

北京周報

A CHINESE WEEKLY OF NEWS AND VIEWS

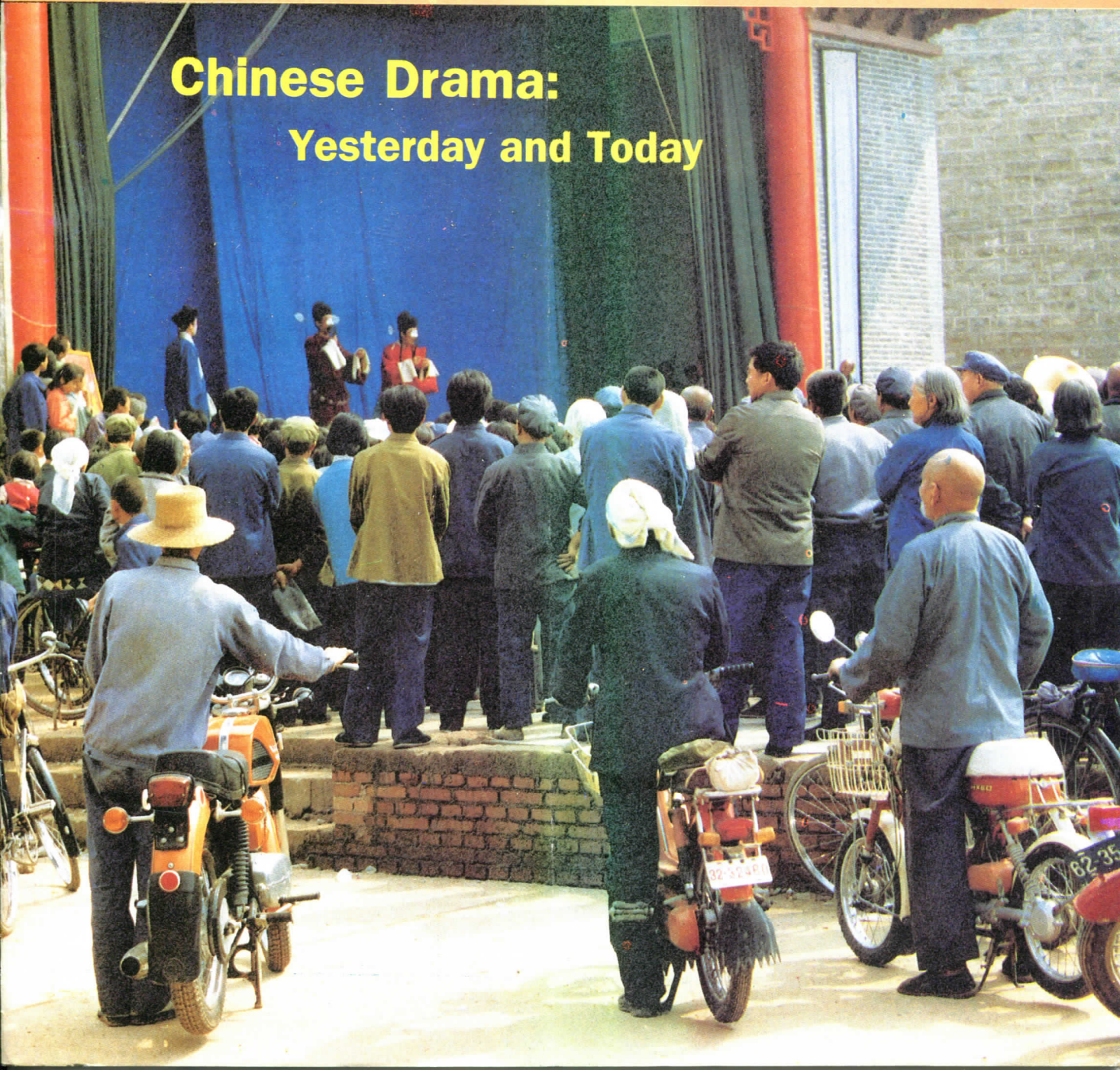
# Beijing Review

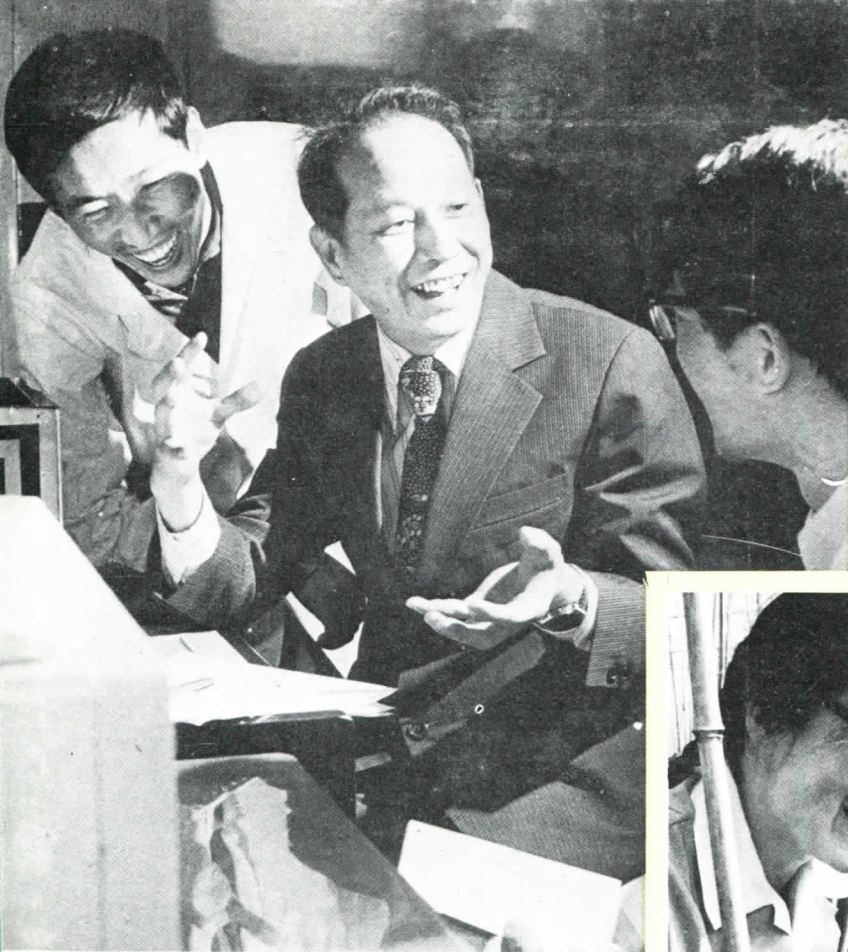
Vol. 29, No. 3

January 20, 1986

US-Soviet Relations: Confrontation and Conversation

## Chinese Drama: Yesterday and Today

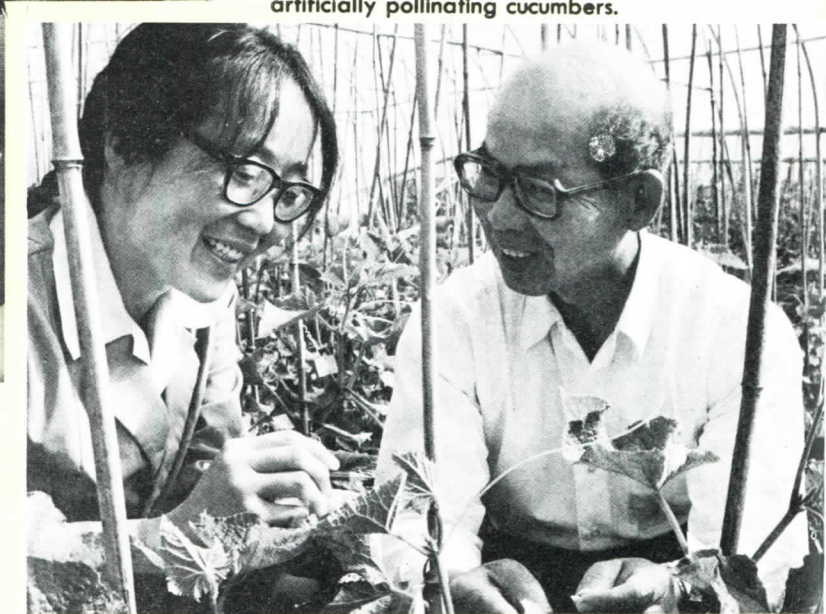




## Taiwan Compatriots Living on the Mainland

### SPOTLIGHT

Lai Junming, a noted agronomist, is engaged in artificially pollinating cucumbers.



Fang Duo (middle), a professor of mathematics, discussing math problems with some of his students.

An official (middle) of Putuo County, Zhejiang Province, visiting Taiwan fisherman in the hospital.





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**COVER:** The peasants in Hebei Province used their own money to bring performers to their home village.

Photo by Zhang Luoyi

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK

### US-Soviet Relations Strike New Ground

The two superpowers finally have emerged from years of intense confrontation to enter a continued phase of rivalry and dialogue. The implications and possible fate of the shift in their relations are the topic of this week's leading article (p. 14).

### Party Strives to Improve Work Style

China has given priority to rectifying the Party's work style, for despite improvements in recent years, many problems still exist. To check malpractice among Party officials, Party leaders have called upon the central organizations to set an example for others to follow (p. 4 and p. 5).

### China's Sprouting Grain Production

A nation that has 1 billion mouths to feed, China considers food production a matter of prime importance. This article shows what policies and measures have been introduced since 1978 to boost grain output, the successes they have brought about and the problems which still have to be tackled (p. 16).

### Innovations Revive Traditional Opera

While in some ways quite different from Western opera, Chinese traditional opera has unique features that have widened its appeal beyond its native land to include audiences all over the world. Here *Beijing Review* reports on innovations that have given new vitality to the ancient dramatic tradition (p. 19).

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# Rectifying the Party's Style of Work

by An Zhiguo

China has recently focused much criticism on a variety of malpractices and has given priority to rectifying the Party style of work. The question of improving the Party's work style and the social conduct at large were first made a few years ago; to date, however, the results have not been very satisfactory. Some people have shown a lack of confidence in the solution of this problem. What, then, is the correct approach to solving this problem?

In my opinion, we should first note that the Party style of work has improved to some degree in the last few years, even though the progress falls far short of a fundamental improvement.

Through protracted revolutionary struggles, the Chinese Communist Party formed its own exemplary style of work, known as the "three major styles of work," namely, integration of theory and reality, criticism and self-criticism and close ties with the masses. Achievements in revolution and construction are inseparable from these admirable styles of work. These work styles, once seriously damaged by the "cultural revolution," have undergone gradual restoration and development since 1978.

In the last few years, in its efforts to build socialism with Chinese characteristics, China has recorded dramatic achievements that have attracted worldwide attention. These have resulted from integrating Marxist theory with China's current construction.

The Party has made open criticisms and corrections of the "left" mistakes in guidelines followed in the past and those committed during the "cultural revolution." During the Party

consolidation campaign, Party members and cadres have, in line with the requirements of the Party Constitution, listened to the opinions of the masses, examined their own thoughts and work styles and corrected their mistakes and shortcomings. Such progress has resulted from applications of the effective weapon that is criticism and self-criticism.

In the past few years, Party and government leaders and other leading cadres at various levels have often left their desks to visit factories, villages, schools and other grass-root units, where they have investigated and studied, listened to the people, solved problems and summed up their practical experiences. The Party was able to formulate a series of correct principles and policies and gradually improve them precisely because its members delved into the realities of life, maintained close ties with the masses and pooled the wisdom of the people.

The above facts illustrate how the Party has in the past improved its style of work. Many problems regarding the Party work style, however, still exist; some of them are very serious. The major problems are as follows:

- Bureaucracy. Some leaders are irresponsible. They indulge themselves in empty rhetoric, while performing no concrete deeds.

- Liberalism. Some people do not study policies and make irresponsible remarks.

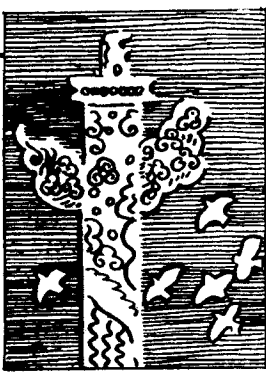
- Abusing power for personal gain. Some leading cadres have vied with one another to replace their older cars with de luxe limousines and have unnecessarily travelled abroad and at home under all sorts of pretexts. Some government functionaries engage

in business, some violate the law and discipline codes and wallow in the mire with economic criminals. Although only a small number of people engaged in such activities, their adverse influence, however, denigrates the prestige of the Party and the government.

- Departmentalism. Some cadres in their personnel appointments and leadership, do not act on principle, but are instead guided by favouritism. Others are lax in organization and discipline.

In the past few years, the Party and government have done a great deal of work to stem the recurrence of misdeeds among their ranks. They decided that equal attention should be paid to building material wealth and to developing socialist culture and ethics, and that a crackdown should be enforced on economic crimes while implementing the open policy and conducting the reforms. Although some achievements have been made in this respect, the problem has not been eliminated. Why do malpractices continue? One important reason is that the bureaucratic style of work has become a habit with some leading bodies and leading cadres; they utter many empty words but actually do little and have fought only half-heartedly against improprieties. Some people put it well when they said "There are many mewing cats but very few that catch rats."

At present, the Party Central Committee is determined to rectify the Party style of work and calls on the central organizations and the Beijing municipal organizations to set an example in this regard. Recently the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee held a meeting in Beijing attended by 8,000 cadres from the central



## Beijing Launches New Drive To Improve Party Conduct

Party and government offices, and worked out plans for solving this problem.

Firm and enduring efforts are required to rectify the unhealthy tendencies. Firmness here means exhaustively investigating and dealing with cases of malfeasance. Serious problems must be dealt with according to Party code and state law regardless of the rank of the cadres involved. Endurance here means waging a long-term struggle against such transgressions.

The policy of opening to the world and invigorating the domestic economy will be implemented for a long time, and the corrosive influence of decadent bourgeois ideology and habits will also continue. When one unhealthy tendency is checked, another may emerge. It is only through prolonged battles that we can minimize negative influences. Besides making earnest efforts to investigate and deal with current malpractice, we also need to augment ideological education in order to improve Party members' and cadres' abilities to resist bourgeois decadence. We also need to perfect our rules and regulations in order to plug up all their possible loopholes.

People hope and have every reason to believe that an improvement of the work styles of the central organizations and the Beijing municipal institutions will have a positive influence on the whole Party. The fundamental improvement of the work styles of the Party will promote the fundamental improvement of the social conduct at large.

Party members and officials in Beijing were called on to take the lead in rectifying the work style of the Party at two meetings recently held in the Great Hall of the People.

Those who were asked to straighten up include staff of the departments directly under the Party Central Committee and the State Council, as well as the general headquarters of the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

At the meetings on January 6 and 9, attended by 8,000 senior officials, the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee called on these departments to play an exemplary role in bringing about major improvements in the Party's style of work and in social conduct at large.

Hu Yaobang, general-secretary of the Party Central Committee, urged the officials in the central organizations to play leading roles in the modernization effort, by working with unity, firmness and integrity.

"The central organizations play a key role in our whole cause. How they play this role has a vital

bearing on the future of our cause," Hu said. "Therefore, a major political task for the central organizations is to set examples for the whole nation in morale and work style."

Hu said he hoped all the central organizations would raise their efficiency levels, concentrate more on their political studies, observe discipline—all in an effort to enhance Party spirit.

Hu called on the functionaries of the central offices to further their studies in Marxism, modern science and technology, as well as management.

Hu said that quite a few people in central Party organizations lacked a true sense of discipline, reflected in a current wave of political liberalism, ideological individualism, and "favouritism through connections." Some officials put personal relations above principles, and behaved unfairly and dishonestly, Hu maintained. In addition, some workers have abandoned personal or even national dignity when they have been involved in foreign contacts.

Wang Zhaoguo, member of the

### Forthcoming . . .

*"Beijing Review" will carry two excerpts from a speech made by Vice-Premier Tian Jiyun at a recent Beijing conference of central Party and government officials. The first, to be published in issue No. 4, is about China's pricing policy, and the second, in issue No. 5, is about income gaps in China and the question of whether the ongoing reform will lead to capitalism. The entire text of his speech, titled "On the Current Economic Situation and Reform of Economic structure," will be printed in our combined issue Nos. 6 and 7.*

## News in Brief

**C**hina has finished reorganizing its field armies into group armies, according to He Qizong, deputy chief of the general staff of the People's Liberation Army.

The reform, which began three years ago, has resulted in a more reasonable setup of army units, helped improve weaponry, and enhanced the manoeuvrability of combined operations and response to emergencies, He said. The formation of group armies calls for better qualified commanders and intensified training and poses a new challenge to ideological work and logistics services, he added.

\* \* \*

**C**hina has 5 million stamp collectors, an increase of 66 percent over 1983, according to the All-China Philatelic Federation.

Every province, municipality and autonomous region, as well as a number of cities and counties, have set up philatelic associations. A survey of Gansu, Guangxi and seven other provinces and autonomous regions indicated that by the end of 1985 there were 90 associations at the provincial and municipal levels, a 50 percent increase over 1984, and 150 at the county level, up 90 percent. The registered members of philatelic associations increased from 28,800 in 1984 to 53,500 by the end of 1985.

Secretariat, said during one of the meetings that new regulations were being drawn up by the Secretariat to counter the unhealthy tendencies in the Party and to improve work style and efficiency. The regulations being formulated mainly concern the strict selection of leading officials according to the Party's principles, the simplified ritual for receiving visiting officials on inspection tours, the prohibition of government officials running enterprises, and putting a ban on the use of state funds for tourism and sending people abroad at random.

Wang called for stern punishment for the serious offenders, including removal of leading officials who refuse to mend their ways.

Yang Shangkun, vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission, said the commission had decided the army should take a lead in improving the conduct of Party organizations in the army. Significant results should be achieved by the first half of this year, he said, and fundamental changes will be evident by the end of the year.

Hu Qili, who presided over both meetings as a member of the Political Bureau and Secretariat of the Party Central Committee, announced that the Secretariat had decided to set up a special group to monitor the style of the Party within central departments.

## Chinese Language Building Character

**E**fforts to standardize the Chinese language gained new momentum as a national conference on Chinese language work wrapped up its session earlier this month.

Addressing the conference, Vice-Premier Wan Li said the standardization of the language was of great significance to China's social and scientific

development. "The degree of standardization of a language is a criterion of a nation's civilization," Wan said.

The conference, which began on January 6, was sponsored by the State Commission on Language Planning, a new commission fashioned on the former national Language Reform Commission established 30 years ago.

Wan pointed out that currently there were too many liberties taken with the Chinese language, including the abuses and simplification of Chinese characters at will. "This phenomenon is incompatible with the modernization drive," he said. "We should pay attention to it, and take effective measures to stop and correct it."

Chinese here refers to the language spoken by the Chinese *Han* ethnic majority group. Most of China's 55 ethnic minority groups have their own language, and although they are not officially required to adopt standard Chinese as their formal language, they are encouraged to have a clear understanding of it.

Liu Daosheng, minister of the language commission, outlined the goals set by the commission: popularizing *Putonghua* (standard spoken Chinese); maintaining standards for the application of Chinese characters; and further popularization of the *Pinyin* system.

*Putongua*, a combination of several northern Chinese dialects, will be used in all schools, offices, radio and TV broadcasts, films and dramas throughout the country. "To popularize *Putonghua*," Liu said, "does not mean to wipe out other dialects deliberately, but to remove obstacles in social communication."

*Pinyin* (transliteration of Chinese characters into the Romanization word forms), which was officially introduced nationwide in 1958, has proven highly effective for Chinese children and foreign students

studying Chinese. The commission reiterated, however, *Pinyin* was not to become a substitute for Chinese characters, which will remain the official Chinese written language.

There are seven major dialects within China's *Han* ethnic majority alone. The regional differences in the Chinese spoken language have presented unconditional obstacles to the nation's advancement, because these dialects are really as different as foreign languages themselves. Therefore, in 1955 the National Language Reform Commission began to standardize the northern dialects into *Putongua* and have made great achievements in the past 30 years. In 1956 the commission simplified many of the more difficult Chinese characters; and since then *Putonghua* and the *Pinyin* system have been widely assimilated into the nation's educational network. *Putonghua* is currently used in nearly all kindergartens and primary schools throughout China. As a result, most children speak better standard Chinese and have a better command of *Pinyin* than their parents.

But convention still presents a great obstacle to the popularization of *Putonghua* in many parts of the country, especially in the south. When a person who works in Beijing visits his family in the south, a shift must be made to an entirely different dialect; if he continues to speak *Putonghua*, he is sometimes jeered at for putting on airs.

## Awaiting That Bus

Thanks to the ongoing reforms, by the year 1990, China's city commuters will not have to wait as long for buses during rush hour. And passengers looking for buses during off-peak hours will not have to let buses go by because they are just overcrowded, according to an official of the

Ministry of Urban and Rural Construction and Environmental Protection.

The official recently said the strain on urban public transport—mainly bus and taxi services—should be greatly eased in the next decade. The main problems that need tackling include poor roads and traffic management, shortages of vehicles, uneconomical fares and large-scale mobility of commuters who live far from their workplaces.

Reforms in the country's mass transit systems are breaking state monopolies with the emergence of about 1,300 collectively or privately owned transport services and joint ventures in the field, the official said. Some cities in northeastern China have taken the lead by adjusting bus fares and adopting private responsibility systems. These cities already have received some financial returns from their efforts, the officials said.

The ministry official said construction of roads and other facilities that have been neglected for many years, catching most of China's large and medium cities unprepared for the sudden increase in the numbers of motor vehicles, will be given special attention in the next five years. Meanwhile, some employers are helping employees find residences closer to their workplaces. As part of the effort to ease traffic jams, bicycle parking lots are being built near main bus stops and subway stations to encourage people to ride bicycles part of the way and then transfer to public transport.

The focus of public transport development, the officials said, will now be on manufacturing bigger and faster vehicles. China has public transport facilities in more than 240 cities. Since 1979, the number of public transport vehicles, excluding taxis, has increased from 25,000 to 44,000 and the number of transportation workers has risen from 270,000 to

500,000. Taxi services have sprung up in more than 100 cities and today there are a total of 40,000 taxis in this country.

## Rafter Inspires Courage in Others

The story of an ill-fated Chinese adventurer, who, though failed to realize his dream, he inspired the same dream in others a hundred times over, shows how with a little care and courage, last year's tragedies can become the foundation for the new year's triumphs.

The adventure was that of Yao Maoshu, a photographer and the first Chinese to try to conquer the Changjiang River by sailing its distance. Yao had intended to shoot all the rapids on the 6,300 km river from source to sea, but was drowned after covering 1,100 km and a number of dangerous white water rapids. Though Yao failed to achieve his goal, and instead met his end, he will be remembered as a hero. His name will go down in Chinese history as a brave adventurer.

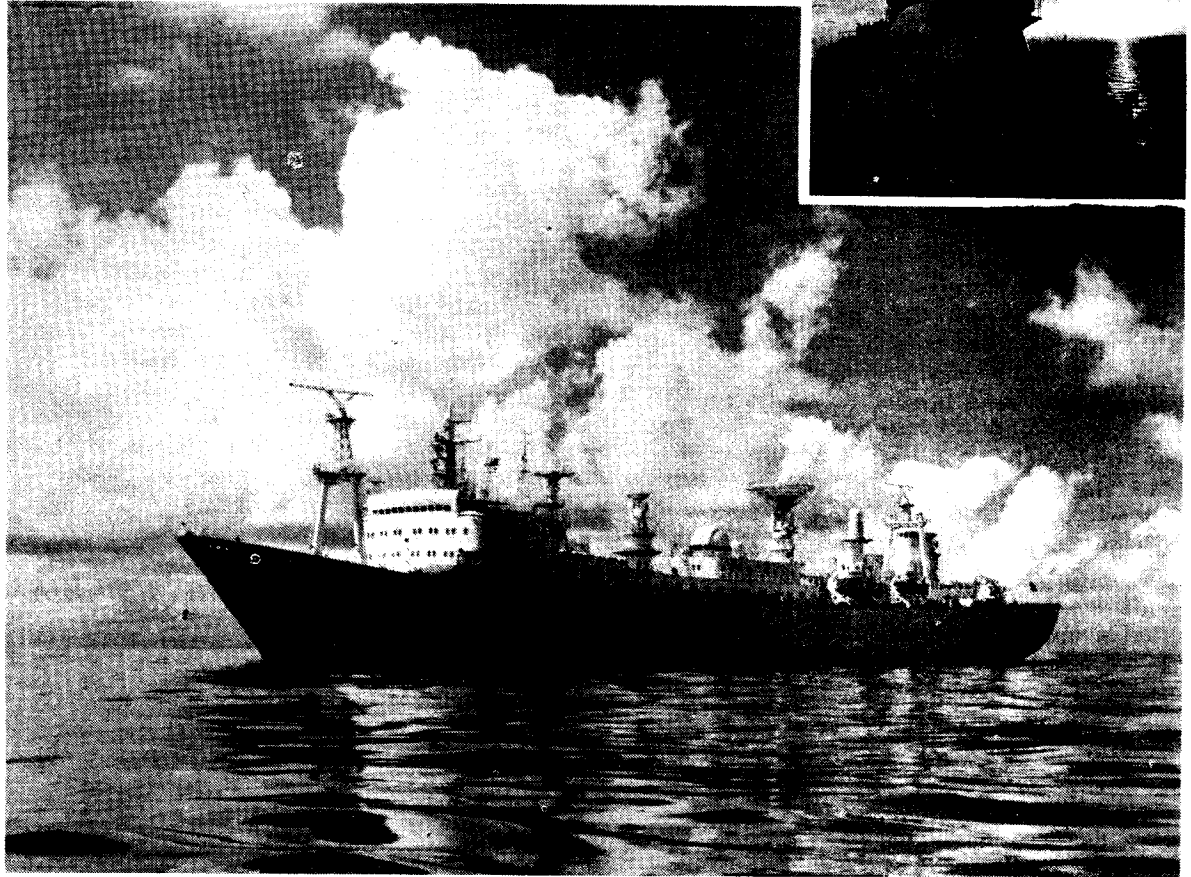
Yao, 32, a native of Lechuan County, Sichuan Province, was a photographer for Jiaotong University in southwest China. Yao grew up beside the Changjiang River. As a child he had admired the seemingly endless river and had often dreamed of walking along the river to where it joins the sea.

It was in 1979, after reading a book on the river that Yao first thought of rafting through the river single-handed. He was deeply attracted by the magnificent scenery at its source, and regretted that so little of the geography, ecological environment and biology there had been explored. He then made up his mind to explore the river and to bring to life this as yet unknown scenery.

## Space Vessel Wins Special Prize

*Yuanwang*, a comprehensive astronomical survey vessel, recently won a special award, the National Scientific and Technological Progress Prize. About 190 metres long, and able to reach speeds up to 20 nautical miles, *Yuanwang* has data-collecting, remote control, salvage and recovery capabilities. The inset shows the precision surveying radar installed on *Yuanwang*.

ZHOU YI



Yao began reading books and other material about the Changjiang and of the world's other mighty rivers. He learned that, with the exception of the Changjiang, almost all the major rivers in the world had been explored by rafters. Yao also learned that rafting on the Changjiang, the third largest river in the world, was regarded the "last great victory" for adventurers. Yao wanted to be the first to accomplish that feat.

Since making his decision, Yao went all out to prepare for the adventure. He jogged around the playground every evening, explored the river on its upper reaches on foot during vacations and practised shooting rapids on different sections of the river. Throughout his training, Yao wore out six rubber rafts.

Yao also read about 100 books on the river, its geography, history, climate and on the folkways of people who live along

its banks. After six years of hard work and with the help and support of the departments concerned, in 1985 Yao was almost ready to begin, and set his starting date for sometime in 1986.

Then in the spring of 1985 news came from the other side of the Pacific that an American rapids adventurer had organized a well-trained team with advanced equipment to raft on the Changjiang in August 1985.

The news compelled Yao to



move up his departure date. "I can't let my six years' efforts go wasted and dissappoint those who have supported me," he said. "More important, the Changjiang belongs to China. Its first rafter should be Chinese."

On May 27, 1985, Yao, with his third elder brother, Yao Maojiang, a doctor, set out for the river's source—the snow-covered Tanggula Mountains in Qinghai Province. From there, the raft dubbed "the Dragon's Descendant," was launched. Together the two brothers floated through the Tuotuohe River, and then the elder brother returned to his work, leaving Yao alone to finish the rest of the journey.

From then on for 20 days, Yao met few human beings. He did, however, have groups of wolves, wild asses and brown bears for occasional company. Once he went on the bank to locate the direction of the river. On his return, Yao saw a brown bear smashing up his raft. The bear ripped up Yao's shelter, threw out the cans and greedily tore into his noodles and peanuts. The plunder left Yao without provisions for two days. Because he didn't have a gun, Yao had to wait it out until the bear left.

"The most unbearable thing is the loneliness," Yao told a reporter who met up with him during his journey. "Sometimes I almost went crazy." On his

lonesome journey, Yao spent most of his time recalling his past or singing made-up "songs" to himself.

A man of great courage, Yao was ready to risk his life. As he was preparing to raft through the Hutiao Gorge, the most dangerous place to pass, he said, "To conquer rivers as great as the Changjiang, in addition to being technically prepared, one must also be prepared to risk one's life. If one doesn't have the courage, one should make way for the courageous."

Before he reached the Hutiao George, however, the rapids took Yao's life.

Yao didn't fulfil his great aspiration, but his courage and brave deeds have inspired thousands of other Chinese youth. Following Yao's death, more than 100 young people entered their names for permission to raft down the Changjiang River. A well-trained Chinese team is being organized to carry on Yao's unfinished cause.

Was Yao a failure? No!

As his wife said, "He was a pioneer, who, like a torch, illuminated the road for the brave. If the Chinese nation is to grow and become strong, it must have the spirit of adventure and struggle. Sacrifice is inevitable; the pioneer's blood is the best foundation."

by Yan Liqun



## China & the World

### China Condemns Terrorism

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman on January 8 condemned the recent terrorist attacks in Rome and Vienna, and expressed concern over the United States' reaction and Israel's threats of military reprisals.

On December 27, terrorists raided airports in Rome and Vienna, killing and wounding more than 100 people. "We strongly condemn these terrorist acts," the spokesman said. "The Chinese government has always opposed terrorism in any form and the use of terrorism as a means of political struggle," he added.

### China To Rejoins Tariff Group.

China hopes to resume its membership in the General Agreement of Tariff and Trade (GATT), an international treaty organization that reduces tariffs between member nations. Premier Zhao Ziyang said at a meeting with Arthur Dunkel, director general of GATT, in Beijing on January 10.

Zhao said the restoration of China's GATT membership, cancelled since 1950, would lead to increase imports and exports. China's economic reforms would eventually reduce differences between China and most other GATT members in prices, currency values and foreign trade systems and practices, Zhao added.

KOREA

## North-South Dialogue Tops 1986 Agenda

*Creating a worldwide stir last year by breaking a 40-year impasse to allow homecoming visits to each side, North and South Korea continue to enjoy international applause as they launch the new year with vows of sustained dialogue.*

Since the beginning of the new year, North Korea and South Korea have vowed to continue their dialogue. Kim IL Sung, president of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, declared the North would make efforts to facilitate further economic discussions and Red Cross talks, hold joint national assembly discussions and a summit meeting as soon as possible. The South, too, has indicated it would push forward North-South dialogue to promote a reconciliation and further build on the foundation for a peaceful reunification of the two parts.

All of these efforts are encouraging. It is well known that in the last year North and South Korea held four rounds of talks concerning economic co-operation, three rounds of Red Cross talks, including the issue of family exchanges, and two preparatory meetings for the national assembly conference. All this good-faith dialogue was conducted in a friendly manner and with some positive results. Cultural exchanges and the visits of delegations of members of divided families to each side—the first such exchanges in 40 years—commanded world attention. Some international news agencies even listed the homecomings as one of 10 major world events of 1985.

As an effort to ease tension along the Korean Peninsula, continuing the North-South dialogue and paving the way for a

productive summit should be the major tasks facing the two sides this year.

The two sides are scheduled to hold their sixth Economic Co-operation Conference on January 22. Red Cross talks are slated for February 26, and the third preparatory meeting for national assembly conference will also be held during this period.

The world is looking on anxiously, hoping the South Korean authorities avoid backlashes that could provoke a negative twist in relations between the two sides, such as the joint military exercise held with the United States last year. Leader of the North Korean delegation to the Economic Co-operation Conference, Li Song Rok, maintained in early January "the military exercise last year stalled the North-South talks for half a year

and aggravated the relationship between the two sides."

*Rondong Sinmun*, the official North Korean newspaper, in an editorial on January 8 said the North-South dialogue should aim to achieve the reunification of the two sides through extensive consultations and exchanges. It also noted that such a dialogue should be gradually upgraded to the level of summit talks.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea issued a statement on January 11 declaring that the government had decided to pull back any large-scale military manoeuvres within the entire northern part of Korea as of February 1, and would stop all military exercises during the period of the dialogue between the North and the South. The statement also called on the United States and the South Korean authorities to respond to North Korean efforts by also halting all large-scale military exercises in South Korea by February 1. This was another step taken by the DPRK government designed to ease tension along the Korean Peninsula and to promote dialogue between the North and the South. **by GAO HAORONG**

FRANCE

## Socialists Facing Popularity Vote

*With parliamentary elections scheduled for March, France's ruling Socialist Party and its opposition are locked in a tight battle over high unemployment, economic slowdown and immigration.*

The Socialist government of France faces a serious test of popularity and of control with its five-year parliamentary elections in the National Assembly, in which their majority could be challenged.

Since the government came to power in 1981 it has pursued an

independent foreign policy that generally has had continuous public support throughout the country. Nevertheless, its economic policies are being challenged by opposition parties.

France's foreign diplomacy was quite active throughout 1985. The "Eureka" programme it put forth

received widespread support from West European nations and was put into force. Meanwhile, the special relationship between Paris and Bonn was upheld by the exchange of visits between the leaders of the two nations. In its relations with the United States and the Soviet union, France adhered to an independent position in its own interest. It also continued to develop its ties with the third world.

Unfortunately, just when it looked as if France was building its momentum in the international arena, it became embroiled in the Greenpeace affair. The sinking of the Greenpeace ship, "Rainbow Warrior," in the South Pacific by French secret agents soured relations between France and the South Pacific nations, New Zealand in particular, not to mention the worldwide cries it provoked for an accurate account and explanation of the government's involvement.

In the field of economics, the Socialists made some significant gains in 1985, although a number of tight spots remain. Last year was the third year during which the government implemented austerity policies. While insisting on modernization and nationalization, it adjusted the nation's economic structure, reduced government expenditures and controlled prices and wages. The adjustments reflect the efforts on the part of the Socialists to bring France into the forefront of West European financial stability.

These measures brought the inflation rate down from 14 percent in 1981 to 6.7 percent in 1984. The 1985 rate was estimated at somewhere between 4.6 percent and 4.7 percent, the lowest in 14 years and close to the 4.5-percent government projection.

The international balance of payments in 1985 might even bring in a small surplus as opposed to the deficit of 6.6 billion francs in

1984. And domestic fixed capital investment also appeared to be on the rise.

France's economy has yet to reach an all-round level of recovery, however, and according to the French National Statistics Institute, last year's economic growth rate stood at only 1.1 percent. That growth rate is expected to reach 1.9 percent in 1986, a figure close to the average growth rate of the European Economic Community's member nations as a whole.

But the worst dilemma the Socialists face today is skyrocketing unemployment, an ominous issue that could bring about dangerous levels of social unrest. The unemployment rate is expected to rise to 11.25 percent in 1986, compared to 9.3 in 1984, and 10.5 in 1985. The number of unemployed was expected to reach 2.6 million by the beginning of this year, the highest level of unemployment in France since World War II.

With all this in mind, the Socialist Party is in full swing for the March elections. Its members are not unaware that the party could lose needed votes in the elections because of the economic problems, especially unemploy-

ment, and they are gearing up for a tight, tough fight.

The opposition parties are not allowing the economic problems to slip away unnoticed and are steeped in preparation for the elections in a bid to recapture political power.

As the campaign elections heat up, so come the debates. Foreign immigration has come into the campaign limelight as the extreme rightists instigate hostility against immigrant workers and accuse the government of provoking social unrest, the high unemployment rate and public security problems by keeping on the immigrant workers.

The opposition also attributes the weak economic recovery to the nationalization policies and has adopted the campaign slogan of "denationalization."

France is standing at a crossroads. If the Socialist Party loses its National Assembly majority in the elections, the sticky situation of having a left-wing president and a right-wing prime minister could set in for the first time in the history of the Fifth Republic. If this should happen, the country would enter an even more complex and volatile period.

by Wang Wei

## MEXICO

### Pressured Into Reducing Oil Prices

*Mexico recently announced a cut in its oil prices, signalling its insistence on deciding its own oil strategy independent of OPEC's moves.*

**O**n December 30, 1985, Mexico, the largest oil producer in Latin America, declared it would retroactively cut the price of its exported light and heavy crude oil by US\$0.90 per barrel. The effective date of the cut, Mexican officials said, would be December 1, 1985.

The retroactive pricing policy, which will involve publicizing oil

prices for the month of January, for example, on January 30, marks Mexico's renouncement of its past OPEC-inspired policy of announcing oil prices for the next month during the last week of each month. Instead, in the future, Mexico, which is not a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, will determine its own prices in conjunction with the fluctuations of the

international oil market. The new pricing policy, Mexican officials said, is an expedient measure made on the basis of Mexico's economic needs and designed to help it deal with the unpredictable changes in the oil market.

Mexico's policy shift is regarded as the first move of the non-OPEC countries to accept OPEC's challenge put forward last December, when it decided to reduce prices, maintain production levels, and abandon its previous policy of stabilizing prices by restricting output. Moreover, the fact that Mexico's policy came in the dead of winter when demand for oil is climbing, makes the strategy all the more significant.

In the past few years, since the oil market has been plagued by growing supplies and diminishing demand, Mexico has dealt only in oil futures and not in spot commodities. Mexico has, furthermore, contributed to the stability of the world oil market by its all-out co-operation with OPEC in oil price and output. However, disappointed by OPEC's recent policy change, Mexico has chosen to discontinue its co-operation with the organization. While Mexico understands the new OPEC policy, a Mexican official said recently, it will not share the responsibility for the policy's consequences, which might have proven harmful to Mexico's already beleaguered economy.

A reduction in oil prices is an unwelcome event in Mexico. With a foreign debt of approximately US\$96 billion, most of it borrowed from the United States, Mexico is the world's second largest debtor nation after Brazil. It is estimated that Mexico would need between US\$4 and \$9 billion in new loans each year to pay its old debt and keep its economy working at the same time. Although the recent drop in the US interest rate on foreign loans has benefited the debt-stricken

country, those benefits were offset by the recent slice into oil prices. It is reported that a 1 percent cut in the interest on loans from the United States will cut down on Mexico's foreign debt by US\$745 million. However, a US\$1 drop in oil prices will siphon off \$550 million from the country's oil revenue each year.

Mexico's foreign exchange coffers depend largely on its oil exports, which have earned about US\$15 billion each year since 1983, at the rate of 1.5 million barrels exported each day. The oil glut in the world market, however, imposed a 4 percent reduction in Mexico's planned daily oil export in 1985. Moreover, OPEC's recent decision to secure its share in the limited world oil sales added to the potential menace facing Mexico. Representatives of Mexico's oil industry said their country was forced to adopt a new strategy to guard against losing its oil clients.

The United States's insistence on price reductions for imported oil was another factor prompting Mexico to cut its price. Since 1979, during the second oil shortage, the United States turned from the Middle East for its oil imports to Mexico, which in 1982 replaced

Saudi Arabia as America's largest oil supplier.

The United States is the largest oil consumer in the world, and has about 30 oil producers competing for its market. Such competition has resulted in forcing down the price of oil. In February 1985, the United States set a reduction of US\$1.25 per barrel of oil as a precondition for buying Mexico's oil. In light of OPEC's new policy, the American oil companies have again asked Mexico to cut another US\$2 to US\$3 per barrel.

Mexico is effectively boxed into a corner and knows it, which is why it agreed to drop its prices. Mexico realizes that should it not meet the demand of its largest oil customer, because of OPEC's new policy, that customer—the United States—needs simply to renew its supply channels with the now more accommodating OPEC countries.

In view of Mexico's decision to chop its oil prices, what remains to be seen is how other nations, such as Britain, Norway, the Soviet Union, the United States and OPEC will react, and whether the world will experience a turbulent oil price war.

by Jiang Hong

## POLAND

### Stability Renews Nation's Spirit

*Although Poland is saddled with old problems in the new year, for the most part, economic and social stability are riding high.*

**A**fter a few years of martial law and labour unrest of the Solidarity trade union in Poland, political and economic stability have been restored to the East European nation. The United Workers' Party, which had lost one third of its membership after the labour unrest, is winning back supporters, and the newly reorganized trade union is reported

to have regained authority of more than one-half of Poland's workforce.

Meanwhile the influence of the banned Solidarity trade union has been diminishing. Last year, when it called for strikes and demonstrations to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the August labour uprising, the underground group received little public

response. Zibigniew Bujak, a leader of the Solidarity movement, announced in December that the national co-ordination committee of Solidarity would not organize further strikes and demonstrations.

But the most significant political event of 1985 in Poland was the parliamentary elections, the first since the labour upheaval and declaration of martial law in 1981. The elections evolved into a major contest between the authorities and the Solidarity-led opposition, as well as a test of public support and social stability. Despite Solidarity's appeal for a boycott against the elections, they were held as scheduled in October and nearly 79 percent of the registered voters turned out at the polls. Observers considered the smooth general election an indication that an end to the political chaos was finally in sight.

Poland's economic performance over the last year, however, drew less applause at home and abroad. The total economic growth rate was reported to be lower than that of the previous two years. The growth of industry only went up by 2.7 percent, falling short of the expected 4 percent. Poland's trade with the West resulted in a decline in foreign exchange revenue, due to a downshift in its exportation drive, although trade with other socialist countries was reported to have met its goals.

Inflation was still causing the government headaches in 1985, with both the average 18 percent wage increase and the 14 percent to 15 percent price increase far outstripping government projections.

On a better note, agricultural production was comparatively better. Though grain and sugar beet production was somewhat lower than that in 1984, because of poor weather, total agricultural

output values exceeded projected figures. State livestock production rose by 5 percent.

When considering the overall view of the economic rehabilitation underway in Poland—the gross national income rose by 14 percent from 1983 to 1985—there have been tangible results. This

year, the government will launch a new five-year development plan, in a spirit of renewed confidence. "The worst period is over," declared Polish leader Wojciech Jaruzelski recently. "We are moving forward steadily, step by step."

by Wen Youren

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### *Just Off the Press*

## **Zhou Enlai—A Profile**

### **Zhou Enlai—A Profile**

By Percy Jucheng Fang & Lucy Guinong J. Fang  
Foreign Languages Press, Beijing

250 pp of text, 38 pp of photos

222 X 152 mm Paper cover with jacket

This book, commemorating the tenth anniversary of his death, fills a most timely need: For understanding of the New China that Zhou Enlai, Mao Zedong and their comrades fought for decades to bring into existence and today's China, embarked on a vast modernization effort that carries the unmistakable imprint of Zhou Enlai's political and executive genius.

The authors possess an expert knowledge of the China scene, having worked continually in the country for thirty years, yet they are also familiar with Western audiences, as they have lived for long periods abroad. This informal biography of China's most outstanding diplomat and head of government is a product of their crystallized experience gained in both the East and the West. Written in English—not a translation—this new look at Zhou Enlai is offered especially to Western readers. No other book on this extraordinary man has so many telling, human anecdotes or such a trenchant comparison of Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong—their different backgrounds, their lasting partnership, their particular strengths and achievements, and their respective

weaknesses and failures. The analysis of the two men makes fascinating reading.

Percy Jucheng Fang was born in Levuka, Fiji Islands, in 1914. He studied at Qinghua University in Beijing and later at the London School of Economics. Lucy Guinong J. Fang, born in Danyang, Jiangsu Province, in 1914, also attended Qinghua University, where she majored in Western literature. Like her husband, she graduated in 1938. The couple spent most of the war years in India, and at the end of 1945 went to England for postgraduate studies and to work part time for the BBC. The Fangs returned to China in 1949. After a lifetime devoted to journalism they have now retired from *Beijing Review* and *Radio Beijing International* respectively.

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## US-SOVIET RELATIONS

# A Year Filled With Dissent, Discourse

by Fang Min

This past year has just seen important changes in the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union. The two countries finally emerged from a prolonged deadlock of confrontation, to enter into a new phase of contest and dialogue.

The crowning event in their relations in 1985 was, of course, the November 19-20 summit in Geneva between US President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Although the meeting did not produce substantive results on critical issues, the two sides did agree that a nuclear war must never be fought, and released a joint statement saying as much. They also pledged to accelerate arms control negotiations and intensify talks at various levels in an effort to keep up the momentum of the ongoing dialogue.

## Intense Confrontation

Looking back on US-Soviet relations in the past year, one gets a general picture of confrontation and conversation walking hand in hand. While there were serious contentions over a number of critical issues at all times, the two superpowers maintained contact with each other. From the January foreign ministers' encounter to the November summit, their contest revolving around the arms race and the issue of arms control went through several stages.

In the fall of 1984, the two nations began squabbling over whether to resume the arms control talks in Geneva, which had been suspended the previous year following a Soviet walkout. Their relationship then became one of intense confrontation, with each stepping up efforts towards a stronger military buildup. The

result only escalated their arms race and forced a sudden increase in the number of intermediate-range missiles in Europe. At the same time, Washington and Moscow were locked in competition to research space weapons, and it became apparent that they would attempt to carry their arms race into outer space.

Meanwhile, the international call against nuclear war was becoming even louder. People around the world demanded a substantial reduction of armaments by the two superpowers, and opposed the extension of the arms race to outer space. The allies of both the United States and the Soviet Union also used whatever leverage they had to urge Washington and Moscow to ease the tension.

Under great internal and external pressure, Washington and Moscow began seeking ways to resume the arms talks and improve their strained relations. After rounds of hard bargaining, the two sides finally agreed in principle to resume their talks on nuclear and space weapons when their foreign ministers met last January.

## Dialogue Amid Rivalry

Then came the next stage in superpower relations, one that was characterized by negotiations up front, with rivalry continuing behind the scenes. The central point of contention among them remained nuclear arms reduction and the prevention of the development of space weapons. The Soviets tried hard to scuttle the US "Star Wars" programme, while the Americans refused to forgo their space weapons system

research plan, intending to use the programme as a chip to force Moscow to make concessions on nuclear weapons.

Both sides launched an extensive diplomatic and propaganda campaign inside and outside the meeting room, with quite a number of proposals and counter-proposals on arms control put forward. Because both refused to soften their stance, the two rounds of arms control talks and the second meeting between the US secretary of state and the Soviet foreign minister all led nowhere.

The third stage in US-Soviet relations began last July when the two sides began to knock heads over the arrangements of the US-Soviet summit meeting. Although both the White House and the Kremlin since early last year had considered holding a summit to break the stalemate, for quite



some time they could not agree on the major issues to be discussed at the meeting. They also disputed over whether to halt nuclear and anti-satellite weapons testing. During this period, both conducted a series of activities aiming to strengthen their position before they went into the November summit. They put forward a number of "new" arms control proposals, and at the same time each raised some sticky issues to put the other on the defensive.

### Improved Climate

The November summit marked a positive turn in the US-Soviet relations, a turn from years of intense confrontation to dialogue. Although serious differences on some critical issues remain as before, and neither Moscow nor Washington has slackened in its efforts to scramble for global supremacy, the climate between the two superpowers has become somewhat brightened. This slight improvement will no doubt have a certain impact on the world

situation. Comparatively speaking, the European nations paid great attention to the US-Soviet summit, while the third world nations reacted frostily.

The White House and the Kremlin had made their own appraisals, which, as their official statements showed, had similarities as well as differences. Both described the dialogue as a good beginning and agreed that follow-up action would be necessary to render the summit a real success. But each of them looked to the other to take such action. Moscow asked Washington to avoid making any moves that would put obstacles in the way of further negotiations. The main obstacle, as the Soviets see it, was Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, commonly known as "Star Wars." The United States asked Moscow to work with it in a joint effort to substantially slash the offensive nuclear weapons and set up a non-nuclear defence force, or SDI. Both sides acknowledged the long-term nature of competition between them, but hoped the competition would not get out of control. At a press conference following the Geneva summit, the differences between the Soviet Union and the United States remained and their competition would continue. But he was quick to add that the two countries should do their best to keep the competition within reasonable limits, not letting it lead to military confrontation. Reagan, too, struck the same note when he addressed a joint congressional session following the summit, saying the main task facing the United States and the Soviet Union was to ensure that their long-term competition remain peaceful, and never to allow the confusion between the two superpowers get any worse than it had been in the past years.

While the two sides agreed that

their main differences were reflected in the issues of arms control and regional conflict, they nevertheless disagreed on how to solve these issues. With regard to the issue of arms control, both failed to achieve any of their goals in this area at the summit. The Americans expressed the hope that the summit would give new impetus to the reduction of nuclear arms so that some progress could be made as soon as possible. Washington also called for a separate agreement with Moscow on the intermediate-range missiles in Europe. The Soviets, however, stressed that the core of the security issue was the prevention of militarization of outer space and the reduction of nuclear armaments, and that the two aspects of the issue were closely related to one another. In a recent statement Gorbachev reiterated that it was absolutely necessary to shut the door through which nuclear weapons might slip into outer space. With the door opened, he said, it would be impossible to reduce nuclear arms.

The new developments in US-Soviet relations took place because both Washington and Moscow knew it was time for a change in their chilly relations, as this was in their own interests; neither side could afford to continue to ignore the mounting peace movement around the world. But real improvements in their relations were limited, and the new-found detente is precarious at best.

**In the near future, the two superpowers will, most likely, continue their current pattern of confrontation and conversation. When they rival with each other, they will see to it that their confrontation does not run out of control; and when they engage in dialogue, they will continue to scramble for that extra edge over the other.**



Last year saw a mounting worldwide peace movement as more and more people were turning to the street, calling for an end to the US-Soviet arms race.

# Food Crops Providing Stable Staples

by Lu Liangshu and Liu Zhicheng

**G**rain is the chief staple in the Chinese people's diet and an important raw material for foodstuffs and light industries. Given China's large population, the steady development of food crops constitutes a long-term state policy for agricultural production. Self-sufficiency in grain is an integral step towards the development of China's national economy as a whole.

## Historical Review

Before the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, China's cultivated land totalled 100 million hectares, which ranked fourth in the world after the Soviet Union, the United States and India. Its per-capita cultivated land, however, was less than that of the major grain producers of the world. China's agricultural production techniques and farm production also were lagging, resulting in the slow growth of its grain production and periods of starvation for its millions of peasants before liberation.

Through the concerted efforts of all the Chinese people since the founding of the People's Republic, China's grain production has developed swiftly over the last three decades. Its total output of grain increased from 113.18 million tons in 1949 to 407.31 million tons in 1984, and its average per-capita grain production increased from 200 kg to 400 kg—close to the world average. In 1985, however, due to serious natural disasters and the reduction of farmland with grain crops, China brought in 25 million tons

less grain than in 1984, a record-breaking year. Nevertheless, good harvests in the previous six years have ensured ample stock for both the state and farmer households.

Today, China basically has solved the problem of feeding and clothing its 1 billion people. This has provided favourable conditions for the all-round growth of its rural economy.

A review of the history of China's grain production shows that it has achieved significant results in the following four areas:

**Rate of Growth Has Picked Up Since the 1970s.** It took China about six years (1952-58) to raise its total grain output from 160 million tons to 200 million tons. During this period the average annual growth rate was 3 percent. It took China another 12 years (1958-71) to bring its total grain output up to 250 million tons, and during this period the average growth rate was 1.9 percent a year. Seven more years (1971-78) were used to raise the figure to 300 million, and the average annual growth rate during this period was 2.9 percent. In the following four years (1979-82), China raised its total grain output even more to 350 million tons, and this period saw an average growth rate of 3.8 percent a year. In 1984, the country's total grain output amounted to 400 million tons, up 4.6 percent over that of 1983. This shows that China only used two years to raise its grain output from 350 million tons to 400 million tons.

**Per-Unit Grain Output Increased by a Wide Margin.** During the 35 years from 1949 to 1985, China's per-hectare grain output increased an average of 73.71 kg per year. During the six years from 1978 to

1983, its per-hectare grain output increased an average of 180 kg a year. Although the farmland planted with crops was reduced from 120 million hectares to 114 million hectares, total grain output went up even faster. A key factor to this inverse ratio was the fast growth of per-unit output. In 1984, the country's per-hectare grain output reached 3,607.5 kg, up 251 percent and 34.4 percent respectively over that of 1949 and 1978. Nevertheless, there is still a fairly wide gap between China's per-unit output and that of the developed countries, indicating there is still great potential to be utilized in per-unit output.

## High-Yielding Areas on the Rise.

Before 1982, in addition to overpopulated industrial cities, some border provinces and autonomous regions with poor production conditions had to ship in large quantities of grain from

**Feng Dashi, a senior agronomist from Sichuan, recently won a top prize for his new strain of wheat, "Mianyang No. 11"**



The authors are director and deputy director of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science.



other parts of the country to balance their food supply. The problem became worse when these areas were struck by natural disasters. By 1983, however, the majority of these provinces and autonomous regions had become self-sufficient in grain and some have even come up with a surplus.

**All-Round Boost of Grain and Cash Crops.** Since 1979, a series of flexible policies have been introduced to enliven the rural economy, and the structure of farming has been readjusted. Many areas have reaped not only high output of grain, but also of cotton, oil-bearing and sugar-bearing crops, tobacco, jute and other cash crops. A number of them even have acquired simultaneous development of food, cash and fodder crops.

The general improvement of agricultural production and the increase of productivity in the rural areas have in turn provided plenty of raw materials and labour force to aquaculture, forestry, livestock breeding and small-scale rural industries. These improvements also have created favourable conditions for developing commerce, transport and communications, and the development of remote mountain areas.

### **Policies and Measures**

In the last seven years, the government has formulated a series of principles and policies and has introduced many measures to boost agricultural and grain production, which have so far yielded positive results.

**Reforming the Centralized Management Method.** Since 1979, a contract responsibility system based on individual households has been put into effect in the rural areas. Under this system, land is still owned by the public, but is cultivated by individual farmers. Irrigation facilities, large farm machinery

## **Plan for the Next Five Years**

During the Seventh Five-Year Plan period (1986-90), China's grain output is expected to grow at an average annual rate of 3.4 percent, and the country's total grain output is estimated to reach 450 million tons by 1990. The per-capita grain level will still remain at 400 kg by then. To meet this target, the government will have to increase its investment in agriculture to build farmland irrigation projects, improve production conditions and develop methods to protect rural areas from natural disasters. In an effort to spark the farmers' enthusiasm for grain production, the government will soon introduce the following five measures:

- 1) Encourage the rural agricultural processing industries to assist production in the economically developed areas;
- 2) Stabilize the selling price of different means of production;
- 3) Cut down the amount of grain purchased by the state and expand market sales in order to increase farmers' income;
- 4) Fix the state price on chemical fertilizer to farmers who have grain contracts with the state;
- 5) Raise the purchasing price of the grain to be shipped to other parts of the country.

and public welfare undertakings are managed by the collective, but the farmers make their own decisions about what to grow and they have the right to sell their own farm produce. Apart from delivering public grain and handing over part of their products to the collectives, the growers themselves are masters of the remainder of the harvest. This responsibility system has fired the farmers' enthusiasm for production—which is the main reason why China's agricultural output and the income of farmers have increased so quickly in the last few years.

**Raising the Grain Purchasing Prices.** Since 1978, the state has on many occasions readjusted the purchasing prices for grain and other farm produce. This has benefited the farmers by making up about 20 percent of their total income hikes. The state currently is introducing a policy of giving preferential prices to better-quality grain. After fulfilling their contracts with the state, the grain producers may then sell the remainder on the open market. When the market price is lower than the state price, the state will make additional purchases at the

state price to protect the interests of the grain producers.

**Reducing Agricultural Taxes.** China's agricultural tax has remained low and steady for many years. Guarding the interests of the farmers in the economically underdeveloped areas, since 1979 the state has once again cut back their taxes. The current amount of agricultural tax collected by the state is the lowest since the agricultural tax system was implemented. Its proportion of the country's total agricultural income dropped from 3.23 percent in 1979 to 1.89 percent in 1983.

**Providing Low-Interest Agricultural Loans.** In recent years, the state has continued to increase the number and amount of loans for agricultural production. From 1979 to 1983, the agricultural banks and credit co-operatives in various parts of China issued a total of 25.05 billion yuan in agricultural loans (not including loans to township enterprises). Of this total, 74.3 percent was granted to farmer households.

**Improving Farming Techniques and Increasing Material Input.** The past 35 years have witnessed

rapid progress in China's farmland capital construction, including the construction of irrigation projects and soil improvement. This increased the proportion of the country's irrigated land to 45 percent and that of tractor ploughed land to 35 percent in 1984. The amount of farm machinery China owns has increased from 160 million hp in 1978 to 265 million hp in 1984; and the electricity consumed in rural areas has gone from 25.3 billion kwh to 46.2 billion kwh. All this indicates that the fast development of China's agricultural production in recent years is an integral part of the increasing material input.

#### Importing and Popularizing Ad-

wheat and maize and their hybrids. Using new technology, the methods for controlling plant disease, eliminating pests and weeds and making crops more resistant to natural calamities also have benefited China's production of grain. The techniques of fertilization and irrigation, as well as those for improving dry-land crops, have all been given a dose of imported technology. By applying modern technology for the treatment of saline-alkaline and other low-yielding soil types, some of China's wastelands have been put to use as productive farmland.

#### Establishing Commodity Grain Centres.

In recent years, the central and local governments

commodity rate of grain.

### Prospects for Production And Consumption

With the rise of China's consumption level, its need for meat, poultry, eggs and dairy products grows and efforts will therefore be directed at the development of multiple uses of grain. Given this, China's current grain output is far from enough to meet the actual needs. Thus grain production still needs to be greatly expanded.

It is forecasted that in the last decade of this century, China's annual grain output will reach 450 million tons to 500 million tons and its per-capita grain level will stand somewhere between 400 kg to 425 kg. The amount of fodder grain gradually will reach 150 million tons, or 30 percent of the country's total grain output. This will boost the production of meat and other animal products. By the end of this century, China's per-capita level for meat is expected to be 25 kg a year; eggs, 12.5 kg; dairy products, 25 kg; and aquatic products, 9 kg. The proportion of animal protein is estimated to increase from the current 10 percent to 20-25 percent, which would be a great improvement in the Chinese diet.

To achieve these objectives, the Chinese government will continue to adopt policies encouraging grain production. The contract responsibility system based on individual households will continue to be implemented and strengthened, and the structure of the rural economy will be readjusted to make grain production more specialized and efficient. Furthermore, price policies, to be formulated on the basis of the law of value, will be introduced to urge the grain producers to rearrange their production according to market demand.

Instant rice produced by a Shanghai fast-food factory only takes 10 minutes to prepare.

XU YIGEN



**vanced Technology.** In the last few years, while devoting great efforts to developing advanced, applicable production techniques, China also has imported advanced technology from abroad. It has attached particular importance to applying the achievements in scientific and technical research. Efforts already have been made to popularize the techniques for improving the quality of rice,

have established commodity grain production centres throughout the country, which have played an important role in ensuring the state a stable and increasing supply of commercial grain. Simultaneously, during the course of introducing the contract responsibility system, a number of households that specialize in grain production have emerged, helping to raise the productivity and



Shandong's Bangzi Opera Troupe performs "Cheng Yaojin Looks For a Wife," a new opera on a traditional theme.

WU JIADU

CHINESE TRADITIONAL OPERA

## Heritage and Development

*Chinese traditional opera today represents a culmination and distillation of more than 2,000 years of Chinese civilization. An elaborate and highly refined dramatic art, it combines elegant vocal styles, gorgeous costumes, lively story-lines, and exacting performance techniques requiring consummate skill, to express aspects of Chinese life, the pursuit of ideals and a sense of beauty. It is an integral part of Chinese popular cultural life.*

by Wei Liming

Chinese traditional opera is quite different from what most Western audiences think of as opera, and its special characteristics, such as the elaborate, stylized makeup and a stage virtually bare of stage sets, can often create an obstacle to understanding. However, at the 1985 London International Festival of Theatre, the Peking Opera *The Three Beatings of Tao Sanchun* was enthusiastically received.

The libretto, which was written by the famous Chinese playwright Wu Zuguang, tells the story of a strong-willed, independent woman and takes place in the 10th century AD during the Song Dynasty. Tao Sanchun, a melon-

seller, has been betrothed to a certain Zheng En. This Zheng, an oil-seller by trade, once suffered a beating by Tao for having stolen some melons from her melon field. Zheng later became a soldier, and now, after some years of meritorious service, has been promoted to be a general.

As the opera opens, Zheng is on his way home to take his bride; however, he suddenly gets cold feet upon remembering Tao's fierce temper, and decides not to go on. Instead, he sends servants to impersonate highway robbers and subdue Tao first. However, it is she who overcomes them. Tao then finds out Zheng's scheme and gives him another beating to teach him a lesson; only then does she

consent to marry him.

During the theatre festival, Beijing's Fourth Peking Opera Troupe gave 11 sold-out performances. Before each performance, a long queue would form of people waiting to buy returned tickets. The opening night performance received more than seven curtain calls.

Post-performance praise for the opera by critics and audience alike was universal. Lord Gowrie, the British Minister of Arts, in a letter to the Head of the Peking Opera Theatre, wrote of the opening night performance, "I thought last night's performance by the Fourth Peking Opera Troupe absolutely stunning and immensely enjoyable." A theatre critic whose

review appeared in the *Times* had this to say: "Critics seldom clap, preferring to type their appreciation, yet four critics in my vicinity applauded during this marvelous show."

A woman who worked in the theatre where the opera was performed described her appreciation in these words: "No periodical or novel could ever have been as effective as the performance of *The Three Beatings of Tao Sanchun* in helping me to better understand traditional Chinese culture and style." The *Guardian's* review praised the theatre festival for introducing the Fourth Peking Opera Troupe to London's theatre audience.

Chinese Peking opera companies have performed in the United States and many European

countries and have been warmly received by audiences everywhere. From this we can see that Chinese traditional opera appeals not only to its native audience, but also can cross language barriers to be enjoyed by people all over the world.

### Long-Standing Tradition

As far back as the 3rd century BC in China, simple plays performed by professional actors in costume were a part of court entertainment. These plays can be considered the beginnings of traditional opera. However, it was not until the 12th century during the Southern Song Dynasty that the first mature forms of opera appeared in Zhejiang



Mei Lanfang.

Province in southeast China. Opera flourished and reached its flowering point during the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368AD). The times produced a great number of librettists, of whose many hundreds of works there are now about 150 extant. (The opera *Hui Lan Ji*, which was translated in Europe in the 18th century as *The Circle of Chalk*, is just one of these.)

In the following 600 years, there was much interchange among the various types of local opera, and new forms of local opera were continually being created. By the first half of the 20th century, there were more than 260 types. For the most part, these types of local opera take their names from the place where their stylistic forms developed and where they are popular, e.g., Sichuan (*chuan*) opera and Shaoxing (*yue*) opera.

The main difference between opera types lies in their use of local dialects and unique melody patterns or tunes. Each type of opera possesses from dozens to several hundred traditional libretto-books which have been written and handed down over the ages. Included in these books are full-length operas, which are quite similar to the multiple-act European operas, and *zhezhi* (episode) operas which for the most part are excerpted highlights of longer operas and can be compared to one-act plays. The total number of

Renowned Peking opera actor Mei Lanfang (right) and his son Mei Baoju perform a scene from the Peking opera "The White Snake."



these operas amounts to about 50,000 titles.

The large number of individual opera types, each popular in its own district, and the ever-increasing amount of mutual borrowing among them naturally led to the emergence of artistic rivalries. It was inevitable that a certain type of local opera would be more skilful at assimilating attractive features of its rivals, and gradually widen its popular appeal and sphere of influence to the point that eventually, after years of artistic interchange and evolution, it would come to be accepted nationwide.

*Kunqu* opera, which began to flower in the 16th century in Jiangsu Province, is a case in point. The local variety of opera in Beijing, which in the first half of the 19th century took shape to become what we know today as Peking (*jing*) opera, gradually replaced *kunqu* opera and gained even greater influence throughout the nation, eventually becoming the representative form of Chinese opera today.

### Unique Art Form

Over a period of about a thousand years, Chinese traditional opera gradually evolved its own unique style and complete set of artistic conventions. Its five main special characteristics can be described as follows:

1. Chinese opera is a type of lyric opera in that it mainly takes the form of sung poetry or lyric verse. However, it differs from European opera, which is entirely sung from beginning to end, in that it uses both singing and dialogue to express thoughts and feelings and to develop the plot.

2. Chinese opera incorporates an especially large number of artistic elements. Included are literature (prose and poetry), acting (character role-playing), direction (artistic composition of the whole), music (vocal instrumental), fine arts (makeup, and

costumes), dance and acrobatics. This varied composition provides the artistic performance with unparalleled richness and variety.

3. The performance of Chinese opera has for a long time revolved exclusively around the skill of its performers. The performer must create his or her portrayal by combining and synthesizing the traditional standard qualities and behavior of the character-types with his or her own personality. Each traditional character-type has a separate code of behavior based upon its age, sex, person-

character will take on in a given opera. For example, the outstanding Chinese opera actor Mei Lanfang, who was famous for his female-impersonation roles, played only *dan* or *qing yi* (beautiful, chaste young or middle-aged women) roles throughout his life. However, for each different opera that he performed in, he had to create a new, individual personality for his character.

4. Chinese drama employs a whole set of stylized movements and symbolic gestures. For instance, the action of holding a



A scene from the opera "Wreaths at the Foot of the Mountain."

WU JIADU

ality, and identity and status in society. For example, there is the young male role called *xiao sheng*, the old man role called *lao sheng*, and the male fighting or military character role called *wu sheng*. The *jing* or *hua lian* ('painted face') role is a military character with a rough and forthright personality. The *chou* or *xiao hua lian* ('small painted face') role is a clown or comic male role.

Each performer, in most cases, concentrates on only one role throughout his or her career. On the basis of the study of that single character-type, the performing artist must further create the specific image that his or her

horsewhip and miming the movements of riding a horse represents a character riding down the road on a horse. Or, a young woman will mime the actions of opening a double-leafed door and step over an imaginary threshold in the absence of any sets. A character running several times around an empty stage represents a trip of several or even dozens of kilometres. Four or even eight soldiers standing on stage represent an army 10,000 strong.

Because of this abstraction and concentration of movement, Chinese opera is able to create on a tiny stage the atmosphere and setting of a real battlefield in ancient days. This is something



WU JIADI

Han Emperor Wudi as performed in the Puxian opera "Song of Autumn Wind."

that is rarely seen in other types of drama.

5. Unlike European opera, in which each opera has a composer who writes the score, Chinese opera's special characteristic is that each type of opera has its own basic set of traditional tunes which appear and reappear in different operas. The best performers are those who are able to add their own subtle interpretation and embellishment to these basic melodies to achieve an even more meticulous development of the character's emotions.

### Weed Through the Old To Bring Forth the New

Chinese traditional operas on the whole were created by petty intellectuals of low social status or anonymous members of theatrical families; therefore, the subject matter prominently reflects the thoughts, feelings, fantasies, and likes and dislikes of the common people. Such themes as patriotism, resistance to invaders, and expressions of national unity commonly appear. Other typical themes concern indictment of corrupt and avaricious officials, the redressing of injustices, and the exposé of many other aspects of feudal oppression. Operas that have as their central theme a frustrated

but eventually requited love between a virtuous young woman and a scholarly young man are so numerous as to be virtually uncountable. Of these love stories, the great majority express opposition to the feudal ethical code and champion freedom of marriage and equality of the sexes. In the most moving and elegant language, they uphold the value of sacrificing one's life for love and the belief that love can bring the dead back to life.

Chinese opera was developed over a long period of history by a feudal society, so it bears obvious signs of the influence of feudal thinking. Some operas propagate feudal superstition, uphold the concept of karma and retribution, or support a fatalistic attitude towards life. Other operas seem to praise feudal social conventions oppressive of women such as polygamy, chaste widowhood, and the submission of a woman to her father before marriage, to her husband after her marriage and to her son after her husband's death. Still others encourage blind obedience and filial piety, and present feudal rulers in a good light.

That is why after the liberation of mainland China it has been necessary to discriminate between the good and the bad in regard to the operas left over from the old society. The work of sorting through and editing these operas is what is referred to as "weeding through the old to bring forth the new." Actually, this is only one aspect of the general rehabilitation work that is being done with operas. At the same time, the writing of new librettos is being encouraged, either writing operas based upon historical events and personages or operas based on modern subject matter.

In December of last year, in order to encourage playwrights throughout the country to better combine the old traditional operatic art with modern themes, the Ministry of Culture sponsored the nationwide 1985 Theatrical Festival in Beijing where troupes

put on performances before fellow artists for the purpose of discussion and emulation. The official object of the festival was to review the achievement in the theatrical world over the past few years of its implementation of the simultaneous development of opera with modern themes, new opera on traditional themes, and revised traditional operas.

Although there were only 11 operas performed at this festival, these were selected after careful study to represent the cream of the nation's current works. The 11 operas included 13 different local opera types, which served to underscore the achievement attained by present-day theatrical workers in upholding the principle of "letting a hundred flowers blossom" and "weeding through the old to bring forth the new."

### Daring Breakthrough

The first effort of a young playwright named Zhou Changfu—a Puxian opera *Song of Autumn Wind*—was an unprecedented success at the national festival. Some critics even went so far as to compare the opera with Shakespeare's tragedy *Othello*.

*Song of Autumn Wind* tells the tragedy of a Chinese emperor two thousand years ago who, misled by the slanderous talk of traitorous ministers, kills his own son, the crown prince.

The Emperor Wudi of the Han Dynasty is often credited with having made substantial contributions to Chinese history. However, in the later years of his life, he became a pathologically superstitious and suspicious man. Some evil ministers then were able to take advantage of his obsessions to bring about the ruin of many loyal and goodhearted officials, and even caused the death of two royal princesses.

The crown prince, returning home after many a valorous exploit in the field, remonstrated with his father in hopes that he could obstruct the machinations

of these faithless ministers. The latter began to hatch a devious plot to ruin the crown prince and, in order to stir up trouble between father and son, they told the emperor that his son had once had an affair with his favorite concubine, Zhao Jieyu.

The emperor sent Zhao to investigate the crown prince, with the idea that he would test the both of them. However, Zhao lied in order to save her own skin and said that the crown prince was plotting to rebel, whereupon the emperor ordered him arrested and executed.

An official who had once been saved by the crown prince shielded him at first, but later, affected by the atmosphere of terror that surrounded the court and lured by the heavy reward placed on the prince's head, he betrayed him. By the time the emperor found out the truth of the matter, the official had already brought him the prince's head and demanded his reward. Of course, the emperor was filled with bitter grief and remorse, but in order to maintain the facade of imperial dignity, he had to reward the official as promised.

Speaking of his purpose in writing this opera, the author said, "Incidents such as this one have occurred many times in Chinese history. I hope this opera will lead people to ponder the lessons of history."

Puxian opera is the local variety of opera popular in the districts of Putian and Xianyou in China's southeastern province of Fujian. Puxian opera possesses more than 5,000 traditional titles in its repertoire. This variety of local opera, which had its birth some 700 years ago, is still very popular, even today.

Critics have said that the creation of the play indicates a breakthrough in the writing of new operas on traditional themes in China. No matter whether one considers the profound connotations of the subject matter or the richness of the character develop-

ment, the genre has reached new heights of maturity.

After liberation, Chinese librettists did turn out a great number of new operas on old themes, but due to the interference of "leftist" thinking, such operas frequently departed from actual historical circumstances and depicted characters with a distinctly modern political flavour. Moreover, characters were portrayed as black and white—either totally good or

tenor of the time and creating a set of characters with twisted, highly intricate personalities, the author has underscored the central theme of the work: the tragedy caused by various social conditions of the despotic feudal system.

The chairman of the Chinese Dramatists' Association and famous theatre critic Zhang Geng, in commenting on the work, said: "The central purpose of *Autumn Wind* is to point out lessons of



Pei Yanling in the role of Lin Chong in the opera "Rushing into the Night." VIA XI

totally bad. These operas have been described as "twisting history for political expediency."

The characters in *Autumn Wind*, whether they be the Han emperor, his beloved concubine, or the official who betrayed the crown prince, are all distinguished by the expression of complex personalities and richly developed inner selves. By depicting the frenzied

history, and in that way it radically departs from the utilitarian attitude in writing new operas of traditional themes in the past few years."

The author himself has said he considers the current dynamic atmosphere of freedom in Chinese artistic circles to have been one of the important factors enabling him to create the work. This is

exactly what another critic is pointing out when he says: "Autumn Wind is definitely a contemporary product. It could not have been written a dozen or so years ago."

### Qualified Successors

On stage the audience sees a man wearing ancient garb, agitatedly rushing along a road—it is Lin Chong, a famous hero of the Chinese classical novel *Outlaws of the Marsh*. Lin was once the captain of 800,000 imperial guardsmen, but now he has been forced by unjust circumstances to flee in disguise. Full of grief and righteous indignation, he sings out his bitter experience: Although he possesses extraordinary abilities, due to the evil schemes of a traitorous minister, he is bereft of a way to serve his country; therefore, he must leave his family and take to the road. He employs all kinds of dramatic and heroic movements to manifest his warrior's prowess. Finally, he disappears into the dark night, determined to join the ranks of the rebels.

The entire performance is spirited and impressive, and the character's ringing, forceful voice leaves the audience deeply moved. The performer's movements are clean, agile, attractive. The audience responds with a thundering applause, for this strong and vigorous warrior is being played by none other than a woman in her late 30's.

Pei Yanling was the performer who most attracted notice at this latest theatrical festival. The above-described *Kunqu* opera *Rushing into the Night*, in which she stars, was a great success in Beijing and won her a special prize for performance. Some people even proposed she be given the special designation "Performing Artist"—a title that is usually only conferred upon senior performers who have made an especially outstanding contribution to their art form.



XU XIANGJUN

Kunqu Opera Theatre performer Cui Jie leading students from Lixue Primary School in the learning of *kunqu* opera technique.

The vocal style of *Kunqu* opera is sweet and refined and its performance elegant. Pei Yanling started her rigorous basic training as a young child, and by age nine was already playing major roles on stage.

Pei once studied under the famous *Kunqu* opera performing artist Hou Yongkui, but she was not content merely to mechanically follow the performance styles set down by the older generation; she came up with her own innovations in vocal style and body movements. As she herself explained it, the performance of *Rushing into the Night* involves almost 40 minutes on stage; with just one person doing all the singing, reciting, acting and acrobatics, it is easy for the pace to get sluggish if the performance is not good. This is why she changed the old methods of performing, adding her own interpretation, "kneading in some things that have an air of modernity about them." Her teachers have expressed satisfaction with her work.

Critics have pointed out that Pei Yanling's brilliant performance has shown that there are qualified successors to carry on China's fine tradition of operatic art. An entire generation of artistically talented young people are rapidly developing and maturing. Some of their

performance skills, especially in the area of character portrayal, have already surpassed those of previous generations; such young people have already established or are in the process of establishing their own individual styles and starting schools of their own.

### Modern Subject Matter

In a small provincial town in eastern China, three playwrights found themselves extremely moved by a newly published novel. Because they themselves had grown up in the countryside and their wives and children were all living in the village, they felt a deep understanding of the influence of the village patriarchal clan system that was described in the novel. Their strong sympathetic response aroused a creative impulse, and the result was the writing of *The Story of the Strange Marriage*, a *Huaiju* opera that praises the simple and honest character of farmers and assails the patriarchal clan system.

The story takes place during the ten chaotic years of the "cultural revolution." A teacher who has been forced to flee far from his native place entrusts on his deathbed his 12-year-old daughter Qiuping to a 40-year-old peasant



named Dahan, with the intent that Qiuping would marry Dahan upon reaching maturity.

Eight years then go by, during which time Dahan has raised her Qiuping to adulthood as though she were his own child.

Qiuping, however, falls in love with a young man of her own age who raises fish using a new, scientific method. She is not oblivious, though, of her debt of gratitude to Dahan.

The village patriarchal clan elder takes it upon himself to intervene and tries every possible way to stand in the way of the young lovers, insisting that Qiuping should marry Dahan. Kind-hearted Dahan, however, suppresses his own desires and agrees to help Qiuping achieve her goal. His chivalrous behavior earns him the love of a widow and the opera ends with everyone happily united.

The opera is richly enlivened with scenes that depict aspects of everyday life in the countryside, e.g. eating, washing clothes and raising fish. Many scenes were so realistic that many in the rural audience were heard to exclaim: "That's just the way we do it too!"

One of the authors of the opera, He Shouguang, elaborates: "Although the farmers have some good, honest and simple traditions, at the same time they still have a lot of feudal ideas that have been carried over from the past. Often there is no way that they can express their feelings in as straightforward a manner as can some other people." He went on to say: "In this opera we are striving to promote a brand new morality — of course, we traditionally do consider repaying a debt of gratitude to be a virtue, but one must not sacrifice love either."

*Huaiju* opera is a relatively new type of local opera which is popular in Jiangsu Province north of the Changjiang River. Since its performance and vocal style very much resemble light opera, *Huaiju* opera lends itself to the incorporation of modern subject material. After liberation the *Huaiju* Opera

Company of Jiangsu Province staged more than a hundred modern operas of varying lengths which grew to be very popular in the countryside and mining areas. Every year the company devotes at least eight months to giving performances in those areas.

In speaking of the reasons for the success of the opera *Strange Marriage*, Xue Li, the director of the opera workroom at the Jiangsu Cultural Bureau said: "Over a long period of time in the past, the writing of literature and librettos was reduced to generalities, which made it impossible to depict characters well. This libretto breaks away from the mould and vividly portrays people and their inner worlds, that is why it has been so successful."

Traditional opera that makes use of modern subject matter has always been encouraged by the government. During the period from 1981 to 1984, the Ministry of Culture sponsored two joint performances of operas on modern subjects. One such opera that particularly attracted attention was *Wreathes at the Foot of the Mountain* which won first prize at the latest festival. The opera praises the sacrificial spirit of soldiers who lay down their lives for their country.

Theatre critic Xiao Jia has pointed out that a great number of recently appeared operas on modern subjects have drawn on the vocal style and instrumental arrangements of other artistic forms. He goes on to say that the current striving by Chinese dramatists for change, reform and excellence in meeting the requirements of today's theatre audience is most commendable.

### Popularization

Every Saturday at Beijing's Lixue Primary School one can see a group of seven- to eight-year-olds practising singing Peking opera tunes. Some of the girls are costumed as young maidens in the classical style; some of the boys are dressed up as martial heroes.

This has come about through the arrangements of the Beijing Association for the Promotion of Peking Opera and *Kunqu* Opera, which started the programme as part of its efforts to popularize opera with the masses.

Because in recent years other artistic media such as movies, television, and pop music have grown popular, Peking opera and certain other local operas have suffered a sudden drop in audience—a problem that has greatly aroused the concern of responsible dramatists. They feel that if Peking opera and other forms of traditional opera are to continue to flourish or even survive, not only do the standards of performance and libretto-writing have to be raised, but a new creative energy must be fostered and new opera fans gained.

An encouraging sign that traditional opera is attracting new faces has been the recent establishment of Peking opera and *kunqu* clubs at several Beijing universities and middle schools. And in October of last year, Beijing put on the first Festival to Promote Peking Opera and *Kunqu*. Of the more than 20 different operas performed, several were excellent traditional operas which had not been seen on stage for many years.

Speaking of traditional opera's future, critic Xiao Jia said that Chinese opera is unique in the world, being one of the few dramatic art forms that has been preserved since antiquity; such a precious cultural heritage will absolutely not be allowed to die out.

Furthermore, Xiao added, in China there are large numbers of people working in opera, and so, with the correct policies and guidance of the Party, there is hope that this precious historical and cultural legacy can develop to be even more in tune with the demands of modern society. "Of course," he said, "we must work hard to bear this burden of historical responsibility."

## Recontracting Mars Building Boom

**"JINGJI RIBAO"**

(Economic Daily)

**W**ith the introduction of reforms to China's building industry, barriers between departments and regions have been broken and competition on the building market has become fiercer. At the same time, however, the emerging problem of recontracting projects out to other units has proven to be increasingly serious.

For instance, the construction of a boiler room and a distributor room for a unit in Anhui Province costs a total of 740,000 yuan, including the cost of equipment installation. The project was first

contracted to a fake "company," which was composed of only nine people. As the "company" could in no way undertake the actual construction, it recontracted the project to a rural construction team, which then again contracted the equipment installation to two installation teams of a Hefei construction company. The installation teams again entrusted the distributor project to a power installation team at a cost of 100,000 yuan.

The emergence of the problem can be mainly attributed to the incorrect management approach used by some business leaders who care about nothing other than profit. First, they acquire the projects for hefty fees and then recontract the projects out at

lower costs, thus profiting from the practice.

The practice has many drawbacks. First, it adds opportunities for unqualified construction teams and brings a certain amount of confusion to the management of construction projects. Second, it is impossible to ensure the quality of recontracted projects. Third, because time is wasted haggling over prices, completion of these projects on schedule also cannot be guaranteed. Fourth, fees on a recontracted project are often distributed in an irrational manner.

These drawbacks should arouse the attention of the departments in charge of construction. At the same time, legal means should be employed to prevent recontracting from becoming more frequent. If the recontracted projects have quality problems, the original contractors should be held responsible for the ensuing legal and economic repercussions.

## Behind Every Great Coach...

**"SHAANXI RIBAO"**

(Shaanxi Daily)

**A**fter Yuan Weimin, former head coach of China's world champion women's volleyball team, was promoted to the position of vice-minister of the State Physical Culture and Sports Commission, the search for a successor began. All eyes turned to Yuan's assistant, Deng Ruozeng. When asked if he wanted the job, however, Deng said he did not. His family, he said, needed him more.

Married in 1967, Deng and his wife Cai Xiqin share an enthusiasm for volleyball. Though their life is a happy one, as a family they have had their share of travail,

making the household burden an unusually heavy one. Their only child was diagnosed as an epileptic when he was three years old, and Deng's mother-in-law, who also had not been well, was hospitalized on four occasions in one year. In the midst of these difficulties, though Deng tried his best to be a good father, husband and son-in-law, the team's heavy training schedule would not allow him to contribute as much to the family as he would have liked. For quite a few years, Deng did not have one chance to spend a Spring Festival's eve with his family. Under such circumstances, all the household duties and responsibilities fell upon Cai's shoulders. "Without your help," Cai once

told Deng, "I believe I may collapse."

When the opening for a new head coach was announced, Cai asked Deng whether he was considering the job. "No," Deng answered. "I think it best that someone younger get the position." With this, the husband and wife seemed to have reached an agreement. The glory of the Chinese nation and the interest of the state, however, was a powerful presence in Deng. Though he did not say so, his desire to be head coach became increasingly fervent with each passing day. Later, Deng realized he had to find a way to ask his wife to take responsibility for the family for a few more years so that he could accept the post. To his surprise, however, before he could do so, Cai came to him and said, "I've thought a lot these days. An

incompetent coach would mean disaster for the team. I am prepared to take on all the household chores, even if I collapse. My sacrifice cannot compare with the needs of the

state." With that declaration, Deng was able to fulfil his obligations to the team, whose achievements from then on can, at least in part, be attributed to Deng's wife—Cai.

below zero. Vegetables thus preserved retain their freshness and nutritional value for longer periods.

Daqing, which has a population of 600,000, the major part of which are oil workers, has built a large cold storage facility with a total floor space of 47,000 square metres, enough to store 40,000 tons of fresh vegetables, fruit, meat, fish and eggs at the same time. When the frozen vegetables and fruits are brought to the market in winter, they will certainly contribute to alleviating the vegetable shortage.

Compared with other methods, quick freezing has some advantages. First, it can make vegetables more profitable. For instance, the cost (including depreciation charge) for preserving and processing each kilogramme of cucumbers, tomatoes, green beans, eggplants, etc. is 0.48 yuan. When sold on the market in November, the price of such commodities will be 1 yuan. In 1984, a total of 1,000 tons of quick-frozen vegetables were sold in Daqing, earning a profit of 370,000 yuan. Second, vegetables also can be stored for longer periods with this method. The experience of Harbin and Daqing has shown that nine vegetables, including cucumbers, tomatoes, green beans, garlic bolts and summer squash, can be stored for several months under a temperature of 18 degrees centigrade below zero. Third, the method results in less waste.

At present, most people keep vegetables in their cellars during the winter. Part of the shortage in vegetable supply can be attributed to inadequate transportation from the south. Therefore, energetically applying the quick-freeze method has become the answer to the problem. While ensuring the supply of vegetables during the slack seasons, the quick-freeze method can also greatly reduce the losses in the peak seasons.

## Society Served by Power of Pen

### "RENMIN RIBAO"

(People's Daily)

**C**riticism and self-criticism in the press plays a positive role in improving the Party's work style and social behaviour as a whole.

At present, the Party's style and social behaviour have begun to improve. Despite all this, however, many problems remain, for corruption does continue to exist within the Party and in society. Therefore, it is necessary for the press to stick to criticism, while commending people for doing well.

Press criticism can provide an unrivalled deterrent to unhealthy tendencies. Some wrongdoers fear nothing so much as they do being publicly criticized in the media because press criticism brings them both the penalty of the public opinion and official censure. Publicity makes it difficult for the guilty to shield their misdeeds.

A handful of people dislike

press criticism and find fault with critics even when it is justified. They seize upon the most minor errors as an indictment against criticism as a whole. Their badgering can sometimes result in the critic himself being punished. This attitude is wrong. Press criticism should be considered as a constructive, rather than destructive process.

To criticize someone in the press is a very serious matter. In order to make such a criticism worthwhile, careful investigation and checking must be made prior to publication. The power of criticism lies in the truth. Therefore, those criticized should also be given the right to respond and defend themselves. In general, criticism should aim to save rather than destroy people who have made mistakes.

The press also shoulders the responsibility of reporting how the exposed cases are handled and how the criticized respond. In other words, press criticism should be a positive process and not an end in itself.

## Tackling Vegetable Shortage

### "GUANGMING RIBAO"

(Guangming Daily)

**T**o overcome their vegetable shortage during off seasons in 1982, Daqing and Harbin in northeastern China's Heilongjiang Province began experimenting with quick freezing vegetables.

Practice in the last three years has proved the quick-freeze method to be an effective way to solve the problem of vegetable supply for cities in northern China.

The quick-freeze method involves placing fresh vegetables at a temperature of 38 degrees centigrade below zero and storing them at a temperature of 18 degrees

## Agricultural Exports Expand

**D**uring the Seventh Five-Year Plan period (1986-90), China will use foreign capital totalling US\$1.2 billion for the development of its agriculture, animal husbandry and fishery, a 50 percent increase over the period of the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1981-85). According to He Kang, minister of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fishery, by 1990, China's exports of primary farm and sideline products are expected to reach US\$7.7 billion, increasing at an average rate of 12 percent a year.

Minister He said China is one of the largest agricultural nations in the world, and its export volume of farm and sideline products occupies an important position in the country's foreign trade. During the Seventh Five-Year Plan period, he said, it is necessary to strengthen co-operation with other countries and make full use

of foreign capital. Minister He said foreign capital will be used largely for the following purposes:

- Construction of commodity export centres will be stepped up. These centres will be built first in China's coastal areas and then in the interior. China intends to technically transform its production centres and import necessary technologies to improve the quality of its products. A number of production centres that will turn out quality farm and sideline products are also expected to be built and the exports of primary and processed farm and sideline products will be expanded.

- Support will be given to township enterprises that earn more foreign currency for the state. More flexible policies for the international market than for domestic sales will be adopted in prices, taxes, the portion of foreign currency to be retained by

the enterprises, the import of fine varieties and advanced technology and equipment.

- The development of famous, special, quality and rare products will be accelerated.

## Nichimen Promotes Trade With China

**T**he Nichimen Corp., one of Japan's nine largest commercial firms, signed trade contracts worth US\$700 million with China in 1985, marking a 15 percent increase in contract value over the previous year's.

Nichimen ranks first among other Japanese commercial firms in its import volume of kerosene for aircraft and cotton fibre from China. The corporation's imports of Chinese goods also include crude oil, garments, chemical products, soybeans, fodder, ducks, mineral products and timber. Its exports to China include complete sets of equipment, machinery, electrical appliances, iron and steel.

Since beginning trade relations with China in 1953, Nichimen has always supported developing China's export products. Even in 1985, the year China suffered a huge trade deficit with Japan, Nichimen maintained a balanced trade of imports and exports with China.

Five years ago, the Nichimen Corp. signed its first compensation trade agreement with China and provided the Honghe Farm in Heilongjiang Province with farm machinery in return for soybeans.

Nichimen has also signed contracts in the form of compensation trade and the import of technology. These contracts involved a cotton mill in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, a garment processing project in Shanghai, a bast fibre mill in Dalian and a washing machine production line in Beijing.

**Workers of the Dongchang Shuttlecocks Factory in Jurong County, Jiangsu Province, use feather from local geese and ducks for their badminton shuttlecocks, which are slated for export.**



The Nichimen Corp., the Standard Chartered Bank from Great Britain and China also pooled funds in November 1985 for the establishment of the North China International Leasing Co. Ltd., so as to contribute to the economic construction in northeast China and Inner Mongolia.

By the end of 1985, the Nichimen Corp. had set up seven offices in China. Of these offices, the one in Urumqi is the city's only official foreign commercial organization.

Business talks on the establishment of joint ventures are being held between representatives of the Nichimen Corp. and China. In order to strengthen its trade contacts with China, Nichimen will appoint a chief representative in charge of the business arrangements in China and Hongkong this year.

## Yantai Zone Making Strides

**T**he Yadong Standard Parts Co. Ltd., the first joint venture involving Chinese and foreign investment in the Yantai Economic and Technological Development Zone, began operation on December 20, 1985. The Yadong company is also the first joint venture in operation in one of the 11 economic and technological development zones set up by China's recently opened 14 coastal cities.

Located on the shore of Zhifu Bay in the western part of Yantai and across the river from the former industrial district, the Yantai development zone, which has a flat terrain and convenient transport facilities, started construction on March 20, 1985. At present, infrastructure construction in an area of one square kilometre has been completed, and traffic, water, electricity and central heating supply and

telephone service have been made available. Of the 10 buildings covering a total area of 36,815 square metres which have started construction, 11,589 square metres of floor space have been completed. The improvement of the investment environment in the zone has created conditions for Chinese-foreign joint ventures to start business. Officials from the Yantai zone have signed 28 letters of intent and agreements, and four contracts with foreign investors for the operation of such ventures.

The Yadong Standard Parts Co. Ltd., with a total investment of US\$1 million (not including the expenses used for purchasing equipment in the country and for construction purposes), is a joint venture funded by the Yantai Standard Parts Factory, the state-owned Changchun Machinery Plant under the Ministry of Aeronautics Industry, the Shenzhen Aviation Standard Parts Co. Ltd. and the Hongkong Kaidi Industrial Co. Ltd. The venture will manufacture fittings for expensive household electrical appliances such as TV sets and refrigerators. Its annual output will reach 1,000 tons, and 65 to 80 percent of its products will be exported. It is expected that all the investment will be recouped in three years.

by Guest Correspondent Wang Lanting

## Yunnan to Offer Air Service

**B**y mid-January 1986, the first of the two Boeing 737-300 aircraft purchased by China was put into domestic and international service by the Yunnan Airline, a newly established aviation company.

The Boeing 737-300, purchased by Yunnan Province from the Boeing Co. of the United States, is equipped with an advanced

CFM56-3 engine and a computerized flight monitor system. The plane also consumes less fuel compared to the former short and medium-range jetliners.

William Carlyon, regional director of commercial contracts of the Boeing Commercial Airplane Co., who accompanied the plane to Yunnan, said at the hand-over ceremony that Boeing will give unqualified support to Yunnan Airline for the successful operation of its new aircraft.

Sharing borders with Burma, Laos and Viet Nam, Yunnan Province is renowned for its beautiful landscape and unique local customs. Yunnan officials said the operation of the new aircraft is expected to contribute greatly to the growth of Yunnan's tourism.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

- A Chinese crew recently completed the construction of Cape Verde's Parliamentary Hall, which covers an area of 12,626 square metres.

Government and other officials of the Republic of Cape Verde spoke highly of China's assistance in building the project.

- The hand-over ceremony of the Somali Political Science Institute, which covers an area of 17,000 square metres and was built by China, was held in Somalia not long ago. Speaking at the ceremony, Somali President Mohamed Siad Barre thanked China both for building the institute and also for training construction technicians.

- The Chinese electrical appliance industry earned US\$400 million from export sales during the period of the Sixth Five-Year Plan (1981-85). China now exports products such as electric fans, irons, cookers, lamps, refrigerators and washing machines, many of which were once import items.

## China Fights Frozen Ground

The recently completed resurfacing of sections of the Qinghai-Tibet Highway—the world's highest highway—is a major victory in China's fight against frozen ground, with which nearly 20 percent of China's land is covered.

Polypropylene was used to resurface parts of 560-km section of the highway, which is built on frozen ground as thick as 40 to 120 metres.

Polypropylene, never before used over such a large area, was used in a bid to keep the frozen ground from thawing and warping highway surface structures, said scientists at the Lanzhou Institute of Glaciology and Cryopedology under the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The section, which took eight years and 770 million yuan to resurface, is part of the 1,937-km highway from Xining, the capital of Qinghai Province, to Lhasa, the

Tibetan capital. The highway handles 80 percent of the goods from inland provinces to the "roof of the world."

When resurfacing began in 1974, parts of the highway were laid with asphalt. Because of the altitude, the long hours of direct sunlight, however, resulted in the black asphalt surface absorbing heat and thawing the frozen soil beneath. The thaw caused serious roadbed deformities and damage to bridges, culverts and roadside buildings.

At the suggestion of the institute, the roadbed was raised about one metre and laid with a foundation of stone, lime and soil and then resurfaced with polypropylene in areas with large amounts of underground water. Ditches were also dug along the road to drain off excess water.

China began its studies in frozen earth in the 1950s when scientists solved the technical problems associated with building railways in frozen areas in northeast China. In the 1960s frozen earth studies also contributed to the development of Daqing, one of China's largest oilfields. China now has over 30 institutes specializing in studies of frozen earth.

A test centre for frozen ground studies, built in the 1970s at 4,700 metres above sea level in the Kunlun Mountains, has conducted a series of tests on how temperatures and other factors affect roadbeds and culverts. The research has helped in the construction of highways, house and coal, copper and asbestos mines and in laying oil pipes on the plateau.

Other achievements of the

## Analysing China's Ancient Cliff Art

Last November, a team of Chinese archeology specialists spent 15 days investigating the ancient cliff paintings along the Zuojiang River in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in southern China.

The scientists said the paintings, which date from 475 BC to 256 AD, are of particular importance because of their enormous size, elaborate patterns and dangerous location on the *karst* cliffs along the 200-km river. The paintings can be divided into 287 categories among the 183 known locations.

The dark red paint, used for the illustrations, is, according to scientists, an iron ore mixture. Although the paintings have faded from exposure to the elements over the ages, most are still discernible. The paintings on the cliffs are of a great variety and

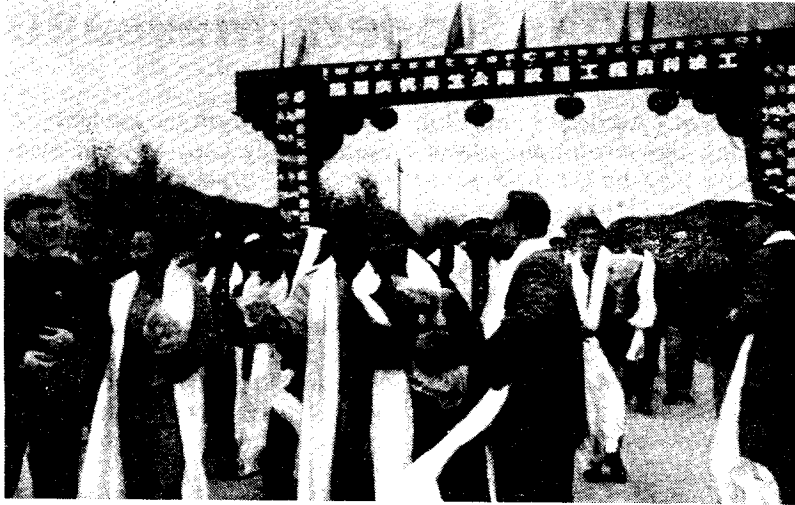
range from full front or profile portraits, some of which are up to two metres high, to drawings of animals and of the stars. The researchers were surprised to find two similar Chinese characters—one red, one white, accompanying some of the paintings.

About 80 percent of the paintings are found on cliffs located at bends in the river. Some of the paintings are found at the river's edge, almost touching the water. Others are higher, 20-40m, or even 120m above the banks. Among the most magnificent paintings found in the recent study were those along the Huashan Mountain cliffs in Ningming County. One of the paintings there, now thought to be China's largest, measured an extraordinary 221 metres long and more than 30 metres wide, and contained more than 1,800 recognizable illustrations.

The survey, which lasted from November 10 to 24, is expected to

contribute to the body of knowledge on China's ancient residents, adding valuable information on the period of drawings, painters' nationalities, and reasons for painting them. After careful examination, the team concluded that these drawings are the cultural and religious heritage of the Zhuang nationality.

After comparing the Zuojiang paintings with those found in Hongkong, Taiwan, Fujian, Yunnan, Sichuan, Inner Mongolia and other parts of China, artists on the team also discovered most of the paintings from northern China focus on hunting, grazing, living, dancing and are usually carved, rather than painted. Those along Guangxi's Zuojiang River, however, deal mainly with religious activities and are found painted on cliffs. The Hongkong and Fujian paintings, however, combine the two, for they are mostly carved illustrations with religious or ceremonial themes like those



Officials in Lhasa celebrating the completion of the renovation of the Qinghai-Tibet Highway on August 26, 1985.

institute include the investigation of the damage caused by frozen earth in the Hinggan Mountains in northeast China, and the study of permafrost zones in the Tianshan Mountains in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, through

which the 476.5-km Southern Xinjiang Railway passes. Scientists have found rich resources of drinking water in frozen ground, to the great benefit of the construction work in China's arid west and northwest.

found in Guangxi.

The November research unveiled additional mysteries of China's cliff paintings and helped researchers further define their similarities and differences. According to some specialists, the ancient cliff paintings provide a wealth of information about the exploitative history of China's southern frontier and the artistic development of various nationalities.

## Rare Macaque Found in Tibet

Groups of macaques, a rare wild animal, were recently discovered in the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. The discovery was made in the Qinghai Forest at 3,100-4,000 metres above sea level by a survey team under the Wild Animal Resource Administration of Qinghai Province.

Witnesses said they discovered

JANUARY 20, 1986

at least 12 groups of macaques, with about 100 in each group. The macaque, which belongs to the primate family, are nimble and quick. When the research team tried to capture some of the young macaques, the older macaques tried to ward them off with stones.

The macaque lives in mountains, feeds on fruits and wild plants and can store abundant supplies of food in the "bags"

inside their cheeks. Macaques were first discovered in the Qinling Mountains in Shaanxi Province.

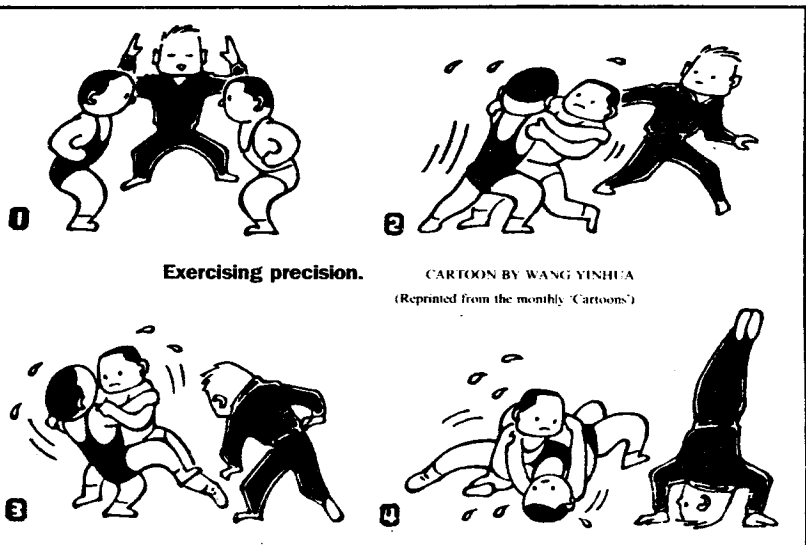
## Reavers Back From the Brink

Once on the verge of extinction, beavers, a rare wild animal, now number more than 800 due to the government's efforts to protect and restore its natural habitat.

A mammal that lives both on land and in the water, beavers are the largest member of the rodent family, and have bordered on extinction for some time because of their tasty meat and high-quality fur. A beaver's secretion is also both a precious spice and stimulant used in traditional Chinese medicine and bears great scientific and economic value.

In the 1960s there were still more than 1,000 beavers along the Altay Mountains and the Qinghe River in China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Because of hunting and damage to the environment, however, in 1980, the area's total number of beavers had been sliced to about 40.

To save this rare animal, in 1980 the Xinjiang regional government established several nature preserves for beavers and encouraged the local farmers and herdsmen to grow plants and grass so as to restore the beaver's preferred environment.



Exercising precision.

CARTOON BY WANG YINSHUA  
(Reprinted from the monthly 'Cartoons')

## Liu Shaoqi's Works Bear Modern Message

The second volume of the two-volume *Selected Works of Liu Shaoqi* was recently published in Chinese.

Liu Shaoqi (1898-1969), noted theorist and statesman, was chairman of the People's Republic and vice-chairman of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee in the 1950s and 1960s. Liu, who was roundly attacked on framed-up charges during the "cultural revolution," died of natural causes in 1969 at the age of 71 years.

In the late 1940s, Anna Louise Strong, an American journalist famous for her contacts with China during its revolution, described Liu as one of the most creative "theorists of the international communist movement." Strong particularly lauded Liu for his insistence that Asia's new socialist state should "allow different economic and cultural factors to coexist."

This second volume contains 38 articles Liu wrote between 1949, the year of the founding of New China, and 1965, the year before the "cultural revolution" was launched. Of these articles, 25 are published here for the first time. All in this collection reflect Liu's ideological concerns as well as his moral standards.

As a senior aide to Mao Zedong in his work in the Party Central Committee after liberation, Liu Shaoqi had many creative ideas as to how socialist economic construction should be carried out. *The Industrialization of the State and the Improvement of the People's Living Standards*, the first article in the volume, was written in 1950. In this article Liu maintains that improving the people's material life and raising their cultural level should be the basic task of the Chinese Communist Party and the people's

government. According to Liu, following the revolution, it was necessary that the nation concentrate on developing a modern economy, never wavering in its devotion, for it is only in this way that the people's material and cultural well-being would improve. Liu also stresses that, in developing China's economy, agriculture and light industry should take precedence over heavy industry, although light industry can be greatly improved and agriculture mechanized on the basis of the development of heavy industry.

In *Report at the First National Conference of Representatives of Co-op Workers*, written in 1950, *On Questions Concerning Co-operatives*, written in 1951, and in other works, Liu Shaoqi points out that while the socialist economy should be planned, it should also be diversified and flexible. It is necessary to make use of the free market, Liu says in these pieces, and to apply the law of value, grant local authorities and enterprises more decision-making power and allow individuals to conduct certain kinds of economic activities. Liu Shaoqi paid great attention to the study of circulation of commodities in socialist construction and proposed circulating as commodities many kinds of goods which were considered means of production. Liu said it was also necessary to build a new trade network in order to spur the commodity economy onward. The peasants should be organized to run co-operatives or to open private businesses with their own funds, Liu said, while state-owned trade centres should provide needed services in the rural areas. Liu catalogued a fairly complete set of theories, principles and measures for developing China's co-operatives. His call for

a departure from the tendency of mechanically copying the Soviet economic structure is still of significance today.

In order to organize production and manage the economy according to the laws governing economic activities, Liu proposed that the socialist industrial structure be reorganized on the basis of trust companies. That proposal is also still considered as relevant to our times.

From 1949 to 1966 the Chinese Communist Party made great progress in leading the people in building a socialist economy. Because of its "leftist" leanings during this period however, the Party also suffered many setbacks. China did not begin to shift its emphasis to economic construction until after the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party held in 1978, during which the current principles and policies were adopted. Liu's works written since the 1950s have been most useful since the shift was announced.

In 1951 Liu wrote *The Contradictions Within State-Owned Factories and the Fundamental Tasks of the Trade Unions*, based on his investigations of some state-owned factories. In this article Liu details his concepts on the contradictions among the people, members of the working class included. He says in this piece that it is necessary to distinguish two sets of contradictions; one is between "ourselves and the enemy," and the other is among the people. Liu then goes on to explain how one should handle the contradictions within the working class. Following the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts and the



capitalist industries and commerce in 1957, Mao Zedong published his article *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People* which makes the theory more systematic.

In the mid-1950s Liu Shaoqi summed up the lesson of the international communist movement and studied the contradictions in Chinese society. Following his research he arrived at two understandings. First, after the establishment of socialist ownership, problems of distribution among the people became readily visible. Because of this it was necessary to address the relation-

*Among the People*, written in 1957, the contradictions among the people were mainly contradictions between the people and their leaders, or the bureaucracy. In acknowledging this, Liu went on to list some of the leaders' more common faults in dealing with the contradictions among the people. Some cadres, he said, placed themselves above the people, and could discern only the mistakes of others and not their own. These officials also tried to wield their power rather than their reason over people and tended to handle contradictions among the people as they might contradictions

allowed to have their own personalities and styles but they should welcome and respect readers' criticisms.

In his *Legislative Work and Dealing With Contradictions Among the People*, written in 1962, Liu said industrialization could not be realized without democratization. Under the people's democratic dictatorship, all state organs—public security bureaus, procuratorates and courts—should abide by the law and protect the people. At the same time, these bodies also should learn to effectively deal with problems among the people. In 1962 Liu analysed the nation's legal work and said its main mistakes had been trying to deal with contradictions among the people as though they were between "ourselves and the enemy."



Liu Shaoqi visiting with college students in 1960.

ship between the nation's short- and long-term interests and between those of society as a whole and those of its component parts, with due consideration given to the interests of the state, the collective and the individual. The problem of distribution calls for constant attention. As Liu recognized, while ensuring the development of society's productivity, it is necessary to make frequent adjustments in matters of distribution.

Secondly, Liu says in this essay *How to Handle Contradictions*

between themselves and the enemy. Liu says officials such as these were incapable of self-criticism and were largely distrusted by the masses.

In *On Writers' Accomplishments and Other Problems*, written in 1956, Liu said Party and government leaders should adopt a consultative and democratic attitude when they expressed their opinions on literary works. They should be neither oversimplistic nor should they try to crudely intervene in the writers' works. Writers, Liu says, should be

**T**his mistake became deadly serious during the "cultural revolution" when it caused a historic tragedy. Even Liu Shaoqi, then chairman of the People's Republic, was not spared. The lesson was a bloody one.

To sum up, the second volume of Liu Shaoqi's selected works deals with a series of questions, ranging from socialist construction and the importance of diversification, flexibility and consistency of the planned economy, to legal work, effective leadership supervision and educational reforms. His probing into these problems, however, was obstructed by what was known as political campaigns, and some of his ideas were criticized during the "cultural revolution." Today, all these issues are being discussed again and all-round reforms are being carried out. All the articles in this volume are valuable for their input and contributions on how China can modernize in a Chinese way.

by Zhou Shu

## Going for the Gold by the Year 2000

**A** group of sports experts predicted in a recent meeting sponsored by the State Physical Culture and Sports Commission, that China would become a sports power by the year 2000. About 500 million Chinese, almost half its population, the experts said, will by that time be engaging in sports activities on a regular basis.

After reviewing China's athletic foundation and the characteristics of its development, the effects of China's rapid economic and social progress and the reform on the economic structure, and by analysing the athletic experiences of the developed countries, the experts concluded that China's sports development would begin to peak by the year 2000. Accounting for that forecast, they said, was the continued improvement of Chinese people's health. From 1980 to the year 2000, they said, the height of China's teenagers in the urban areas is expected to increase on the average by 2-4 cm. Their weight will at the same time go up 1-2 kg, chest width will increase 2-3 cm and their lung capacity will improve by 175-250 ml.

The panel also said that by the year 2000, schools from junior middle schools upward will, according to state regulation, conduct student hygiene classes and establish or improve after-class sports activities. These regulations also stipulate that primary and high school students take at least one hour of sports daily and that at least 90 percent of the students should achieve the level of athleticism set by the state.

Between 1986 and the year 2000, the experts said, the popularity of various sports will spread across the country. The development of entertainment sports, tourism sports and thera-

peutic sports are all expected to gain momentum. In urban areas, sports activities will not only be organized by schools, factories or army units, but also among residential areas and families. The plan also mandates that athletic instruction centres be established in rural areas and staffed with 10-20 coaches for each, and that traditional minority sports be recorded and refined. Sports for the elderly and the handicapped are also expected to be expanded and improved.

At the 25th Olympic Games in 1992, the experts estimated China would place between fourth and sixth in terms of number of medals. At the 27th Olympics in the year 2000, they predicted, China would move to the place between third and fifth, and that by then, China will also have performed admirably in the winter Olympics.

Also according to the sports experts, the number of China's sports scientists will go up from its current number of 600 to 2,000 by 1990 and to 4,000 by the year 2000. They also said that by the year 2000, China's sports science and technology would in general reach the level held by the sports developed countries in the 1980s, and that in some respects the research results would match their contemporary levels.

Further solidifying China's sports base, a number of modern sports facilities will be constructed in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and other major cities. When conditions allow, big stadiums to host major international competitions will also be built.

It is also expected that by the year 2000, the coverage of sports by the media and in art and literature will also improve.

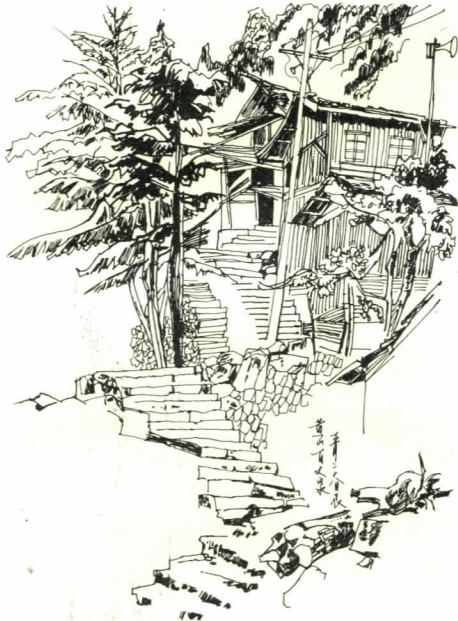
To reach the goals mentioned

above, the experts suggested the state relax its overconcentrated control over sports and that non-government sponsored sports activities be advocated. They also recommended that knowledge on sports be popularized and that a systematic health-check programme be launched with the aim of discovering how best to improve the overall health of the population. Strategically speaking, the search for medals both in Olympic and Asian Games should also be put high on the agenda, and efforts be spent on making Chinese martial arts part of the Olympic programme. The experts also recommended that those athletes, coaches and sports scientists who have made outstanding achievements should be awarded for their efforts, that titles be given them for their meritorious conduct, that sports stadiums should be opened to everyone and that laws on sports should also be drawn up.



Shi Hengmo, born in Yangquan, Shanxi Province, now works as an artist for the Beijing Publishing House. Shi sketched these pieces during a trip to Huangshan Mountain in Anhui Province.

A Mountain Family.



A Spring.



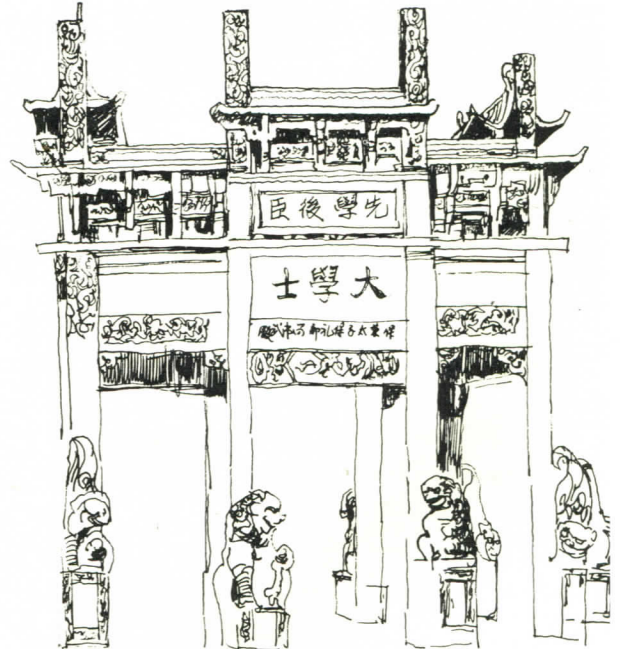
A Decorated Archway.



Beautiful View.

## ART PAGE

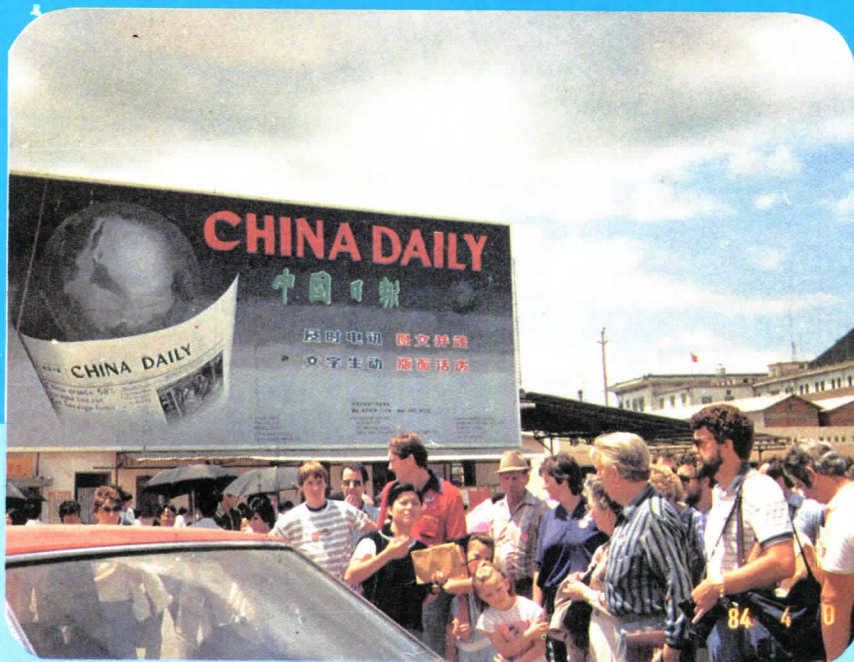
### Sketches by Shi Hengmo



五月廿五日  
 淑秋  
 画

# CHINA DAILY 中國日報

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