rivalry between men” (Karl Clausewitz), not between cities, it was already evident that they would lose the cities too after losing their divisions.

General Liu Po-chen, one of the brilliant military leaders in China, pointed out in late 1947 that:

“If you keep land and lose land, The land can be taken again; If you keep land and lose men, You lose both land and men.”

In the first half of the second year of war, (July - December 1947), the war situation underwent a drastic change. After reducing the enemy's strength from 4,300,000 to 3,700,000 (taking into account 550,000 new recruits) and expanding its own forces from 1,200,000 to 1,950,000, the People's Liberation Army passed over to the offensive.

The counter-offensive began on July 1, 1947, on the southern front where General Liu Po-chen's army forced a breach in the Kuomintang defences line along the Lung'ai-Kuang River, pushed south to the Tung-shih Mountains, deep in the enemy's rear. From then on, the main theatre of operations was shifted to the Kuomintang-controlled areas.

The powerful offensive of the PLA, which rapidly spread to every front, astonished the world. It threw Chiang and his American military advisors into utter confusion. New measures were improvised with the help of the American Advisory Group to check the advance of the PLA. But they proved unsuccessful.

The Kuomintang defences were tottering.

A Decisive Year
The first basic change in the war came when the PLA went over to the offensive. The second occurred in the latter half of 1948, when the PLA began to place greater emphasis on modern positional warfare.
Liberation of Taiwan In Sight
Gen. Su Yu

The Chinese people have already won basic victory in their War of Liberation. Chiang Kai-shek's regular armies have been completely wiped out on China's mainland, except for those in far-off Tibet. The armed bandits and special agents whom Chiang dispatched to our places have already been largely exterminated. Only Taiwan (Pumossu) and the islands along the southeastern coast are now still under his control. Hence, the liberation of these islands and the final, complete annihilation of the remnants of his army is an extremely important task now confronting the people of the eastern seaboard and the East China People's Liberation Army.

I must first of all point out that the liberation of the islands along the southeastern coast, especially Taiwan, is an extremely big problem, and will involve the biggest campaign in the history of modern Chinese warfare. These islands cannot be occupied without sufficient transports, suitable equipment and adequate supplies.

Furthermore, a considerable number of Chiang Kai-shek's land, sea and air forces are concentrated there, together with a batch of the most intransigent reactionaries who have fled from China's mainland. They have built strong defense works, depending on the surrounding sea and islands. After the defeat of the American imperialists, they have invited in a group of Japanese militarists, who had slaughtered inestimable numbers of our Chinese people, to defend Taiwan for them and to man their places, thus continuing to play the Chinese people.

All these are actual problems which we certainly cannot overlook. One must realize these are new difficulties that have arisen in the course of our war. Only when we have fully prepared the material and technical conditions for overcoming these difficulties can we smoothly carry out this tremendous military assignment and thoroughly eradicate the Kuo-mintang remnants.

But, we absolutely must not draw the erroneous conclusion that, because of these difficulties, Taiwan and such places cannot be liberated. To the contrary, we have many favourable conditions for liberating these islands.

General SU YU, who ranks among the top military strategists in the PLA, is Vice-Commander of the Third Field Army. The article presented here is a condensation of his latest speech made in Shanghai.

Although Chiang Kai-shek has concentrated 250,000 regular troops (or about 300,000 men if some of his volunteers and other miscellaneous troops are included) in these areas, these troops are thinly dispersed throughout these islands and their fighting power is therefore very weak. Moreover, these troops are grouped into 44 divisions comprising 15 armies, which constitute 71 per cent of the total 61 divisions (340,000 troops) of Chiang's remaining forces. Most of these forces consist of defeated conscripts and demoralized troops. Chiang also attaches much importance to the maintenance of a high degree of confusion, having many officers and few soldiers, or else they are the so-called "new armies" that have never been in battle.

Here one should recall the conditions prevailing in 1945 during the early days of the Liberation War. At that time Chiang had more than three million troops, several hundred tanks, tens of thousands of heavy artillery pieces, and over one thousand planes. Forty of his armies, comprising more than one million men were American-equipped and had been trained and directed by American imperialist generals in person. Chiang also controlled a vast area on the mainland and a large supply of manpower and natural resources, as well as all the large cities, communication centres and strategic positions.

The PLA then had only three or four hundred thousand troops in its ill-equipped field armies, which had just been organized from scattered guerrilla units. It had not one tank, one plane at all, and only a few artillery pieces. There was little ammunition, and no time for intensive training.

Yet it only required three years for us to swing over from the defensive to the offensive, to grow in strength, and to gain superiority in military strategy and tactics, material and technique. We have annihilated all of Chiang's main forces, and cleared his regular troops from the mainland.

Speaking of East China, when the Liberation War began in 1946, the regular troops at Chiang's disposal consisted of 21 armies with 67 divisions, or a total of 493,000 troops. At that time, our East China Field Army had only about 70,000 men. In 1947, when Chiang Kai-shek launched his concentrated attacks on Shantung, he increased the number of regular troops deployed there to 30 armies with 74 divisions, or 454,000 men. If you add in the Kuo-mintang forces in Central and North Kiangsu and on north and south banks of the Huai River, their total strength totaled seven or eight hundred thousand men. The East China PLA Field Army did not then exceed several hundred thousand

troops. Under the brilliant leadership of Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and with the co-ordinated efforts of all the various military bases and field armies, plus the correct leadership of the Communist Party's East China Bureau and the all-out support of the East China people, we smashed Chiang's concentrated assaults. In addition to this, we also went over from the defensive to the offensive, completely recovered areas Chiang had occupied, liberated large new areas and cities in Southeast China and totally annihilated all Chiang's regular forces in the East China region. During these three years of war, our East China Field Army and local troops jointly inflicted 757,512 casualties upon Chiang's forces and captured 1,246,382 of his men. Another 55,157 Kuo-mintang troops were forced to surrender, while 40,811 of them revolted and came over. All together, Chiang lost 2,109,742 men in this theatre of operations. Among the war materials captured were 21,298 artillery pieces of various sizes, tens of times more than we had at the beginning of the war. Today, the bulk of our entire army has replaced its equipment with American-made arms. Besides, during the last six months, we have wiped out 64,778 bandits and armed special service agents which Chiang trained and sent out, thus basically clearing out the local bandits.

Our East China Field Army and local troops were small in number. But due to the brilliant leadership of Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Central Committee and to the energetic support of the broad masses — particularly those of the old Liberated Areas who tightened their belts and mobilized their sons and relatives to join the army or support the front — we were able to achieve such a tremendous victory.

Now Chiang's regular troops have been cleaned out from the mainland. His forces now defending the coastal islands and Taiwan are only the remnants of the remnants.

Furthermore, the people of Taiwan, under the crushing oppression and exploitation of the Kuo-mintang, in collaboration with the U.S. imperialists and Japanese militarists, will demonstrate their "February 28th" fighting spirit. They are intensifying their resistance against Chiang's armies, and at a suitable time, their struggle can assume a role of incalculable significance. At the same time, the factionalism within Chiang's armies are splitting up.

All these are favourable conditions for liberating Taiwan and the islands along the southeastern coast.

If only we thoroughly recognize the actual problems stated above and adequately prepare the material foundation and technical conditions for overcoming our difficulties, we may be fully confident of liberating these places in the near future and of thoroughly eradicating the remnants of Chiang's forces.

Every PLA officer must energetically increase the training and preparations for combat. With the whole-hearted support of the people and under the brilliant leadership of Chairman Mao Tse-tung and Commander-in-Chief Chu Teh, we can guarantee that before long the East China PLA will assuredly fulfill the gigantic task of liberating the islands along the southeastern coast and Taiwan. Thus, together with our brother field armies, we shall carry out the glorious task of liberating the whole of China.

* On Feb. 28, 1947, the people of Taiwan revolted against the corrupt Kuo-mintang rule. The uprising was touched off when the Kuo-mintang authorities assaulted some street hawkers, causing the death of several persons. This atrocity aroused the entire population, and the subsequent revolt swept the province with great rapidity. The uprising was only suppressed some weeks later after Kuo-mintang military reinforcements arrived from the mainland.
The Record Restoration of China’s Railways

Liu Shin-hwa

On January 1, 1950, the railway from Peking to Canton via Hankow, totalling over 2,300 kilometres, reopened to traffic. This meant that all the main trunk lines in China were in working order for the first time in 13 years. This meant that passengers and freight could once more travel by rail all the way from Manchuria, on the Russian border, to Canton, near China’s southern boundaries.

With the resumption of these rail lines, of the 24,922 kilometres of railways that make up China’s total network (including those on Taiwan and Hainan Islands), 24,170 kilometres of rail lines had been liberated and 21,646 kilometres had been repaired.

Magnitude of the Task

The restoration of China’s railways involved monumental task. Many of the lines had not been in operation since the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War. The rails had been carted away, the ties had been used as firewood, and the embankments had been leveled and planted with crops. If the lines had not been torn up in the course of 13 years of war, they would have seriously deteriorated due to the Kuomintang’s neglect and inadequate management. In most cases, the railway structures had been blown up by the railway bridges and tunnels as they fled from an area.

For instance, when Northeast China was liberated, most of the rail lines, bridges and tunnels had to be repaired. Forty per cent of the sleepers needed replacement. Eighty per cent of the locomotives, 40 per cent of the passenger cars, and 70 per cent of the freight carriages had been destroyed by the Japanese or the Kuomintang. Maintenance had been so poor that with the first heavy rainfall, 100 kilometres of rails were washed out along the Suihua-Kiamusze line.

The state of affairs was even worse in South China. All signal installations were out of order along the Guangyang-Kwaihlin Railway. With the exception of the Shanghai-Nanking Railway, all lines had suffered heavy damage at the hands of the retreating Kuomintang forces. Even large bridges along the Canton-Hankow Railway had been blown up.

It is only against this background of almost total destruction that one can gain some concept of the magnitude of the task of reconstruction. But despite the scope of the damage, and despite the shortage of such supplies as steel rails, alloys and construction apparatus, China’s rail network had been almost entirely restored by the end of 1949.

Rapid Restoration

The repair of rail communications was given a high priority on the list of tasks for 1949. Chairman Mao Tse-tung emphasized the importance of this task by raising the slogan: “Where the People’s Liberation Army goes, the trains must go too!” The job of railway repair was raised to such an important level because it was a vital prerequisite for carrying the Liberation War to a swift conclusion and for restoring the nation’s economy.

The workers did not disappoint Chairman Mao. From January 1 to March 31, 1949, they restored 1,686 kilometres of rail lines. Included in this figure were the railways in the Peking-Tientsin area as well as those running north to Shantung and west to Taihang. North China was linked with Northeast China, thus furnishing a necessary condition for the Yangtze River crossing last April.

Between April and October, 1949, 4,475 kilometres of railways were restored. These lines included the following sections: Mokden-Shanghai, Tientsin-Pokow, Shanghai-Nanking, Tientsin-Tsingtao, Shanghai-Hangchow, the northern section of Canton-Hankow Railway, in the eastern section of Canton-Hankow Railway. Most of the administrative regions of the country were linked up, and the People’s Liberation Army had the necessary facilities for its drive towards Southeast, Northwest and Southwest China. Through trains from Peking to Shensi, which started on July 1st, brought large stocks of steel and coal from Northeast and North China. This was of immeasurable assistance to that city’s economy and helped to nullify the effects of the Kuomintang sea blockade.

From October to the end of the year, another 2,658 kilometres of lines were restored. These included the Peking-Hankow, Canton-Hankow, Longhai, Chekiang-Kiangsi and Hunan-Kwangsi-Kweichow railways. China’s railway network had then been basically restored.

In the course of this job of restoration, many outstanding records were set for both speed and efficiency — records that would have been astonishing even in the most modern and highly industrialized countries. For instance, the Huai River Bridge along the Tientsin-Pokow Railway was completely rebuilt within two months. The heavily damaged Tsinan-Taian Railway (393 kilometres) was restored in a single month. It took only 30 days to rebuild the Huai River Bridge along the Hunan-Kwangsi-Kweichow line, although the Kuomintang had been trying vainly to repair the bridge for four years. But the workers surpassed even their own previous records for speed of work. For example, a relayed 120 kilometres of track in one day and repaired 45 metres of bridge span during another work-day. Such records would have been unthinkable in Kuomintang days.

Service to the People

But people’s railway must serve the people. Once the roads were repaired, the next task was to establish an efficient system for passenger and freight traffic. High traffic efficiency thus became the focal point for all railway workers’ efforts.

To achieve this end, the railway administrative authorities introduced a series of reforms. In July, 1949, uniform passenger and freight rates were fixed in line with popular interests. During the Kuomintang days, since railways were all cut up and monopolized by bureaucrats, there had never been either uniform rates or uniform administration. This had caused a number of difficulties in the transport of goods and had seriously hampered the exchange of commodities. Such a state of affairs was now put to an end.

Under the Kuomintang regime, goods were divided into only five grades and the difference in freight rates ranged merely from 1 to 50 percent. Under such a system, it was cheaper to transport luxuries and light, non-essential goods than bulky commodities essential to daily life such as grain and coal. Such a system favoured only the upper classes and wealthy speculators.

Under the new regulations, goods were divided into 20 grades. The difference in freight rates between the highest and lowest grade is 1 to 200. Freight rates for industrial and daily necessities are fixed at approximately the transportation cost, while the most essential materials such as coal and ores run even below cost. This has led to substantial increase in the goods needed to develop industry and to ensure an adequate supply of daily necessities. Books, magazines and other materials for educational use are also placed in lower grades near transport cost. Luxury items and various non-essentials are transported at higher rates.

Traffic Efficiency

Traffic efficiency of China’s railways went up sharply during the year of 1949. It was best illustrated by the considerable increase in traffic capacity along all rail lines. The load carried by the railways in Northeast China went up 70 per cent during the first eleven months of 1949. The railways of North China registered sharp increases after July. The load delivered by the Tientsin Railway Bureau shot up 55 per cent between March and December. This topped the highest capacity achieved in 1947 under the Kuomintang by 64 per cent.

There were many factors contributing to this achievement. First and foremost was the considerable increase in the speed of the trains. The average travelling speed (including stops at railway stations) of freight and passenger trains in Northeast China last year was 27.7 kilometres per hour, as against the 21.7 kilometres per hour during the Japanese occupation. The freight trains of the Tientsin Railway Bureau ran at a speed of 19.9 kilometres per hour in December, compared with 15.1 in July.

(Continued on page 28)
New Year's Pictures
— A People's Art
Tsai Jo-hung

During the long period of feudalism, Chinese art branched out into two main currents.

One current flowed towards the imperial courts. Monopolized by the nobility and the gentry, it reflected the life and taste of these ruling classes.

The other current flowed towards the peasantry, comprising more than 90 per cent of the Chinese population. The life of these down-trodden, severely exploited working people had never been pleasant at best. Living as they did under the most oppressive conditions, art became a sort of compensation for their miserable lives. It offered them momentary escape from their everyday drudgery, and it held out the hope of a better life in some distant future.

The folk arts, on the one hand, reflected the tranquility of pastoral scenes, while on the other hand, they expressed the people's uneasiness and their dissatisfaction with reality. Although strongly coloured by feudalism, the folk arts often broke through the shackles of the existing society. This was true of all folk art forms—folklore, painting, drama, music and dancing. And it was likewise true of New Year's pictures, one of the types of visual art which grew up among the people.

Chinese peasants like to decorate their cottages with colourful woodcuts and paintings. Of course these woodcuts and paintings cannot compare in refinement and durability with standard types of fine art. Folk art is always coarse, and the peasants had only rough paper and crude printing methods at their disposal. Therefore the pictures soon deteriorated. This gave rise to the custom of putting up fresh pictures at each lunar New Year, which is now known as the Spring Festival. In a way, the New Year season became an art festival for the people. (See Page 38.—Ed.)

The origin of the deep-rooted and inalterable custom of pasting up fresh New Year's pictures is lost in antiquity. But this simple ritual itself has come to symbolize the passage from one year to the next.

The peasants turned the New Year's pictures into a medium for portraying their own lives. On the basis of content, these pictures fell into four categories.

In the first category, and the most common in those days, were the religious pictures. The custom of hanging up images of gods about the house was an offshoot of the superstitious feudal society. Never-
and nights praying for deliverance from the direst poverty, it was only natural that they enshrined the Fortune-God in their homes. Yet even in their poverty, the peasants were fond of amusing their morals and so they set up a Kitchen-God to watch over the family's behaviour.

The second category of New Year's pictures consisted of reproductions of the peasants' life. Some illustrated farming processes, while others merely portrayed rural scenes. Such series as "Pictures of the 24 Solar Terms" and "Pictures of the Four Seasons in the Countryside" were actually calendars of the farm year. Themes like "Water Buffalo in Springtime" and "Plentiful Harvest" were perennial favourites.

The third category was composed of allegorical pictures, which related to ancient fables known and loved by all the peasantry. For example, a picture with a Buddha Fingers (a kind of citrus fruit), a peach and a pomegranate represented the "three abundances"—happiness, longevity and offspring. In the same way, fish symbolized great abundance, peonies symbolized riches and honours, and unicorns symbolized child-bearing. Such allegorical pictures revealed the simple but lively imaginations of people who missed so much in actual life that they could only dream of perfection and happiness.

The last category consisted of picture sequences which depicted popular folk stories, legends, romances and historic episodes. This group could in turn be subdivided into two sections.

One kind served as propaganda medium for promoting feudal morality. This variety was typified by "The 24 Pictures of Filial Piety," "A Gallery of Chaste Women" and "The Pictures of the Emperor's Loyal Subjects."

The other kind reflected the peasants' rebellion against the injustices of the feudal order, as illustrated in "The Legend of the White Serpent," "The Wife of Meng Jiang Weeps at the Great Wall," etc.

Since China has been gradually changing throughout the last century, the New Year pictures have also changed in both form and content.

Up until the May Fourth Movement, New Year's pictures had consisted entirely of coloured woodcuts. For more than 200 years, Yangliuching, situated half-way between Peking and Tientsin, had been one of the most important centres for producing these prints. This centre turned out 100,000,000 prints a year, selling them throughout North and Northeast China.

But after the May Fourth Movement, other printing methods were adopted such as lithography, first in Shanghai and later in Tientsin. This change in printing process caused some change in form, yet the contents remained practically unaltered.

It was only after the great writer and teacher Lu Hsun became interested in this form of folk art that the content began to change. Lu Hsun, who exerted a great influence over the young woodcut artists of his time, believed that art should be used as an instrument of mass education in furthering the revolutionary cause. He edited and published reproductions of woodcuts by Soviet artists, and insisted that young Chinese artists should learn realistic creative methods from such pictures. He urged young artists to turn to real life for their subject matters. At the same time, Lu Hsun also popularized reproductions of old Chinese woodcuts. He advised his students to value what was good in China's national art forms and to learn from these sources as well.

Tremendous changes were occurring throughout the nation and the outlines of the new China were already appearing. The age-old contents of the New Year's pictures no longer conformed with present-day reality and for this reason could not continue to fully satisfy the people.

Early during the War of Resistance against Japan, artists in the anti-Japanese bases began their attempts to reform the pictures. But in carrying out this task, these artists still lacked a sufficiently deep understanding of the needs and demands of the people. Therefore, their efforts attracted little attention or interest among the peasant masses.

In 1945, Chairman Mao Tse-tung laid down a clear guiding principle for all revolutionary artists when he provided the slogan: "Art for the sake of serving the people!" From then on, artists went into the countryside and learned to live with the peasants and to share their lives. This provided an adequate foundation for genuinely reforming the New Year's pictures, and before long this task became one of the major features in the movement to popularize art.

After working along these lines for several years, the artists of Liberated China brought forth New Year's pictures with entirely new form and content that met with the peasants' approval. Through this medium, the artists were able to score new successes in the struggle against feudal tradi-
Dramatic Movement in Contemporary China

Chang Keng

The history of the new Chinese dramatic movement extends over fifty years. It was born at a time when there was a bitter struggle between the old and the new, both in ideology and in revolutionary activities. The new dramatic movement emerged from the revolutionary movement. While the revolutionary forces cultivated it, the anti-revolutionary forces attempted to destroy it.

The new dramatic movement served as an instrument to expose the feudalistic rule of the Ching (Manchu) Dynasty and to propagate revolutionary ideas among the people. Dr. Sun Yat-sen, leader of the Republican Movement of 1911, placed great importance on the role of the new drama. The best-known dramatic organization of the time was sponsored by a group of the overseas Chinese students in Japan, who formed the Spring Willow Dramatic Association (Ch'un Liu She). This organization presented plays, such as Le T'ao by Victorién Sardou, that were tinged with a romantic flavor and were filled with pathos. However, progressive actors and playwrights were bitterly persecuted during this period, and a number of them became martyrs. But after the failure of the Revolution of 1911, the new dramatic movement degenerated to a low level and became the mere pastime of the urban bourgeoisie.

The May Fourth Cultural Movement in 1919 also produced a great deal of dramatic reform. Modern Western plays, such as the works of Henrik Ibsen and G. B. Shaw, were introduced into China. The social problems reflected in such dramas gave this movement new impetus and made A Doll's House exerted a great influence on the Chinese intellectuels. The new dramatic movement of this period helped pave the way for the revolution of 1926-1927.

The failure of the revolution was a tremendous blow to the petty bourgeois intellectuals. It was reflected in the dramatic movement of the South China Association (Nam Kuo), which was largely romantic in nature. It advocated the principle of art for art's sake, but at the same time it also reflected a strong feeling of dissatisfaction with the conditions of China prevailing at that time. The most popular playwright of the time was Tien Han. His famous works include A Night At the Cafe, The Tragedy On the Lake and The Death of a Feminist.
Unite With the Masses

The situation in the democratic anti-Japanese bases was entirely different. The theatrical workers went to the small villages, where the people realized the situation, and worked there. They were fighting strenuously to halt the Japanese aggressors. At first these newcomers did not understand how to approach the masses, or how to depict them; in fact, they were not even alive to the existence of the masses at all. They were familiar only with the old society, and worse than that, only with one small section of the old society, the petty bourgeois intellectuals. For this reason, the masses did not care much for their dramatic works.

During the literary conference held at Yanan in 1942, Comrade Mao Tse-tung proposed that writers penetrate deeply into the life of the masses, that they live with the people and use the familiar and well-loved folk forms to describe the peasants' life and activity. With this clear guidance, the progressive theatrical workers started the jianghuo movement based on songs originally sung while working in the fields. Not very long after this, they produced a series of operas and plays such as Ho Chi-min's The White-haired Women, Ma Chien-lin's Bloody Tears of Vengeance, Pu Tu's Wang Hsia-hsun, Tu Fung's Li Kuo-tun, Ting Li's The People's Army and the child actors in these portrayed various aspects of the life of workers, peasants and soldiers.

Although these works and their presentation were not yet very mature, they marked an entirely new phase in the history of Chinese drama. For the first time in the long time working with the masses became the central theme of playwrights. It was a new phase not only because the drama had new content but also because it created a new national form beloved by the people. Now at least the broad masses could enjoy their own dramas, for this art was no longer monopolized by a small circle of intellectuals as before. The audience in the past numbered at most a few thousand persons. Now play-goers increased to tens of thousands, and even millions. This was a big event in China where culture prior to the war had been limited to a small circle of intellectuals.

The change was brought about by the adherence to Comrade Mao Tse-tung's right approach to the drama of new China.

Liberated Area Drama

After the conclusion of the Anti-Japanese War, the progressive drama continued to be severely restricted in the Kuomintang areas. However, excellent works with a strong sense of reality, like T'ien Han's The Odds on Three Women, still appeared now and again. During the three years of the War of Liberation, Kuomintang persecution of drama groups became more and more ruthless. Consequently, progressive theatrical workers went one after another to the Liberated Areas where the dramatic movement was in a state of rapid development. Among plays produced in the Liberated Areas were: Yung Chin's The Wedding of Long Leaf River and Li Tse-hsun's Counter-Restoration, which took the agrarian reform as their subject-matter; Dang Hsiu-tan's First Born on the March, written by Chia Ks and others, which described the student movement in the Kuomintang areas; The Song of the Red Flag, the collective work of Lu Mei and others, which was written by students under the guidance of Ch'en Chi-tung, both of which described the process of industrial reconstruction after the People's Liberation Army entered the cities.

The democratic political conditions in the Liberated Area ensured a healthy environment for writers to develop and fully utilize their creative abilities.

"None Shall Starve" - Nation-wide Campaign Against Natural Calamities

Cheng Lien-tuan

less serious nature also affected the situation.

Most of these difficulties can be traced to adverse weather conditions. Total rainfall during the summer and autumn of 1949, for instance, was reported to be the highest for any corresponding period in any of the preceding ten-years.

However, the disasters were not completely nature-made. In many cases they resulted from the wanton destruction or neglect of the Kuomintang reactionaries. Under Kuomintang rule, large sections of river dykes were left unrepaird for years. Forests were ruthlessly cut by the Kuomintang armies. Kuomintang troops also deliberately tore down dyke embankments, trying to hold up the People's Liberation Army with floods. All this contributed heavily to last year's famine damage.

The situation was grave. It was especially bad when viewed against a background of war-torn villages already impoverished by long years of ruthless exploitation and outright plunder.

If China were still in the grip of the Kuomintang rulers, calamities of such dimensions would have certainly caused dreadful famines. Millions would have perished. But allowed to die of hunger, a not-infrequent occurrence during the Kuomintang's two-decade rule.

Today's China is different. The calamities are indeed great, but the people's government knows how to cope with them. On December 10th, Premier Chou En-lai issued a directive to the local governments responsible for seeing that "none shall starve." Government and Party workers in the affected areas set to work to help the peasants organize all possible forms of production in order to surmount the crisis.

In the all-out battle against disaster, the government's measures fall largely into the following five categories:

1. Prevent Disaster Where Possible

The local governments are constantly on the alert against all possible sources of trouble. Wherever crop failures are threatened by drought, the peasants are immediately organized for preventive action. Government leaders often personally take part in such struggles. The People's Liberation Army also extends generous help to the peasants, while Communist Party members are always conspicuous for their daring and tireless efforts.

When a flood threatened Chang River in Hopei Province, more than 2,000 villagers were called out by the government to reinforce the dykes. All of a sudden a gap appeared in the embankment, and the water threatened to pour through. The situation was getting out of control. Chen Lo-san, a Party member, quickly wrapped himself in his flannel, climbed the embankment, and rushed back and forth filling the hole in order to block the leak until more repair supplies could be brought up. Deeply moved by this heroism, the other dyke workers redoubled their efforts and conquered the obstreperous river.

At Tsian, Shantung Province, the Yellow River last year rose 0.02 metre higher than any previous year.

But a well-organized force of 100,000 peasants and 30,000 cadres successfully prevented any serious breach.

Herocile fights like these have greatly eurbed the floods. Without such preventive measures, an even greater disaster would have been ineluctable. (Continued on page 27)
2. Adopt All Possible Remedial Measures

When floods occur, the peasants are moved to safety in an organized manner. They are persuaded not to enter their fields in all directions as is the case, but to remain in adjacent areas. Then when the flood subsided, the villagers could be organized to drain the land by digging canals and building dams. In Hopei Province last year, 34,000 acres of flooded land were drained and protected. In the adjoining Pingyuan* Province, 71 per cent of the 3,200,000 mow of land under cultivation is already under cultivation.

Although the newly-plowed land offers no immediate solution for the food problem, the cultivated fields nevertheless serve as a great stabilizing factor among the distressed peasants. At least they now have a harvest to look forward to.

3. Organized Handicraft Industries

Secondary occupations form the mainstay of the "relief-by-product" campaign. Practically all peasants have started some new handicrafts which have now been organized into a wide variety of secondary occupations. Among the most popular ones are yarn spinning, clothing weaving, mat weaving, fishing and gathering herbs for Chinese medicines. The peasants get their capital either by pooling their own resources or by applying for government loans. The state-operated trading companies provide them with raw materials and assume the responsibility for marketing their products.

The peasants in newly liberated areas are not yet accustomed to co-operating in their new activities. It is not easy to organize them into collective undertakings. A good deal of time is taken when they are beset with calamities. But by fully mobilizing the Party members and more active members of the villages, and by patiently persuading the peasants one by one, the relief workers eventually convince the people that they can best overcome their difficulties through organized production.

Kaochung village in Shouchuan county, Pingyuan Province, is a typical example. There are 189 families, 770 persons and 879 mow of land in the village. Last summer the Yellow River flooded two thirds of the village's 2,657 mow of land. No one was able to get enough to eat beyond the lunar New Year in mid-February. Eleven families left to seek a living elsewhere. The rest were left on their own, awaiting relief whatever the future held in store for them.

With the arrival of the relief workers, Party members and other active occupants were immediately set in motion. They investigated the conditions of each family and canvassed opinions from door to door. As a result, small discussion groups were formed to consider how other villages had conducted their "relief-by-production" movements.

As the peasants gradually gained confidence in the new movement, efforts, secondary occupations groups were set up one after another. When necessary, the government advanced equipment, raw materials and funds. In a few weeks, there were 13 hand-weaving groups and five small flour mills in operation. The peasants and families pooled their money to start selling vegetables at the local markets. Nine families received a living by selling exporting grain from place to place. Three carpenters were given the job of building a granary for the village. Even the aged people and children were organized to search for firewood in the neighbouring regions.

Thus, all the villagers were soon engaged in organized relief efforts to help themselves out.

4. Organize Work Relief and Resettlement Programs

The government has initiated many work relief projects to help the people overcome difficult times. In Shihchiashan, which has been severely from floods, the Central People's Government has allocated 851,840,000 mow of grain for work relief. The various local governments plan to spend an equivalent sum for water conservancy projects. In North Kiangsi province, 200,000 peasants have been employed to harness the Yi River. In North Anhwei, 200,000 peasants are working on the Nu River projects. In Hunan, 100,000 peasant have been given work along the Shu River. The completion of these projects will provide food production for the Peasants' Hostel. Having heard about this project, they stopped in to enquire about it. But after a brief interview, and after the hostel could handle the marketing of their goods for them, the four men looked at each other doubtfully — they were all equally suspicious of any citizen police offered to help them. Finally Pan Lao-chung mumbled: "We'd better go on and manage the business ourselves."

As they left, the hostel employee assured them that the organization would always be on hand to help them if ever they needed it.

The old man and his group did not have much luck that day, as frequently the case in the past. They offered their whole consignment of sweet potatoes to a number of groceries stores, but the prices quoted were far too low. At last they decided to sell the potatoes to a local government and the hostel, which has practically no overhead expenses. It derives its income from selling them to the local government, and the hostel can make extra profit even though its goods are sold far below the prevailing market quotations.

When it came time to settle their bill in the morning, Pan Lao-chung tried to pay something in addition as a token of their gratitude. The gift was firmly rejected this well-meaning gift. As the visitors departed, old Pan slapped one of the hostel clerks on the back and said:

"You folks are really doing something for us peasants. I'll tell everyone coming to Shihchiashan about this place. This is like a home in the city to us."

And this is why the hostel has grown so much in a year's time. Countless peasants like Pan Lao-chung have been inspired to further surprise when they come to the city, they can find a helpful friend in every member of the hostel's staff.

The Peasants' Hostel in Shihchiashan has been so successfully operated that it has come to be regarded as a model. Hostels run by the Party family now flourish in almost every city. Peasant hostels have become an integral part of the co-operative movement which is the new relationship between the city and the countryside, thus creating a solid foundation for a prosperous New China.

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A New Type of Peasants' Hostel

Ke Chia-lung

The Peasants' Hostel was established in Shihchiashan county in February, 1949, by the Council of the Co-operative Association with the aid of the local people's government. The Peasants' Hostel is a new type of co-operative movement which grew out of the new relations between the city and the countryside, thus creating a solid foundation for a prosperous New China.

Early one morning, an old peasant named Pan Lao-chung and three of his neighbours arrived in Shihchiashan, a railway market center in the province. They had come on business, bringing 1,600 catties of sweet potatoes to sell.

On their way to the market place, they stopped at the Peasants' Hostel. Having heard about this place, they stopped in to enquire about it. But after a brief interview, and after the hostel could handle the marketing of their goods for them, the four men looked at each other doubtfully — they were all equally suspicious of any citizen police offered to help them. Finally Pan Lao-chung mumbled: "We'd better go on and manage the business ourselves."

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Let us come back to Pan Lao-chung and his group. So grateful for the assistance he received in selling the sweet potatoes — so grateful, in fact, that he hesitated to bother the hostel personnel with more of his problems. But he still wanted to buy a new car wheel, so he went out to look for one early in the morning. At first he met with difficulty locating any dealers, and then, when he finally found one, the prices were quite exorbitant. As usual, when the city merchants saw they were dealing with a country bumpkin who was not familiar with market conditions, their prices shot up. In the end, Pan returned to the hostel empty-handed.

When the hostel staff learned of his fruitless trip, they volunteered to handle the purchase for him. A telephone call to an iron foundry revealed that its price was much less than that which he had given. Pan Lao-chung ordered his cart wheel, and it was delivered to the hostel the next evening. He and his friends bought several other necessities from the hostel. They also purchased a cart-load of coal for less than market price. All of this saved them both money and time.

Then the four peasants had a hot supper and a good night's sleep in clean beds.

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CURRENT CHINA

Jan. 25—Feb. 10, 1950

Three Conferences

On Jan. 27, a nine-day meeting of the Northwest Military and Administrative Committee successfully closed in Sian. Attended by representatives of Sinkiang, Ninghsia, Chihli and Sinkiang provinces, the meeting unanimously agreed upon the tasks to be fulfilled by the meeting. China in 1950. According to the decisions of this meeting, land reform will be completed in a large part of the area in 1950. Over 100,000 PLA soldiers in Sinkiang and more than 400,000 in the other four provinces will take part in agricultural production, land reclamation, irrigation and railway construction. Regional autonomy will be instituted for the national minorities.

On Feb. 6, the East China Military and Administrative Committee concluded an 11-day meeting in Shanghai, which outlined the tasks of 1950 for East China, which include vigorous preparations for land reform and the liberation of Taiwan and other islands off the eastern coast. (See article on Page 8 by General Su Yu—Ed.)

On Feb. 5, a similar meeting opened in Hankow to make plans for the Chungnan (South-Central) Area which covers parts of Honan, Hupeh, Hunan, Kiangsi, Kwantung and Kwangsi provinces. Preparations for land reform and the liberation of Hainan Island are leading items on the meeting's agenda.

After 3½ Years of War

On Jan. 25, the Kuomintang's last two regular units on the mainland, the 8th and 26th Armies, were completely routed in South Yunnan. After three and a half years of war, the remnant Kuomintang reactionaries now control only Tibet, Taiwan, part of Hainan Island and Kinmen, Tintai and other small islands off the southern coast. These territories, according to a communiqué issued by PLA General Headquarters on Feb. 5, constitute a total area of 1,122,500 square kilometres with a population of 11,220,000. The communiqué also disclosed that the Kuomintang lost 1,754,220 men, 259 entire divisions, during the first half of the fourth year of the Chinese people's Liberation War (from July 1 to Dec. 31, 1949). This brings the total losses of Kuomintang troops during the past three and a half years to 7,445,659 men. (See article on page 6 by Ta Ching-yin—Ed.)

In the face of irrevocable defeat, Chiang Kai-shek's gang became all the more unscrupulous in its attempts to stem the tide of the national movement by all possible measures against the people and their collaboration with foreign imperialism.

On Feb. 6, 17 American-made Kuomintang planes dropped a bomb on Shanghai, injuring and killing more than 1,000 civilians. The city's indignant populace staged a huge demonstration on the following day to protest the Kuomintang's series of criminal air attacks against the civilian population of Shanghai.

In Taiwan, the Kuomintang rulers held discussions with a 15-member Japanese advisory group for the organization of a "Japanese volunteer army" to help them make a last stand on the island. This project carried the approval of General MacArthur, Japan's American boss.

On Feb. 7, the New China News Agency reported that 7,000 Kuomintang troops in French-occupied Viet-Nam had re-entered Kwangsi Province to cause disturbances along the border. Over 30,000 Kuomintang troops have taken refuge in the French-controlled areas of Viet-Nam since last December.

A Group of Liars

On Jan. 30, the New China News Agency strongly denounced the background material put out by the U.S. State Department which was filled with shameless fabrications about Soviet Union's "penetration" into Northeast China, Inner Mongolia and Sinkiang. The NCNA also emphatically refuted a United Press report about the so-called "Harbin Agreement" and "Moscow Agreement" allegedly concluded between China and the U.S.S.R.

The report included such allegations as that the Soviet Union will station troops in Manchuria and Sinkiang and that Liaoning and Shantung provinces will be incorporated into Korea at some future date. The NCNA pointed out that such imperialist-manufactured lies "can only prove how astoundingly ignorant American imperialism is and how ensnared it is over the failure of its aggressive policy in China."

State Department fabrications were again denounced on Feb. 6 when a Foreign Ministry spokesman refuted American charges that the Chinese government had impeded the withdrawal of American nationals. The spokesman pointed out that the treaty committee officials in China had applied for exit permits following the American threat to recall such personnel.

"Our government is ready to permit them to leave at any time," the spokesman said. In fact, in view of the American espionage activities being brought to light, he added, More Chinese would rather like to hear that all American officials will leave China soon."

Foreign Affairs

Other developments on the diplomatic front included:

On Feb. 1, the U.S.S.R. sent China a note proposing the creation of a joint commission to investigate the report of the proposed force to try five Japanese war criminals, headed by Hirokito, for bacteriological warfare. On Feb. 5, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Li Ke-nung replied to the Soviet Union, expressing complete agreement with the Soviet proposal. This proposal has drawn enthusiasm and support from all parts of the country.

Chi Chao-tung was appointed China's representative to the U.N. Economic and Social Council on Feb. 1. A non-party democrat, Chi was a member of the Central Bureau for Administering Enterprises with Foreign Capital.

On Feb. 4, the Chinese People's Government invited Pakistan to send representatives to Peking to discuss the establishment of diplomatic relations.

The Chinese Government lodged a strong protest with the Government of Thailand against the maltreatment and slaughter of over 15,000 Chinese residing in that country.

Saifulul, Vice-Chairman of the Sinkiang Provincial Government, arrived at Moscow on Jan. 30 to take part in the Moscow-Soviet negotiations.

Economic Reconstruction

The Government Administration Council approved the 1950 railway plan on Feb. 1. The program calls for purchasing 1,600 passenger carriages, 4,400 freight carriages, and the construction of 1,500 new railways.

A national telephone and telegraph meeting opened in Peking on Jan. 25 to map out a plan for the reconstruction and construction of the national telecommunication network. Up to now, 1,200 telephone and telegraph bureaux and 80 per cent of the country's telephones and telegraph lines have been restored to working order.

The People's Victory Bonus drive rounded out its first month as the cities of Calgran, Hangchow, Foochow, Sian and Tsinan announced the first instalment of their respective quotas.

China's Workers Organized

Under the guidance of the All-China Federation of Labour, the labour movement throughout the country has made rapid strides ahead during the past year. More than half of all the workers in China are now organized.

Here are a few statistics which reveal the rapid progress being made in organizing China's workers:

Railway workers' unions have gained 2,200,000 members, comprising 87 per cent of all railway workers; 349,405 textile workers are organized, or 75 per cent of all textile workers; 200,000 miners have joined unions, or 60 per cent of all miners in the country.

One year after liberation, Peking, the capital of new China, has 83 trade unions and 125 trade union preparatory committees. Of Peking's 300,000 workers, 28,100 workers, or 47 per cent, have been organized.

More than 379,000 workers in Tientsin, comprising 59 per cent of the city's total labour force (87 per cent of the city's industrial workers) have joined trade unions.

More than 280,000 workers, 87 per cent of all the workers of Shanghai, are now organized into 402 trade unions. Union preparatory committees have been set up in 846 establishments, over 80 per cent of the workers of Tangshan, an industrial centre near Tientsin, are organized.

Now that national unity is being consolidated, the ACFL has undertaken a systematic organization of national industrial telegraph workers.

The ACFL has called upon all local trade unions to convene meetings with a view to merging their respective unions into national federations. It intends to set up such national organizations for the following industries and trades: railways, miners, textile, postal administration, telegraph and telephone, seamen, electricity, metalworkers, shop assistants, food and transportation.

All-China Trade Union of Transport was formed early in February and All-China Trade Union of Railways was to be formed also within this month.

The miners, textile workers, postmen, telegram and telephone workers, seamen and shop assistants have already convened All-China trade union congresses, which created preparatory committees to form their national unions.

Electrical workers and metal workers have already fixed the dates for holding their all-China congresses.
Winter is the season when the peasantry may study as it is the only season that they have some leisure.

In the old liberated areas, such as parts of Northeast China, this is already the third or fourth year of the winter school movement. There the winter schools, by utilizing the experiences gained in the past, are well-organized and correctly led by the local cadres. Attention has also been paid to the working method with promoting production and elevating the political level. Many educational methods are being introduced to accelerate the progress of the students.

Up to the end of last year, more than 1,500,000 students had enrolled in the winter schools, according to incomplete statistics recently released by the Ministry of Education of the Northeast People's Gov't.

In twenty counties of Liaochi Province alone, for example, there are 6,838 regular winter schools and 6,008 study groups with an enrollment of 452,000 students, mostly adults. Those educational centres are staffed by 24,800 teachers.

In Sungkiang Province, there are 5,899 winter schools with 7,750 teachers and 294,560 students, according to figures so far available.

Liaotung Province has organized classes for 700,000 students; Kirin, for 660,000 students; and Heilungkiang, for 480,000 students.

Reports from all parts of China show that the mass movement to wipe out illiteracy is making tremendous advances through the winter schools.

Even if a peasant learns only a few hundred characters during the winter months, still such initial success gives him confidence in his ability to learn more next winter. The full impact of the winter school movement upon China's rural area can only be estimated in the light of the fact that millions upon millions of peasants are grasping this opportunity to rid themselves of the curse of illiteracy.

Children's Reading Room

The People's Cultural Hall in the city of Chinchow, in Northeast China, opened a Children's Reading Room in December. This library contains a collection of 2,800 books suited for young readers. They are classified into seven sections: political readers, literature, introductions to the USSR, applied science, natural science, story books and operas, and what is called "New Education" for all school and primary schools.

The place has already attracted great attention among the city's children. It is so crowded that several hundred readers have to form a long queue.

During the first twenty days after the Reading Room opened, it attracted 4,300 children. On Sunday afternoons, attendance rose to a peak of 350 for the day. The lowest attendance during week-days has been 120, while the average is 210.

As a result of this popular interest, the first primary school library was set up in Shenliu Village. On the basis of experiences gained there, 179 more rural libraries have been created. The peasants themselves donate money to purchase the books. The libraries are housed in village centres where the peasants frequently gather. A total of 20,000 general and special books suited to the peasants' average cultural level are now in circulation in these rural libraries.

The ROAD to FINAL VICTORY

(Continued from page 7)

In autumn, 1948, the PLA for the first time in history gained numerical superiority over its enemy. By July, 1949, the PLA had 4,000,000 troops compared to the Kuomintang army's 1,400,000 — a ratio of 1 to 0.37. This change was of vital importance, for it greatly shortened the course of the war and provided the conditions necessary for attacking the Kuomintang's most strongly defended bases.

The PLA's new strategy was illustrated during the Battle of Tainan, in September, 1948. Tainan, the provincial capital of Shantung, was one of the Kuomintang's key strategic bases in the East China War Zone. It was strongly fortified and garrisoned by more than 100,000 troops. Surrounded by rivers and mountains, the city was easy to defend but hard to attack. Nevertheless, the battle lasted only eight days. Royal Armoured Divisions of Kuomintang and men were captured, together with area commander, General Wang Yao-wu; the three brigades of the 84th Reorganised Division under General Wu Hua-wen came over to the PLA.

The PLA's skill in mastering modern positional warfare was further demonstrated during the Battles of "West Liaoning-Mukden" (Sept. 12 to Nov. 2, 1948), "Huai Hail" (Nov. 7, 1948 to Jan. 16, 1949) and "Kotchan-Kaling" (Feb. 8, 1948 to Jan. 15, 1949). During these campaigns, Chiang lost 148 divisions, or 1,548,000 men, including the 26 divisions under General Fu Tao-yi who actually surrendered and handed over Peking without bloodshed. Chiang's four remaining crack units, the New 1st, New 5th and New 6th Armies and the 11th Reorganised Division, were wiped out in the course of these campaigns.

After these crushing defeats, the Kuomintang tried to gain a breathing spell by launching a so-called "peace offensive" early in 1949. "Peace talks" proceeded but when a final agreement had been reached in the middle of April, the bogus Acting President Li Tsung-jen rejected it.

On April 20th, one million PLA troops began to pour across the Yangtze River. Three days after the signing, the PLA's veteran Nanking, the Kuomin- tang capital. On May 27th, Shanghai was liberated. And so was Canton in South China on October 14th.

Mopping up

The war then entered a mopping-up stage.

In the first half of the fourth year of war, all of Eastern China was liberated with the sole exception of Tibet. The PLA took over 953 cities and county towns, including 13 provincial capitals. Chiang lost 1,754,220 men in this period, or 29/3 per cent of his strength. 786,220 were taken prisoner, 92,220 were casualties, 215,070 surrendered, 637,980 revolved and came over, and 22,030 accepted reorganization terms. This brought Chiang's total losses during the three-and-a-half years of war to 7,445,520.

Throughout the war the Kuomintang had served as the PLA's main source of supplies. Here is a partial list of the equipment which the Kuomintang army has transported to the front for the PLA since July, 1948:

Artillery pieces: 52,051
Machine guns: 297,749
Rifles and body arms: 2,612,128
Aircraft: 813
Warships: 186
Tanks: 596
Armoured cars: 29,513
Rounders of ammunition: 492,799,700
Shells: 5,183,399

The PLA is now poised to make its last thrust, which will bring about the revolution to a victorious close. The whole history of the PLA, and of the revolutionary war it fought, provides conclusive proof that if the people in colonies or semi-colonies want to gain true independence, they must rely primarily upon their own armed strength.

DRAMATIC MOVEMENT

(Continued from page 20)

The nation-wide victory of the Chinese revolution has united these two fighting groups of dramatists. The Ministry of Cultural Affairs of the Central Government has founded the Central Dramatic Academy. Preparations are being made to organize a State Theatre. In fact, the dramatic movement as a whole is now being encouraged not only by the trade unions and the people's organizations, but also by all levels of the people's government. Never before has so much importance been attached to the development of dramatic art.

This brief survey illustrates how the dramatic movement has conscientiously fulfilled its tasks during the different stages of the Chinese revolution. In the beginning it provided the first few sparks of enlightenment and a vehicle for the reforms of the May Fourth Movement. Then it aroused the intellectuals as well as the workers to help pile fuel on the raging fire of the Great Revolution. During the long struggle of the Anti-Japanese War and the War of Liberation, the dramatic movement joined in the struggle in order to mobilize the peasants; it spread throughout rural China where the people's longing for the elevation of their social status was particularly intense. In the end, the drama helped overcome the abyss that separates intellectuals from the masses of labouring people. From now on, it is bound to gain even more popular support from the workers, peasants and soldiers, and with their support it will undoubtedly flourish as never before. We can confidently state that Chinese drama will move on to a new height and will surely fulfill its mission in the new era of peaceful construction.
RESTORATION OF CHINA'S RAILWAYS

(Continued from page 11)

Another factor effecting high traffic efficiency was the increased hauling capacity of the locomotives. Locomotives in the Tientsin Railway Bureau now hauled 1,147 metric tons, or 25 per cent more than they did in 1947 under the Kuomintang. Under the Japanese or the Kuomintang administration, each locomotive on the southern section of the Peking-Hankow Railway only pulled a load of about 1,000 metric tons. By July, one locomotive on this line reached a new record in hauling 2,000 metric tons. Locomotives in Northeast China now pull an average load of 1,500 metric tons, as compared to 700 metric tons during Japanese occupation. Dairen locomotives have increased their load to 2,500 metric tons.

Higher speed and increased load usually result in greater engine trouble and damage to the track. But this is not the case with the railways in China today. On the contrary, there were fewer engine break-downs and railway accidents in 1949 than ever before, as a result of careful maintenance. Another important factor is the recently introduced system known as the "traffic responsibility system." This requires traffic work teams to assume full responsibility for their work. As a result, trains of the Tsitsihar Railway Bureau made a record run of one million kilometres without an accident; while those of Harbin Railway Bureau made a similar record for 500,000 kilometres.

In Northeast China, locomotives must be checked after every 50,000 kilometres to see if major overhauls are necessary. But the workers, all anxious to render greater service to the people, are competing with each other to reduce the time spent in overhauls by taking good care of their locomotives. A dozen locomotives made runs of over 100,000 kilometres without major overhaul. One locomotive in Tsitsihar even covered 180,000 kilometres before undergoing a general overhaul.

Swift loading and unloading of trains at the terminals also improves efficiency on the railways. This is calculated by "operational frequency" which means the average length of time, in terms of days, required by each freight carriage in one station between its first and second loading. The smaller the figure, the greater the traffic efficiency. "Operational frequency" in Northeast China was cut down to 3.98 days in 1949, as compared to 5.6 days in 1948 and 14.45 days in 1946 under the Japanese.

Leadership and Assistance

The tremendous success achieved on China's railways is primarily due to the leadership of the people's government and the Communist Party. In Kuomintang days, the national railways were considered the private property of the Big Four Families, who used them as a means to squeeze profits and wage war against the people. Corrupt and backward administration hampered rail development. But now the railways have been returned to the people and are operated in their interests only.

Another reason for the success is the enthusiasm of the working masses. In their new role as masters of the state, the workers devoted their full energy to restoring the lines and reviving the wrecked locomotives. The engineering corps of the People's Liberation Army, the administrative cadres, the technicians and engineers also contributed their part. The peasants living near the lines volunteered to help in the restoration. They dug up rails which they had hidden and helped carry back sleepers removed by the Kuomintang.

The final important factor is the sincere and friendly assistance offered by the Soviet Union. It would have been impossible to achieve such rapid restoration of railways in an industrially backward country like China without both the material and technical assistance of the Soviet Union. Immediately after Northeast China-USSR Trade Agreement was signed, the Soviet Union supplied China with 500 kilometres of rails and other needed equipment. The Soviet experts offered their assistance in drafting the repair plans and introducing new administrative systems to improve operations. Their selfless devotion to the work was a great inspiration to the Chinese workers in achieving the great task of restoring and building their own railways.

On the basis of all these past achievements and experiences, the Railway Ministry has mapped out a 1950 Railway Plan which went into effect on January 31, 1950. According to this plan, freight traffic will be increased to 96,491,987 metric tons, or twice that of last year. Passenger traffic is expected to exceed 167 million passengers, which will also double the 1949 figure.