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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK

China Elects New Leaders

■ The First Session of the Seventh NPC elected Yang Shangkun as PRC president and Li Peng as premier of the State Council. Wan Li was elected chairman of the Seventh NPC Standing Committee and Deng Xiaoping chairman of the Central Military Commission (p. 5).

The Seventh CPPCC National Committee ended its first session with the election of Li Xiannian as chairman and the approval of a political resolution (p. 6).

For profiles of the leaders, see centrefold.

CPPCC Members on State Affairs

■ At the First Session of the Seventh CPPCC National Committee, many CPPCC members aired their views on state affairs and raised criticisms about such problems as pricing, education and social conduct—subjects of much concern to the public (p. 17).

NPC—A Platform for More Than One Voice

■ The first sessions of the Seventh NPC and the Seventh CPPCC National Committee evidenced an increasing democracy in the open expression of opinions, suggestions and criticisms about the government's work by deputies, elections with more candidates than posts, and the wider press coverage with conference participation by Chinese and foreign reporters (p. 4).

Tibetan Leaders Face the Press

■ Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme and Bainqen Erdini Qoigyi Gyaincain, Tibetan leaders and deputies to the Seventh NPC, discussed the recent unrest in Tibet and answered questions posed by Chinese and foreign reporters (p. 14).

Fujian Attracts Taiwan Investment

■ With the improvement in Fujian's investment climate, many Taiwan business people are keen to invest in the province. Though considered as domestic capital, investments by Taiwan businessmen will enjoy more preferential terms than foreign investments (p. 20).

COVER: Newly elected PRC President Yang Shangkun (right) and NPC Standing Committee Chairman Wan Li.
Liu Jianguo

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NPC No Longer a Platform of One Voice

by Zhou Minyi

Seldom before, if ever, has a democratic atmosphere been so pervasive as at the First Session of the Seventh National People's Congress recently held in Beijing. Deputies vied to take the floor, voicing their opinions of nominees to the seven special committees under the National People's Congress. The result has been that few nominees, if any, take up their responsibilities with unanimous consensus. The nominees to the Education, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee, for example, were passed with eight votes against and 69 abstentions, a break with the traditional "raising of the hand" of past sessions.

The session has struck many people with some of its innovations—the attendance of more non-Party deputies and the multi-candidate election, to name just two. Another hot issue is the discussion of the government work report. Deputies offered their opinions and suggestions and aired their criticisms about the meagre allocations for education, the price hikes and bureaucracy.

Discussing the restructuring of the State Council, deputies disagreed about the proposed merger of the Ministry of Railways, the Ministry of Communications and the Civil Aviation Administration of China into a new Ministry of Transport. The State Council responded by withdrawing the original proposal and agreeing to keep the three government departments separate.

Drafts for an Enterprise Law have been discussed and modified

for years before being tabled for discussion and approval at the recent session. The Sixth NPC Standing Committee deliberated on many occasions before the draft was released in January for nationwide discussions. More than 1,800 opinions and suggestions calling for modifications were collected. In the light of these opinions, the Sixth NPC Standing Committee once again amended the draft before forwarding it to the recent session for final approval.

A similar atmosphere prevailed at the First Session of the Seventh National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. Committee members spoke out either at the session or during panel discussions.

More than 400 Chinese and foreign reporters covered the two sessions as well as the panel discussions. Many news briefings and live TV broadcasts have made it easy to keep up with any developments.

To give all people an opportunity for input in the sessions, many news media organizations set up "hot lines" to invite public discussions and some newspapers started special columns giving full coverage of the opinions and suggestions of the deputies. The two sessions were therefore far more open than before.

Representatives of foreign news media admitted that the two sessions gave an idea of the strides towards democracy being made in China; the remarks of some deputies were surprisingly out-

spoken; and the "rubber stamp" was becoming harder.

The surprisingly rapid progress towards democracy has answered the calls for reform and opening to the world. Without the enthusiastic response of the masses, these needs could hardly be met. The progress of economic reform makes reform of the political structure increasingly urgent, and democracy is an important part of this political reform.

The 13th Party Congress held last October suggested the establishment of a system of consultation and dialogue, so that what is going on at higher levels could be promptly relayed to lower levels and vice versa, and a greater understanding could be fostered between people on all levels. It also suggested that the activities of the government and Party departments be more openly carried out to keep people acquainted with matters of great consequence and let them participate in discussions on major issues. This would, at the same time, give more scope to the supervisory role of public opinion.

Socialist democracy has made much headway since the 13th Party Congress, and the masses have become more interested in participating in government and political affairs. Democracy was also seen in the elections of provincial and municipal leaders, and deputies to the recent National People's Congress.

There is little knowledge of China in the world because the country has been shut off from the outside for quite a long time.



China Elects State Leaders

Yang Shangkun has been elected president and Wang Zhen vice-president of the People's Republic of China. Wan Li has been elected chairman of the Standing Committee of the Seventh National People's Congress, and Deng Xiaoping chairman of the country's Central Military Commission. (For profiles of the leaders, see centrefold)

A total of 2,883 NPC deputies participated in the election, which took place on April 8. They also elected 19 vice-chairmen, the secretary-general and 135 members of the NPC Standing Committee.

At the next day's meeting of the NPC, Li Peng, who was nominated for the post of premier of the State Council by President Yang, was elected China's fourth premier.

Yang and Zhao Ziyang, general secretary of the Communist Party of China, were elected the vice-

chairmen of the Central Military Commission.

The Standing Committee members were elected from 144 candidates. It was the first time in the history of China's legislature that there was a competitive election for the committee.

Song Ping, executive chairman of the presidium of the First Session of the Seventh NPC, answered questions raised by the deputies. One deputy noted that among the candidates for the Standing Committee, some still held government posts. The deputy asked whether it was appropriate to elect these people.

Song answered that according to the Constitution, once they are elected to the Standing Committee, they will resign from their government posts.

The NPC deputies also elected Ren Jianxin as president of the Supreme People's Court and Liu Fuzhi as procurator-general of the

China is now making a point of opening its doors and expanding economic and technical exchange and co-operation with other countries. China needs to know the world and be known by the world. The world needs to understand its policies, the present situation, history, cultural tradition and its investment climate. The full coverage of the two sessions provided by both Chinese and foreign reporters offers an opportunity to see what is going on in China today.

In a socialist country the people are the masters. The first Constitution adopted by the First National People's Congress in 1954 marked the establishment of this view of a socialist democratic system. Unfortunately the construction of this system went astray. It was not till the convening of the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Party Congress at the end of 1978 that the process of political democratization was put back on the right track. Since the 13th Party Congress, the progress towards democratization has been continually accelerating, and the NPC session ushered it into a new phase.

China is now riding on the high tide of reform. However, many problems lie ahead and further improvements are still needed to form the sound democratic system NPC deputies were striving to create. ■

Yang Shangkun, China's newly elected president, casts a ballot in the voting to select the country's leaders.

LIU JIANGUO



Supreme People's Procuratorate.

The 19 NPC Standing Committee vice-chairmen are: Xi Zhongxun, Ulanhu, Peng Chong, Wei Guoqing, Zhu Xuefan, Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme, Bainqen Erdini Qoigy Gyaincain, Seypidin Aze, Zhou Gucheng, Yan Jici, Rong Yiren, Ye Fei, Liao Hansheng, Ni Zhifu, Chen Muhua, Fei Xiaotong, Sun Qimeng, Lei Jieqiong and Wang Hanbin. Peng Chong is also the secretary-general of the committee. ■

CPPCC Session Completes Tasks

China's top consultative body to the government ended its first session on April 10 after electing its new chairman, vice-chairmen and Standing Committee members and approving a political resolution.

Li Xiannian, the 79-year-old former president of the People's Republic of China, was elected chairman of the Seventh National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

A total of 28 people, including Wang Renzhong, Yan Mingfu, Fang Yi and Gu Mu, were elected vice-chairmen of the committee. Zhou Shaozheng was re-elected as its secretary-general.

National committee members also elected 280 members of the standing committee. Most of them are intellectuals.

The political resolution, approved in principle at the final meeting of the 18-day session, calls on CPPCC organizations at all levels to unite all forces that can be united, mobilize all positive factors, maintain and develop the political stability and unity of the country, and work to promote socialist modernization.

The resolution asks the State Council to attach great im-

portance to the problems raised during the session and try to resolve them in a planned way.

The resolution also endorses the government work report delivered by Li Peng and the work report of the Sixth National Committee of the CPPCC delivered by Qian Xuesen.

Prior to the last two days of the conference, members put forward 1,734 new proposals on issues concerning the economy, education, science, culture, public health, law and labour management.

Many suggested that the government should work out a stable agricultural policy to encourage farmers to grow more grain.

Members in their suggestions criticized the government for overlooking education, especially basic education, and for inadequate investment in education.

Proposals relating to law and democracy suggested that the government should open more communication channels, allow more people who are not members of the Communist Party of China to participate in the work of government, and fight against corruption, bribery, prostitution, smuggling and illegal drug sales.

Before the resolution was approved in principle, six members asked for revisions. Four of them suggested that the resolution should also ask the State Council to attend to minority and women's issues, and problems of underdevelopment in minority, remote and poverty-stricken regions.

These amendments were adopted at a Standing Committee session held immediately after the ceremony which closed the session.

In his closing speech, newly elected Chairman Li urged the committee to work in a down-to-earth, pioneering and creative manner and fulfil all the tasks entrusted to it. ■

Progress Made In Legal System

A legal system has basically taken shape in China during the past five years, says Chen Pixian, vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of China's Sixth National People's Congress (NPC).

Summarizing the work of the previous Standing Committee to the first session of the Seventh NPC, Chen said the country now has basic laws to guide its political, economic and social life.

Of the 37 laws enacted in the past five years, 22 govern economic activities and 10 concern China's opening up to the outside world, Chen said.

These laws have facilitated the development of a socialist planned commodity economy. They have consolidated and furthered the gains brought about by the reforms and provide legal protection for foreign investment and economic and technological cooperation and exchanges.

The congress still has a lot to do in the area of legislation, he said, adding that it should focus on formulating economic laws, especially laws concerning economic co-operation and exchanges with other countries, and ones that facilitate the political reform and promote democracy.

He singled out the need for laws relating to private businesses, maritime trade, investment, corporations, labour, township enterprises, administrative procedure and civil servants.

To protect citizens' rights and freedoms as stipulated in the Constitution and to check abuses, Chen said, efforts must be stepped up to formulate laws on the press and publishing, and association, assembly and demonstrations, and to establish a people's appeal system.

Legal supervision by the congress and its Standing Com-

mittee concentrates on the implementation of the Constitution and laws. Work supervision involves examining work reports by the government, the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate. The congress also studies reports by government departments on price reform, the labour system, education, the work to improve the living and working conditions of intellectuals, and other key issues that arise in the course of reform and opening up the country, Chen said.

He noted that supervision remains a weak link in the work of the Standing Committee and lags far behind the provisions of the Constitution, people's expectations and the needs of the political and economic reforms.

Referring to the electoral system, Chen said that the Standing Committee has amended the electoral law of the national and local people's congresses and the law on local governments. More candidates than posts are required in electing people's congress deputies and local government officials so that voters can make a choice.

He reported that the Standing Committee strengthened its contacts with the NPC deputies in the past five years, enabling it to be more responsive to the wishes and requirements of the people and to better reflect the actual situation, while enabling the deputies to more effectively supervise the committee's work.

At the same time, Chen said, special NPC committees and government departments handled 380 motions and 14,215 suggestions, criticisms and opinions submitted by the deputies.

Many important suggestions contained in the motions have been accepted and incorporated into decisions of the Standing Committee, and many have found their way into laws, Chen said. ■

Anti-Crime Drive Brings Results

Public order in China has improved since a crackdown on crime was launched in 1983, said Zheng Tianxiang, president of the Supreme People's Court.

In a report on the work of the court delivered to the Seventh National People's Congress on April 2, Zheng said China's crime rate has stood at about 5 per 10,000 for four years running. The rate is lower than the 7.4 per 10,000 of 1981-82, but higher than during the 1950s.

Zheng cautioned that the rising trend of violent offences and serious economic crimes is yet to be brought fully under control in some places. From August 1983 to the end of last year, people's courts at all levels in China handled nearly 1.7 million criminal cases and passed judgement on 2 million people. Of those accused, 38 percent were sentenced to more than five years in prison, life imprisonment or death, and 0.7 percent were acquitted.

Some 690,000 cases, or 40.5 percent of the total, involved murder, rape, robbery, bombings and hooliganism. These crimes accounted for more than 90 percent of the life imprisonment and death sentences.

With the broadening of economic reforms and the further opening of China to the outside world, the number of economic disputes has increased. There are also a growing number of maritime cases and economic disputes involving foreigners.

Since 1983, the number of cases involving economic disputes has doubled year after year. There were 365,000 such cases in 1987, eight times the 1983 figure.

The intensified crackdown on serious economic crimes uncovered 77,386 cases of embezzle-

ment, bribery, smuggling, speculation and fraud in 1987, an increase of 54.4 percent over the previous year. Violent criminal offences are a major problem in some regions where rising economic crimes have caused social disorder, Zheng said, adding that people in these regions lack a sense of security.

He noted the increasing direct and indirect participation of government officials and enterprise personnel in illegal economic activities—10-15 percent of the serious economic offenders are staff members of government bodies, state-run institutions and state-owned enterprises, while 22-28 percent are factory workers. At the same time, state bodies and enterprises have seldom been penalized for serious violations of law, and some cases of grave dereliction of duty are ignored. Last year, only 16 of the more than 3,000 cases of gold profiteering and smuggling in the country's major gold-producing areas resulted in prosecutions, Zheng told the session.

The most serious problem in the current legal handling of economic disputes is the failure to carry out verdicts, he said. Court decisions were not enforced in about 30 percent of the cases involving economic disputes last year. In some provinces the rate exceeded 40 percent.

Localism and departmentalism make it difficult to execute court rulings, Zheng said. "This has seriously disrupted the socialist economic order, hampered progress in reform and the open policy and even affected social stability." He urged courts throughout the country to improve their work and government offices to help enforce court decisions.

Last year the courts handled nearly 1.2 million civil cases, a big increase over 1986, he said. Civil cases involving debts, marriage

and alimony have been on the rise in recent years. The number of debt cases rose sharply to 256,000 in 1987, seven times the 1983 figure.

Regarding debt disputes, Zheng said that the rapid growth of the commodity economy and the insufficient availability of state loans have led to brisk non-governmental loans, which in turn accelerate the circulation of funds.

But the interest rates for non-governmental loans are usually high, and many borrowers do not sign written contracts with lenders, increasing the likelihood of disputes. Some debt cases end up in assault, murder and other criminal offences. The state should formulate laws and regulations for non-governmental loans as soon as possible to halt the rapid growth of debt cases, Zheng said. ■

China Reaffirms Policy on Students

Sending students to study abroad is China's long-standing policy which remains unchanged and will never change," an official from the State Education Commission says.

Huang Xinbai, the commission member in charge of implementing the policy, denied rumours that China plans to drastically cut the number of students sent abroad and to limit the proportion sent to the United States to 20 percent of the total.

The rumours are groundless, Huang said. "There is no change in the principles set forth in the regulation publicized on June 11, 1987."

Since 1980, the number of students sent to dozens of countries by the government has averaged around 3,000 a year. This year's figure is expected to be roughly the same.

The number of students sent

abroad by institutions or departments has risen sharply in the past few years. In 1987 the number grew to some 5,000. This year the figure is expected to remain the same.

Neither the central government nor the State Education Commission controls the number of self-financed students going abroad. Their number has been estimated at a minimum of 3,000 a year.

Of all the students studying abroad, including both state-funded and self-financed, the majority go to the United States. This holds true this year.

Huang said some 4,600 students will be sent to the United States this year, of which 600 are government-funded and 4,000 are financed by various institutions and departments. The policy on self-financed students going to the United States remains unchanged.

"We decide on the number of students to be sent abroad according to our needs, ensuring that what they learn can be applied to the development of our country," he said. "At the same time we must ensure that the students to be sent are qualified."

Huang added, "In light of our internal situation, it is only normal to make necessary adjustments in our policy on state-funded students studying abroad."

The adjustments fall into three categories:

— Adjustment in the choice of courses. More students are encouraged to major in applied fields of study.

— Adjustments in the categories of students sent abroad. As China has the capacity to train undergraduate and graduate students, it will not generally send students abroad for undergraduate courses, and will reduce the number studying abroad for master's degrees. At the same time, it will send abroad more people who will pursue advanced

studies or act as visiting scholars (including people who have received a Ph.D. in China or elsewhere). These adjustments are applicable to all state-financed students, regardless of the country of study.

— Adjustment in the choice of countries. Based on China's needs, it will send more students to countries which are capable of accepting more Chinese students but have taken very few so far.

Huang said it is necessary to limit the time state-financed graduate students spend pursuing a degree in foreign countries. "This is mainly because during the absence of the students, the institution or department that has funded them has to make arrangements such as finding other employees to fill their vacancies and collecting extra funds to cover the related costs."

Such limits clearly will not be applied to self-funded students, he added.

In the nine years since China started its reforms and opening up policy, the country has sent more than 40,000 state-funded students to study in at least 70 foreign countries and regions. To date 20,000 of them have finished their studies and returned home. ■

Tobacco or Health: Choose Health

In a public letter to the world news media, Dr. Halfdan Mahler, director-general of the World Health Organization (WHO), called on all countries to join in a one-day quit smoking campaign. WHO chose April 7 as the first world No Smoking Day to mark the organization's 40th anniversary.

In response to the call, which was especially directed at developing countries, China's Minister of Public Health Chen Minzhang made a speech over national radio

and television on April 5, encouraging everybody to observe No Smoking Day. At the same time, the ministry released a circular calling for more efforts to get people to stop smoking.

Beijing, the capital of the world's top tobacco-producing country, was decked out in colourful anti-smoking posters and banners. No shops sold cigarettes on No Smoking Day.

About 270 information and consultation posts were set up downtown and in residential areas. Students, medical workers, office workers and government officials volunteered to offer messages about the harmfulness of smoking to passers-by. "Tobacco or health, please choose health," was heard wafting from loudspeakers everywhere.

A journalist told a volunteer that she and her children had ganged up on her husband the night before and persuaded him to quit smoking. "By the time I left home this morning, he had not yet had a cigarette," she said.

A recent survey of 500,000 people showed that 33.9 percent of Chinese people over the age of 15 smoke; for males, the figure is 61 percent for those over 15 and 68.9 percent for those over 20, Chen said.

A 1984 survey by the Central Patriotic Public Health Campaign Committee and the Ministry of Public Health showed that office workers have the highest smoking rate in China followed by farmers, labourers, scientific and cultural workers and students. The smoking rate for women was low.

But recently a female post-graduate at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences found that smoking seems to be becoming more common among professional women.

Health departments report that more than 100,000 Chinese died of cancer last year as a result of smoking. Experts predict that by

the year 2050, China's annual death toll related to smoking will reach 2 million.

China is making efforts to launch a war against smoking, which has been described as the plague of the 20th century. Southeast China's Fujian Province has launched a no-smoking campaign directed at the province's more than 9 million smokers.

Chen said that during the past few years, many departments have made efforts to control smoking. The country's airlines do not allow people to smoke on domestic flights and some trains are now designating "no smoking" cars.

Some of the country's medical facilities are providing outpatient services to help people stop smoking. Beijing and Shanghai municipalities, Liaoning Province and some other areas have set up organizations to deal with smoking and the resulting health problems.

Meanwhile, a chemical factory in Guizhou Province has stepped up its production of a liquid said to be effective in helping smokers to kick the cigarette habit. The liquid is put in special containers. When smokers smell it, they lose the desire to have a cigarette.

Health ministry officials think China should focus its future efforts on dissuading teenagers from smoking. To this end, the country has decided to pass a bill to prohibit smoking by people below the age of 18.

Most recently, 33 deputies submitted a motion against smoking to the first session of the Seventh National People's Congress. The motion calls for bans on smoking in public places, smoking among students, sales of cigarettes to people below 18, cigarette advertising in the media, and smoking by performers on the stage. It also calls for warnings on cigarette packets saying, "Smoking is harmful. Please quit."

Smokers around the world puff away 50,000 billion cigarettes a year. The death toll from various diseases caused by smoking is 2.5 million a year. This is equivalent to the number of people who would die if 20 jumbo-jet airliners crashed every day without a single survivor, Mahler warned in his letter. People the world over must be concerned about the question of health or death. ■

HK Panel to Hold 7th Session

The Drafting Committee on the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region will hold its 7th session April 24-28 in Beijing. The meeting will deliberate and approve an initial draft of the Basic Law for public discussion in China's mainland and Hong Kong.

After the meeting this "draft of the draft" of the Basic Law, as it is called by the officials of the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office under the State Council, will be published in *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily), *Fazhi Ribao* (Legal Daily) and *Beijing Review*.

The committee will meet again towards the end of 1988 or early in 1989 to revise the initial draft in accordance with the opinions solicited. A revised version will be submitted to the NPC Standing Committee for deliberation. Then the NPC Standing Committee will publish the draft of the Basic Law for public discussion and further revision before it becomes law. ■



UNITED STATES

Shultz Returns to the Middle East

US Secretary of State George Shultz launched a third round of his Middle East peace mission after he failed to get a response to the latest US Middle East peace plan.

After waiting nearly a month and receiving no reply to a "new proposal" by the United States on how to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict, US Secretary of State George Shultz returned to Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Saudi Arabia on April 3-8. It was the third round of consultations within a month to be conducted by his Middle East peace mission.

Observers saw two basic aims in Shultz's visit. First, he wanted to seek support for the US proposal and get formal responses from both the Arab and Israeli sides. Second, he wanted to consolidate the US position in the Middle East by showing the Arabs that the United States is sincerely trying to resolve the Middle East question. Moreover, Washington is still seeking to help the Shamir government quiet the four-month-long upsurge of Palestinian resistance against Israel despite Israel's refusal to accept the US plan.

Shultz told reporters on April 6 that he was making some progress in his talks but that differences had not been substantially narrowed. The comment is a suitable summary of his tour.

Reports said the talks between Shultz and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir were not smooth. The United States embarked on its peace initiative to safeguard its interests in the Middle East, placate domestic and foreign opinion and deal with grievances from Arab countries. The peace

plan centres on implementing the principle of "land for peace" by convening an international Middle East peace conference. It involves shortening the transition period for autonomy and speeding up the Israeli withdrawal from some occupied lands.

But Washington persists in its original stands on two key questions. It rejects national self-determination for the Palestinians and insists on the exclusion of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) from the peace talks. Even so, Shamir has refused to accept the plan. He rejected both the proposal for an international peace conference attended by the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and the "land for peace" formula. Shamir's rigid stand has met wide opposition at home and abroad—including from the Israeli Labour Party and American Jews—and his government has become more and more isolated.

Egypt supports the US plan in general but has asked for the direct participation of the PLO in the peace talks. The Arab side stresses that the conference must have full power and insists on a complete Israeli withdrawal from all occupied lands. The Arab countries recognize the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and support the PLO's right to participate in any peace talks. They also demand

that the national rights of the Palestinians be restored.

The Arab side welcomed Shultz's three visits, which they saw as an opportunity to force Israel to make concessions through US pressure, as well as a chance to reaffirm their own views and stands on the Middle East peace process.

Neither side formally accepted or rejected the US plan; both said they are willing to continue discussions and that they hope the United States will continue its peace efforts. Shultz said the discussions must be made concrete. But it is noteworthy that no fundamental change has taken place in Washington's pro-Israel Middle East policy. Because of this and the wide differences between the Arabs and Israelis, a conference is unlikely in the near future.

Before Shultz's latest trip, observers said it had little hope of success. No peace proposal on the Arab-Israeli conflict can succeed, they said, as long as the United States attempts to exclude the PLO from the talks and rejects national self-determination for the Palestinian people.

At the end of his visit, Shultz acknowledged that he had failed to win needed support for the US peace initiative and to bridge the gap between Israeli and Arab leaders. He pledged that the United States will continue to seek "a comprehensive peace that will bring about great security to all and meet the needs of the Palestinian people."

During Shultz's visit, Jordan put forward a working paper on Middle East peace based on six principles. Jordan's principles are believed to generally reflect the common stand of the Arab countries.

by Zhao Xin

Diplomatic Relations Restored

Ethiopia and Somalia have decided to restore diplomatic relations, which were severed in September 1977. The move is in the interests of the people of both countries.

Ethiopia and Somalia have agreed on four important steps towards normalizing their relations, including the disengagement of their troops. The agreement was reached in the Somali capital of Mogadishu on April 3, after talks between Ethiopian Foreign Minister Berhanu Bayih and Somali Deputy Prime Minister Ahmed Mahamoud Farah.

The two sides, which have been involved in border skirmishes for more than 20 years, agreed to refrain from the use or threat of force against each other's territorial integrity or political independence and to settle any disputes exclusively by peaceful means. They also pledged not to interfere in each other's internal affairs.

The pact said that with a view to creating the necessary conditions for lasting peace and reducing tension between the countries, "both sides agree to withdraw their armed forces in accordance with Khartoum communique of March 30, 1964, without prejudice to the position of either party on the boundary question." The withdrawal was to begin no later than April 15 and be completed by May 15.

The two sides agreed to establish a joint military committee to supervise the implementation of these provisions.

The countries also pledged to prevent acts of destabilization and subversion against each other and not to engage in hostile propaganda against each other or permit their territories or mass

media to be used for such activities.

They agreed to repatriate within four months all prisoners of war and other detainees held by each side. Details of the exchange of prisoners are still to be worked out.

The Mogadishu meeting, held March 31-April 3, followed talks between Ethiopian President Mengistu Haile-Mariam and Somali President Mohamed Said Barre on March 22 in the neighbouring country of Djibouti. It was the fourth meeting at the ministerial level since the presidents first met in Djibouti in January 1986 in an effort to resolve their dispute over the sovereignty of the Ogaden region.

In the previous three rounds of talks the two sides could not even agree on the agenda. Ethiopia insisted on tackling the issue of border demarcation immediately, while Somalia wanted first to create a peaceful atmosphere by disengaging the countries' armed forces and resuming diplomatic relations.

ARGENTINA

Financial Troubles Stir Social Conflict

The Argentine government is finding it hard to deal with its financial difficulties. A recent agreement with the International Monetary Fund poses a dilemma.

A teachers' strike over pay demands is the latest manifestation of Argentina's financial difficulties. Nearly 7 million elementary and high school

The dispute over the Ogaden is a legacy of the colonial rule. Both countries have a claim to the region, a large semi-desert area in Ethiopia which is populated mainly by ethnic Somalis. In 1964, four years after Somalia gained its independence, war broke out along the border between the two East African countries. Since then, there have been two major clashes along the border.

In recent years the Horn of Africa has been hit by a succession of devastating natural calamities and the famine there has shaken the world. Ethiopia and Somalia are among the world's poorest countries. Somalia's economic predicament could be eased if it can reduce its military spending. Ethiopia is also in economic trouble, partly because of a serious drought in the north of the country. The lengthy hostilities have cost both countries a lot in terms of human, material and financial resources. Economic development has been strangled and people's standard of living remains low.

The resumption of diplomatic relations is a move towards reconciliation and peace and conforms to the interests of the people of both countries. It will also help promote regional stability. Nevertheless, there are still obstacles on the road to total reconciliation between Ethiopia and Somalia.

by Chang Qing

students were unable to return to school after their break, which was scheduled to end on February 22.

Provincial education ministers travelled to the capital to discuss

the problem with President Raul Alfonsin, but no solution was found. Education in Argentina is mainly run by the state, and teachers are paid by the government.

The country's financial difficulties extend beyond the education sector. Three provinces have asked the central government for emergency help so far this year. Cash runs have closed some provincial banks.

The government had been hoping to ease its financial problems by raising tax revenue and early this year the Argentine Congress adopted a government bill that aims to increase taxes. But the measure has encountered strong opposition in the business community. The country's 13 business people's organizations have publicly called on their members to resist any tax rises.

The country's financial deficits have increased sharply. In 1987 the deficit rose to 7.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) from 3 percent in 1986. The deficits have led to inflation. The purchasing power of wage earners has dropped and social conflicts have been exacerbated.

In this context, a handful of anti-democratic elements took the opportunity to make trouble. On March 29, bombs exploded in three cinemas in the centre of the capital. The troublemakers were trying to generate fear in the society and to damage the government's prestige. But the Argentine people have kept calm and denounced their dirty tricks.

Although the government is well aware of its financial problems and their effects, it can find few workable measures to resolve them. According to a memorandum of understanding reached early this year between the Argentine government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the IMF will grant loans to

Argentina on the condition that the country reduces its deficit to 2.7 percent of GDP. This would require a strict money policy, tight control of the volume of currency in circulation and big cuts in public spending. But to surmount its current difficulties, the government must increase both its spending and the amount of

currency in circulation. Faced with this dilemma, the government has found it hard to carry out its economic adjustment plans. It has made limited increases in local emergency funds and has proposed that provincial governments issue bonds to tide them over the emergency.

by Li Zhiming

ASIA

'Four Dragons' Enjoy Economic Success

The economies of Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea continue to expand at a rapid pace. Their growing investments abroad—especially in Southeast Asia—have attracted considerable attention.

Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea—known as the "four little dragons" of Asia—have been developing rapidly in recent years. Their development is expected to continue this year despite the reduced demand for exports as a result of intensified global trade protectionism and the slow-down of economic growth in the United States and other Western countries.

The following noteworthy trends can be discerned in the four dragons' economic development:

—First, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea have all increased their investments abroad, especially in the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). All four countries and regions face the task of adjusting their industrial structures. Since the drop in the value of the US dollar, South Korea's currency has gained 12 percent against the dollar and Taiwan's currency has risen 36 percent. To ease the pressure of currency revaluations and the rise in labour costs, the four dragons plan to produce more high-technology products and to transfer labour-intensive

industries to the ASEAN countries, where the cost of labour is lower. In the first eight months of 1987, overseas investment by Taiwan totalled US\$116 million, more than twice the total of US\$57 million for all of 1986. South Korea's overseas investment reached US\$397 million last year, a 130 percent increase over 1986.

By investing in the ASEAN countries, the four dragons can use the rich resources and cheap labour in these countries to reduce their production costs and increase their profits. Moreover, exporting goods from ASEAN countries is one way to get around export quotas. Since the United States said it would cancel the four dragons' preferential tariff starting from this year, they have had an even greater interest in exporting products from the ASEAN countries, which still come under the US generalized system of preferences.

—Second, the four dragons are absorbing more foreign investment. Currency revaluations and the rise of wages have reduced the advantages of their labor-intensive industries. But they still have strong appeal for foreign

investors because they offer well-educated technical and skilled workers, comparatively advanced infrastructure and all the mechanisms required for developing exports. It is estimated that Taiwan absorbed about US\$1.35 billion in foreign investment in 1987, and the figure is expected to increase to US\$1.5 billion this year. In Taiwan, Japanese investors have mainly concentrated on ventures producing high-technology products and on the service and retail trades, while the Western Europeans have focused on building factories to produce electronic and biological products. According to newspaper reports, foreign investment in South Korea totalled US\$1.06 billion last year, compared with US\$354 million in 1986.

—Third, the role of Japan in the economic development of East Asia has become more important. Japanese capital, technology, materials and spare parts have played a key role in developing the export-processing industries of the four dragons. Japan has tightened its economic links with the ASEAN countries in recent years, and several Japanese companies have transferred some of their major operations from the four dragons to the ASEAN countries. According to Japanese statistics, Japanese investment in the ASEAN nations totalled US\$817 million in the first nine months of 1987, nearly three times the level for the corresponding period of 1986. Japan also has plans to transfer some technology-intensive industries to the four dragons.

Some Japanese economists believe a new division of industry will appear in Asia as a result of Japan's efforts to co-operate with the four dragons and increase its investment in the ASEAN countries and China. The four dragons and the ASEAN countries will

continue to rely on Japanese capital and technology and the opening up of markets in Japan. But at same time, they will try to

reduce their dependence on Japan and to prevent the Japanese from gaining too much dominance.

by Pang Rongqian

INDONESIA

Suharto to Serve Fifth Term as President

Indonesian President Suharto has been unanimously re-elected to a fifth term in office.

Indonesia's 1,000-seat People's Consultative Assembly has re-elected by unanimous consent the sole presidential candidate. The election of 66-year-old Suharto to a fifth five-year term makes him one of the world's longest-serving presidents.

The consultative assembly, Indonesia's highest state authority, has the right to revise the constitution, formulate state policy and elect the president and vice-president. The assembly consists of the members of the House of Representatives and delegates from the country's various regions and sectors. Except in extraordinary circumstances, it meets only once every five years.

At a meeting which started on March 1, the assembly ratified draft state policy guidelines including the outline for the Fifth Five-Year Plan (1990-95). On March 10 the assembly re-elected Suharto as president of Indonesia's 170 million people.

Elections to the country's legislature took place a year ago. Three major parties presented candidates: the ruling Golkar Party, the United Development Party and the Indonesian Democratic Party. The Golkar party, the strongest of the three, claims to have 8 million activists at the grass-roots level, organized into

300 industrial groups. It won more than 60 percent of votes in the country's first three general elections and 73 percent in the latest election.

The biggest opposition party, the United Development Party, consists of four Muslim political groups. Disputes and factional struggle within the party prevented it from making headway in the last election.

The Indonesian Democratic Party, which consisted of the National Party, formerly led by the late President Sukarno, and four other small parties, has some influence among poor urban residents. It attempted to use the internal contradictions of the United Development Party to gain more votes in last year election, but had little success.

In a speech before his re-election, Suharto called for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan and Kampuchea, backed the creation of a Palestinian homeland and urged an end to the Iran-Iraq war.

On domestic affairs he said that the 1986 plunge in world oil prices and the later fall of the US dollar had forced his country to take some harsh economic adjustment measures.

by Li Yongming

Tibetan Leaders on the Tibet Situation

On April 4 while the First Session of the Seventh National People's Congress (NPC) was still in progress, NPC spokesman Zeng Tao chaired its fourth press conference in the Great Hall of the People. Tibetan leaders Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme and Bainqen Erdini Qoigy Gyaincain, deputies to the Seventh NPC and vice-chairmen of the Sixth NPC Standing Committee, discussed the riots in Lhasa since last September and answered questions raised by Chinese and foreign reporters. — Ed.

The Situation Today

Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme, 77, said that after the riots in Lhasa staged by a handful of separatists in September and October last year and March this year, many people, both Chinese and foreign, are eager to know what the real situation is in Tibet. The question they are most concerned with is whether the situation is stable. Our answer is yes, despite disruptive factors.

Tibetan farmers and herdsmen, who make up more than 95 percent of the Tibetan population, are against any move aimed at splitting the motherland and damaging national unity. They are also opposed to any riots which undermine social order. They know that only through the support of the whole country can Tibet enjoy development and achieve prosperity and the Tibetan people lead a happy life.

The first person to raise a question at the press conference was a Tibetan reporter from the Xinhua News Agency. He asked what measures would be taken to restore calm to Tibet and ensure the region's long-term stability.

Bainqen Erdini Qoigy Gyaincain said: The Tibetan people and the people of all other nationalities in China are against the riots. He explained that there exist both internal and external factors

behind the recent unrest. A few separatists at home and abroad collaborated to engineer and stir up riots; plus, there has for a long time existed within the country a "Left" tendency which has caused material losses and psychological wounds. This has given separatists inside and outside the country an opportunity to stir up the riots.

Not long ago, I said in Tibet we must try hard to improve three aspects of our work: In the efforts towards providing genuine national regional autonomy; in the implementation of policies which can heal the wounds caused by

"Left" mistakes of the past, and in the efforts towards economic and cultural development and an improvement of the living standards of the Tibetan people. Long-term stability and better social order in Tibet will be the product of success in these tasks.

A reporter from Hong Kong asked whether the "Left" mistakes in Tibet mean the Tibetan people are suffering under oppression and being denied religious freedom.

Bainqen said: China's Constitution stipulates all nationalities in China are equal and all Chinese citizens enjoy freedom of religious

Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme (fourth right) and Bainqen Erdini Qoigy Gyaincain (third right) face the press.





Chinese and foreign reporters at the press conference.

belief. Since the Third Plenary Session of the 11th CPC Central Committee in 1978, the central and local leadership has corrected many "Left" mistakes committed in the past. Development, however, is uneven in Tibet. "Leftist" ideas are still retained by some local officials in Tibet who grew up with this way of thinking. The presence of these people makes it difficult to ensure a thorough implementation of policies formulated by the central leadership.

The Three Riots

A reporter from America's CBS asked about the numbers of people involved in the Lhasa riots and the number of those arrested, and released later, the number of people beaten, wounded or killed, and the number of people executed.

Bainqen said: The riot on September 27 last year was started by a small number of lamas with about one or two thousand followers. After the riot, police detained a small number of lamas. The riot on October 1 last year was more serious with rioters setting

fire to a police station, burning vehicles and injuring many people. Some of the rioters were detained by the police, and part of those detained were released soon afterwards. When I was sent by the central government to handle this matter in Tibet, I found 74 persons were still being held. After some work, 59 were released. Most of the 15 persons still in prison committed serious crimes such as burning, looting or assaulting. Those detained included one or two lamas who had engaged in underground sabotage work, although they didn't take part in the riot in person. On my return to Beijing, I suggested to the central authorities that some of the 15 people be treated with leniency and the authorities expressed their appreciation for my suggestion. Part of the 15 detainees would have been set free had the riot in March not taken place.

The March 5 riot was first staged by a hundred or so lamas who were later joined by several thousand civilians. If onlookers were included, the number came to close to ten thousand. During that incident, four people were killed, among them a policeman

who was seriously beaten by rioters and thrown from a great height to his death. One lama was killed by rocks thrown by rioters, and two other people died of bullet wounds from warning shots fired by police trying to defend themselves. A fifth person died of severe injury despite emergency treatment in the hospital.

Altogether over 330 policemen were injured during the riot on March 5, and over 110 civilians were treated in hospitals for injuries caused by thrown stones. There may have been others with minor injuries who did not go to the hospital for treatment.

A total of over 200 rioters were detained, not imprisoned, after the incident. Many of them who committed minor crimes will receive lenient treatment. For example, only three of the 15 detained last year were officially arrested and will be punished according to law.

An Ansa News Agency reporter asked whether Bainqen could deny that many lamas were beaten by police and some were even poisoned by doctors.

Bainqen said: During the March 5 riot, some leaders present were surrounded by rioters and their lives were seriously endangered. To disperse the crowd and secure these leaders, police did club some rioters, in some cases very seriously. But any suggestion that some lamas were poisoned to death is pure fabrication. If such a suggestion was concocted by a lama, he does not deserve the name of lama as he has violated the commendments of religion which allow no lies.

On the Dalai Lama

A Washington Post reporter asked Bainqen four questions: If he thought the Dalai Lama had something to do with the recent

riots in Tibet; how personal relations are between Bainqen and the Dalai Lama; under what conditions would the central government allow the Dalai Lama to return to China; and where would he stay after his return, Beijing or Tibet?

Bainqen answered: Facts will help you see the connection between the Dalai Lama and the riots in Tibet. Last Septemeber the Dalai Lama made a five-point statement to the Human Rights Sub-Committee of the US House of Representatives, soon after which, separatists in Tibet declared their support for the five-point statement. The riots in Lhasa followed. These things are very clear. As for the activities behind the riots, I cannot go into details here. I only want to talk about the apparent connections between the two events. The Dalai Lama should not have done things like this which are irresponsible to his nation and religion.

With regards personal relations between us, I've said many times that we are good friends in religion and my feelings towards him as a religious friend remain unchanged.

The five-point policy of the central authorities towards the Dalai Lama has not changed. The only condition for his return is that he gives up his ideas of Tibetan independence, acknowledges Tibet as an inseparable part of China and joins the people of all nationalities in their efforts to safeguard the motherland's unification, strengthen national unity and build a socialist motherland and Tibet. As for his political status after his return, the central authorities have already made it known that he still can assume the post of a vice-chairman of the NPC Standing Committee.

As for his place of residence, the Constitution stipulates that citizens have the freedom to live where they choose. The Dalai

Lama can choose to live anywhere in China, either in Beijing or in Tibet. If he accepts the conditions of the central authorities but, after his return, tries to continue in his separatist activities, we will not let him do so. If he insists on independence and separatism, there will be no basis for further talk.

About Bainqen Himself

The last question directed to Bainqen by a China News reporter was: Last February you went to Tibet to implement government policies and solve problems left from the "cultural revolution." Do you think you still need some rehabilitation?

Bainqen answered: It's a mere coincidence that you ask this question, because I will be officially rehabilitated in tomorrow's presidium meeting of the National People's Congress. I was openly criticized in 1964, labeled anti-people and anti-socialism, and accused of attempting to stage a rebellion. Tomorrow (April 5), the decision on my rehabilitation will be announced.

In 1959, the Dalai Lama fled the country. I didn't leave. Instead, I requested that the central authorities carry out democratic reforms in Tibet and my suggestion was accepted. Soon after, I was appointed acting chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region (the Dalai Lama was the former chairman). Many "Left" practices were adopted in the democratic reforms, which ran counter to the realities in Tibet. I made many suggestions to the central authorities in an attempt to help correct these mistakes. I am frank and outspoken, which is why I invited trouble for myself.

I wrote a long report to the central authorities in which I discussed many problems I found

with democratic reforms in all Tibetan-inhabited areas, including Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, Yunnan and Tibet. Some problems I addressed critically and the language was rather harsh which made the late Chairman Mao very unhappy.

After the slogan "never forget class struggle" was raised at the 10th Plenary Session of the Eighth Party Central Committee held in August 1962 in Beidaihe, I became the target of class struggle. Because I did not accept criticism and insisted on the veracity and accuracy of my report. I was openly criticized, attacked and overthrown in 1964. Later, during the "cultural revolution" (1966-76), I was imprisoned for nine years and eight months, and I was still not released immediately even after the downfall of the gang of four because some people adhered to the "two whatevers."* As my case was decided in line with Chairman Mao's directives so the verdict could not be easily reversed. But I was later released. I should thank Deng Xiaoping for his efforts and Zhou Enlai for my survival. After my release I first became a member of the Standing Committee of the CPPCC National Committee, later its vice-chairman, and then vice-chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. The restoration of my posts have also been escalated.

Bainqen closed by saying: I think the central leadership is resolute and far-sighted. If the labels once placed on me are not removed, it won't look good — my sitting on the chair of vice-chairman of the NPC Standing Committee wearing three counter-revolutionary hats. ■

*Whatever policy decisions Chariman Mao made must be resolutely supported and whatever directives Chairman Mao issued must be consistently followed.

CPPCC Members on State Affairs

At the first session of the Seventh National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) held between March 24 and April 10, many CPPCC members aired their views on state affairs and raised criticisms about some growing problems. Following are some of these views. — Ed.

by Our Correspondent Yang Xiaobing

Prices, Education

Qian Jiaju, noted economist and vice-chairman of the Central Committee of the China Democratic League, expressed his views on pricing, education and social conduct.

Qian said that the more rapid rise in prices compared to wage increases has been the subject of much complaint among the people. In the past 30 years and more, China's policy of price stabilization through administrative means has resulted in many problems. Price restraints have led to shortages of goods and materials. It was necessary for the state to offer subsidies for the production of daily necessities and ration the supply of some of these goods. Price rises for other goods are forbidden, so some commodities do not sell well. Since reform of the pricing system has a bearing on reform of the economic structure as a whole, it is better to use objective laws of economy rather than administrative force to readjust prices which are out of line with the real value of goods.

Qian expressed his dissatisfaction with excessive investment in capital construction. China's state budget earmarks 60-70 billion yuan for capital construction each year. This, plus more than 100 billion yuan invested outside state planning, accounts for one-third of the state's expenditure. Large-scale capital construction leads to



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Qian Jiaju speaks out on pricing, education and social conduct.

shortages of energy, raw materials and foreign exchange, and the strain on transportation. It also produces imbalances in the national economy and saps available funds for cultural, educational, health, and scientific and technological undertakings. Professor Qian suggested that all capital construction projects, except in the areas of energy and communications and those already under way, should be halted in the next five years. The money saved can be used to adjust prices, increase wages and develop educational, cultural, health, scientific and technological undertakings.

Qian said he was once asked

whether China would take a roundabout course in its reconstruction programme. He answered, if China takes a roundabout course, it would be the result of its neglect of education and intellectuals. The 13th Party Congress report clearly points out that education is of fundamental importance to the fulfilment of our long-term aims. We must therefore continue to stress its importance. But in fact we never look on funds for education as a productive investment. State financial expenditure first of all guarantees investment in capital construction, not education. Local governments concentrate on agricultural and industrial production rather than educational development.

Qian believes the fundamental purpose of education is to increase the quality of the people. This is much more important than scientific and technological achievements and individual talent. He worries about compulsory education without sound financial support. He said primary school teachers now have the lowest social standing and suffer poor conditions.

According to Qian, China allocates about 20 billion yuan to education each year, less than 10 percent of state budget expenditure. But investment in capital construction amounts to 100

billion yuan a year. If it is true that education is to be given priority in the strategic development plan, the expenditure for education should be doubled and investment in capital construction cut by one-fourth or one-third. Qian hopes the educational cause will be developed not just in words but in action, and elementary education seen as state capital construction. Otherwise, he said, it is doubtful that China will be among the civilized countries in the world next century. He expressed his objection to the possible repetition of the population policy pursued in the 1950s.

Finally Qian talked about social conduct, an area of concern to many. Social misconduct is one problem looked on with bitterness by people of insight. A few Party members and state cadres take advantage of their positions and power to satisfy their own selfish ends. Some even commit serious economic crimes. Banquets and gift-giving are becoming ever more common. Although small in number, the influence of the corrupt is very damaging and could change the whole tone of our country.

Qian offers three suggestions to check misconduct in society. He feels it is necessary to significantly increase the wages of public servants— if not, those who abide by the rules will find their lives much harder than those who seize every opportunity to gain an advantage through trickery or deceit. It is also necessary to enforce discipline and law. Party spirits and the working style of cadres must first be tackled, and malpractices or biased handling of the law should be checked. Finally it is necessary to strengthen public supervision. Some leading cadres fear public criticism through the media much more than criticisms in the notes circulated within a limited scale. Reporters should seek facts and cover both shortcomings and achievements.

Criticism and self-criticism in newspapers is a useful standard for the implementation of China's reform.

Democratic Supervision

Ye Danian, research fellow in geology, said that democratic supervision is a multi-tiered process. On the one hand there is the democratic supervision by workers' congresses over enterprise leadership; and on the other there is supervision by people's congresses and CPPCC organizations at various levels. In his opinion, the National People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference represent the highest level of democratic government participation. He said that whenever democratic supervision at this level is absent, problems are inevitable.

Ye cited the Ministry of Railways as an example. Recently, China's railways have been appearing quite frequently in the news. Can this be explained by a lack of democratic supervision over the rail transport system? No.

Newspapers have been publishing highly critical articles about the railway system. In less than a month after the minister of railways resigned for failure in his duties, another serious train crash occurred in Shanghai. Obviously democratic supervision had not been extended to the higher levels and either the channels for supervision were obstructed or the supervision itself ineffective.

Ye said that in China the people are the masters. It is natural that they raise suggestions and air their views to the state. Although leaders of the central government repeatedly point to the need to take up these suggestions, some very good suggestions are often overlooked.

Ye cited his own case as an example. Over the past two years, he said, he has suggested the central government and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fishery consider adding the mineral zeolite to fodder for pigs and chicken which he claims could cut grain consumption by 5-10 percent. He submitted reports prepared by the Institute of Geology on research into China's reserves of the

CPPCC members applaud the joint speech presented by Zhao Chaogou and Zhang Xiluo.

WU JIGUO



mineral, as well as studies conducted in other countries. Despite all this, however, he did not receive a single word in reply.

Ye said a channel should be formed through which important suggestions from NPC deputies and CPPCC National Committee members can directly go to the leaders of the central authorities and of related departments.

Reforms to Mass Media

In their joint speech, Zhao Chaogou, director of *Xinmin Wanbao* (Shanghai Evening News), and Zhang Xiluo, deputy editor-in-chief of *Renmin Zhong-xie Bao* (CPPCC News), said that prior to the Spring Festival this year the Department of Journalism at the China People's University conducted a wide-ranging opinion poll. The results indicated that 200 well-known personages surveyed are dissatisfied with China's mass media. Most of them felt the media does not take enough notice of the real voice of the people. In particular, the media does not provide enough opportunity for participation and discussion in the political sphere. The media was criticized for its failure to play an active role in criticizing and supervising the work of Party and government leadership at various levels.

Thorough reforms to the field of journalism were seen as necessary. The speakers suggested relaxing controls over reporters and their writing. In their opinion, prior to the 13th Party Congress last autumn, newspapers offered little coverage on "hot issues" which the people were very much concerned about. Since the congress, rather major changes have taken place in journalistic reporting, and newspapers have started publishing a broader range of opinions. In general, however,

the reforms have not been on large enough scale. It was hoped that the leadership in related departments might make further efforts to create a favourable climate for more reform and guarantee the freedom of the press. This freedom

The most important function of the mass media, said two CPPCC members, is its role in upholding truth. It is now all the more important to encourage freedom of speech and a seeking out of truth.

is an indispensable part of the rights of the people. To allow political participation by the people, it is necessary for newspapers to provide open coverage of all issues and events.

More importance should also be given to the media's supervisory role. This was mentioned in both Zhao Ziyang's report to the 13th National Party Congress and Li Peng's government work report. Supervision by the mass media takes many forms. One of its most important roles lies in exposing and criticizing violations of the law, abuse of power, particularly among leading officials.

Zhao Chaogou and Zhang Xiluo called on leaders at various levels to give support to the mass media in its efforts to report on real events and problems, and allow it to criticize errors in the work of the Party and government and expose corruption and injustice.

The most important function of the mass media, according to Zhao and Zhang, is its role in upholding truth. It is now all the more important to encourage freedom of speech and a seeking out of truth. Credible reporting is

essential to function of newspapers.

Reunification

Xu Simin, chairman of the Hong Kong Mirror Culture and Enterprise Co. Ltd., held that the fundamental way to improve the Party's style of work is to develop democracy, implement structural reform and strengthen the supervisory role of the mass media and public opinion. He said that in the past, too much stress was laid on the authority of the state machine, and the supervisory role of society was neglected. As a result, the country was robbed of the strength it needed to fight against serious mistakes when they occurred.

Xu said that the atmosphere on both sides of the Taiwan Straits is continuing to improve and this has provided a good opportunity to promote the reunification of the country. He asked the CPC leadership to give careful consideration to the appeals of Taiwan compatriots and pay due attention to the positive role played by the democratic movement in Taiwan for China's reunification. At the same time, he hoped the mainland would further develop democracy and strengthen its legal system to allow the people to enjoy more freedom.

China will resume sovereignty over Hong Kong on July 1, 1997. Turning to this question, Xu said it is necessary to ensure a high level of autonomy for Hong Kong. It is not necessary for the central government to exercise control over everything. Apart from diplomatic affairs and national defence, all internal matters should remain under the administration of the people in Hong Kong. Only by implementing the principle of allowing Hong Kong people to manage Hong Kong affairs, can the prosperity and stability of Hong Kong be maintained. ■

Taiwan Businessmen Invest in Fujian

by Our Correspondent Yang Xiaoping

Many Taiwan business people intend to make investments in Fujian Province. "We already have 50 enterprises involving a total investment of US\$50 million now operating in the province," said You Dexin, deputy governor of Fujian Province and deputy to the National People's Congress, in an interview on April 4.

The deputy governor said the 50 small and medium-sized enterprises mainly operate as joint ventures or co-operative enterprises. They include shoe and garment manufacturers, crop raising and livestock breeding industries and manufacturers of plastic products.

You said the Taiwan-invested enterprises, except one which faces problems in its organization of personnel, are operating well. The wallpaper mill and prawn feed plant set up in Mawei, in Fujian's capital city Fuzhou, started making profits soon after they began production. After establishing a plastic products plant in Changtai County, one Taiwan businessman made tangible profits which helped him make up his mind to invest in a pesticide factory in the locality. Another Taiwan businessman who invested in a machinery plant in Quanzhou told You Dexin with regret that the plant he invested in was too small. He wanted to expand it, but this was impossible. He had no alternative but to set up another two machinery fitting factories in the area. The decentralized management of these three factories is inconvenient for him, and he often regrets having started off with such a small factory.

Although investment by Taiwan business people must be conducted through another place outside the mainland, the lan-

guage and customs of Taiwan and Fujian are so close and the distance between them so small that many will readily invest in Fujian. There are more than 20,000 people of Taiwan origin and 400,000 who have relatives in Taiwan now living in Fujian Province. Fujian is the ancestral home of some 80 percent of Taiwan residents. Taiwan's *Independent Evening News*, in an article written by Wei Eh, claims Fujian is the most ideal place for investment.

Although Taiwan business investments can be considered as domestic capital, they are still treated as foreign capital and investors can often enjoy more preferential terms than foreign investors in some areas.

To help Taiwan investors make more profits in Fujian, the Fujian provincial government has implemented a series of preferential terms. Now Taiwan investors can invest in the province only after gaining approval from the Fujian Foreign Economic Relations and Trade Commission. The provincial government will ensure that their names and the nature of the investment are kept strictly confidential.

Although Taiwan business investments can be considered as domestic capital, they are still

treated as foreign capital and investors can often enjoy more preferential terms than foreign investors in some areas. For instance, in the Xiamen Special Economic Zone, foreign-invested enterprises are exempted from paying tax for two years, but enterprises funded by Taiwan business people are exempted from paying tax for three years. Foreign-funded enterprises are offered 50 percent tax reduction for four years, but enterprises invested by Taiwan businessmen enjoy these reductions in tax for five years. In addition, like other mainland enterprises, Taiwan invested businesses enjoy the rights of inheritance and transfer.

Taiwan business people and their assets are protected by state law. The government guarantees the civil rights of Taiwan investors, including individual freedom, freedom of action and freedom to remit capital to and from other places. Profits earned by Taiwan business people from their enterprises and assets in Fujian are also protected by law.

Deputy governor You recalled that Fujian learned a lesson from its trade with Taiwan in 1985. At that time some people rushed headlong into rashly importing inferior goods made in Taiwan. You said we should now pay more attention to legal systems in our economic and trade relations with Taiwan. Local rules and regulations have now been drafted on special preferential terms for Taiwan business people and they are being examined and approved by the central government department concerned.

In the past Fujian faced long-term military confrontations with Taiwan and as a result the economy in its coastal areas

remained undeveloped. Since government implementation of the policy of opening to the outside world in 1979, Fujian has accelerated its economic growth, and the superiority of the province has been felt. In 1987 its gross national product rose 3.98 times above the 1978 figure, its total industrial and agricultural output value, 2.91 times, state revenue by 2.18 times, foreign exchange earned through exports, by 4.45 times, and the per-capita income of urban and rural people, by 2.5 and 3.52 times respectively.

Up to now, Fujian has established economic and trade ties with 120 countries and regions in the world and has clinched 1,273 contracts involving US\$1.2 billion in foreign capital. The number of foreign-funded enter-

prises examined and approved by the department concerned totals 1,023. The total output value and fixed assets of foreign-funded enterprises account for 10 percent of the province's total.

With the growth of the economy, the deputy governor said, special attention has been paid to the construction of infrastructural facilities, so an even more favourable investment environment has been created. Fujian has an ample supply of electricity with a generating capacity of 2.93 million kw and power projects with an installed capacity of 2.1 million kw are under construction. Of these, the projects with an installed capacity of 700,000 kw are due to be completed and go into operation in October this year.

The province has 101,000-channel programme-controlled switchboards capable of directly linking up with 17 countries and regions in the world. Some 10,000-ton-class wharfs in Xiamen and Fuzhou and a fleet of 130,000 tons displacement cater for international trade and sea transportation. Main airports, railways and highways have been revamped or are undergoing improvement.

You Dexin expressed the hope that overseas Chinese will also see the benefits of investing in Fujian. The province is the birthplace of Seven million overseas Chinese with advanced technical know-how, managerial expertise, and marketing and information skills. More flexible policies will be adopted towards these potential investors. ■

Democratic Party Active in Social Life

by Our Correspondent Lu Yun

The Chinese Peasants' and Workers' Democratic Party (CPWDP) is one of eight democratic parties* in China. Many of its members, as well as working on their own jobs, have devoted themselves to providing the possibility for intellectual development and consultation services in medical care—their main field of interests—in their localities and remote areas.

Under the leadership of the Communist Party, China operates a multi-party co-operative system. All eight democratic parties were

founded and established co-operative relations with the Chinese Communist Party during the period of the democratic revolution. Since 1979 the parties have shifted the focus of their work to serving the socialist modernization drive. While actively participating in state affairs, they devote much effort to social projects, opening new service areas and playing an ever-increasing role as think-tanks. In recent years, the Chinese Peasants' and Workers' Democratic Party, five other democratic parties and the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce have organized over 4,300 people to go to 156 minority areas in Qinghai, Xinjiang, Tibet, Yunnan, Inner Mongolia and 13 other provinces to assist in 3,700 intellectual development projects.

The predecessor of the Chinese

Peasants' and Workers' Democratic Party—the China Kuomintang Provisional Action Committee—was founded by Deng Yanda (1895-1931) in 1930 and renamed in 1947. Its members are mainly academics in the fields of medical science, mechanical engineering, education, literature and art. Many are scholars and professors of high standing. The chairman, Zhou Gucheng, is a noted historian and vice-chairman of the NPC Standing Committee

Medical Service

Many CPWDP members involved in the area of public health volunteer free medical and consulting services. They attend to patients in rural areas, factories and schools, and regularly visit grass-roots medical units to assist

The other democratic parties include the Revolutionary Committee of the Kuomintang, the China Democratic League, the China Democratic National Construction Association, the China Association for Promoting Democracy, the China Zhi Gong Dang, the Jiu San Society and the Taiwan Democratic Self-Government League.

in the treatment of complicated cases.

Last year, nearly 200 CPWDP members working in Shanghai hospitals gave up their Sundays to provide free consulting services in the People's Park. Beijing members held 10 group consultations for 1,300 armed policemen and other Beijing citizens. Members in Zhejiang Province conducted physical check-ups on 2,500 workers at the Hangzhou Silk Printing and Dyeing Integrated Plant. They filed health records for half of the workers and provided follow-up services for those with illnesses. Members in Changsha, the capital of Hunan Province, opened an experimental pharmacy.

The party has set up 74 clinics in various parts of China, each with its own distinctive features. In 1985, the party and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Guangdong branch set up a medical centre in Shanwei, a coastal town more than 300 km east of Guangzhou. The inadequate medical service in this town made it necessary for people with serious illnesses to be transferred to hospitals in Guangzhou; emergency patients often had to be kept waiting. The party organized experts and professors of both Chinese and Western medicine from 21 major hospitals in Guangzhou to go to Shanwei in groups to give medical consulting services. Over the past two years, they have attended to 20,000 people and dealt with 200 serious cases.

The CPWDP members have served the local people wholeheartedly. The renowned ophthalmologist Professor Du Nianzu completed 33 difficult operations in 15 days. Li Wenxian, an acupuncture specialist, effected a speedy recovery for one middle-aged woman suffering from hemiplegia and his success attracted patients from other areas. Doctors at the centre have also

successfully treated Hong Kong and Macao compatriots.

Teaching

As well as offering medical consultation services, CPWDP members have also held academic symposiums and short-term training courses, to help local workers in medical, scientific and technical fields to improve their skills. At the invitation of the Guizhou Traditional Chinese Medicine

The Chinese Peasants' and Workers' Democratic Party has since 1979 shifted the focus of its work to serving the socialist modernization drive. Recognizing the contributions made by the party to the country and its people, many intellectuals in medical circles and other fields have applied for membership.

Society, noted traditional medicine doctor Zhu Chenyu from Beijing and three others visited the province on a lecture tour which attracted an audience of 10,000. The lectures on traditional medicine sponsored by the party in Beijing have been given over the past seven years and received wide public support.

Schools set up by the party in various parts of China are also very successful. The party's organization in Zhejiang Province has opened 16 schools with a total enrolment of 7,000. They offer courses in traditional Chinese medicine, stomatology and nursing for medical technicians. A

rural doctor training course sponsored by the party in Shaoxing has so far turned out 68 trained medical practitioners. Some have been employed by local rural clinics.

A correspondence college for traditional Chinese medicine run by the party in Inner Mongolia has trained 8,000 people. A spare-time college in Shanghai has sponsored regular Sino-US biomedical engineering discussions to promote academic exchange in this new field of study.

Specialists in dairy cattle breeding have also opened a training course for prisoners at a reform-through-labour farm in Zhejiang, which currently has 32 people attending classes.

In recent years, a total of 135 schools have been established across China, 263, people have been trained in specialized fields and 6,000 lectures attended by 790,000 participants have been sponsored by the party.

Aid to Frontier Areas

Since 1985, the party has sent 2,900 experts to frontier areas to help with medical service, family planning, light industry techniques, water conservancy, hydroelectric power, farming and aquaculture projects.

The CPWDP provincial party committee in multi-national Yunnan in southwest China invited specialists from Anhui, Shanghai, Hubei, Guangdong and Sichuan to assist in local construction in the province. In 1986, they offered consulting services for 39 projects, provided group consultation for 6,000 patients, opened training courses for 540 people and gave lectures to another 6,300 people.

In the Honghe Hani and Yi Nationalities Autonomous Prefecture, CPWDP members from Hubei Province completed nine projects in intellectual develop-

ment in the past three years. A course on river valley planning was offered to help local engineers and technicians revise their plans for the development of two river valleys. After making an on-the-spot investigation in Mengzi County, six irrigation specialists from the party offered useful suggestions on how to stop reservoir leakage. Their suggestions have already been acknowledged by the provincial irrigation department.

Policy Advisory Service

The CPWDP Central Committee, together with the China Democratic Construction Association and the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, has participated in the investigation of traditional Chinese medicine management systems sponsored by the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. Discovering that low payment to veterans preparing traditional Chinese medicines hindered the development of this field. The investigation report suggested the State Council give subsidies to veteran pharmaceutical workers appropriate to their technical posts. The suggestion has already been accepted.

CPWDP organizations in Jiangsu Province and Nanjing City organized experts to investigate over a dozen projects. Based on their investigations these experts put forward many recommendations to promote the roles of skilled workers and improve rural medical services and urban hospital management.

The CPWDP committee of Suzhou City in Jiangsu Province has conducted 11 special investigations into developing traditional Chinese medicine, and improving the living conditions of elderly and middle-aged intellectuals in medical circles and the system of appointing professionals.

Self-Improvement

Many veteran party members recalled that after the late 1950s, the activities of Chinese democratic parties were very much isolated from social realities and from the masses. They were limited to studying government policies and self-remoulding. Even intellectuals in medical and educational circles knew little about the party.

In the past nine years, the party has become more involved in social life. In a sample survey of 100 party members conducted last year by the Suzhou CPWDP committee, 93 saw the party's activities as highly satisfactory or basically satisfactory, and 90 believed that their sense of political responsibility has been enhanced since joining the party.

Zhang Shiming, the current CPWDP vice-chairman and son of Zhang Bojun, a noted democratic figure, said the party's main task for some time to come will be the development of social productive forces in the modernization drive. "To provide consulting services for the community is an effective way for the party to participate in social activities and is important for our understanding of society and people's needs," he said. "Offering consulting services for individual projects, helping formulate local development plans and consulting on state policies—these are processes through which we gain first-hand experience to contribute to political consultations. Actually, it is an effective way for us to participate in the democratic supervision of state and social management.

Zhang added that members who have displayed organizational talent and ability in political consultation will be promoted to leading positions in the party.

The party's consulting services have also expanded the party's influence in society. Recognizing the contributions made by the

party to the country and its people; many intellectuals in medical circles and other fields have applied to become members. In recent years, the party has established local organizations in northeast and northwest China and other remote areas. In the end of the 1940s the party had only slightly more than 1,000 members. Its ranks expanded to over 6,000 in the late 1970s and now totals about 32,000. ■

International Studies

A quarterly in Chinese

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China's Foreign Relations: A Chronicle

THE ABC OF INVESTING IN CHINA (XII)

Insurance Service

by Our Correspondent Yue Haitao

Most joint ventures in China have taken out insurance with local insurance companies. The Beijing Lido Hotel has over 10 kinds of insurance with the People's Insurance Co. of China (PICC). PICC is the only state-owned insurance company in China, and has many branches and sub-branches throughout the country. China's law stipulates that all joint ventures, and other foreign-funded enterprises, Sino-foreign offshore oil co-operatives, and projects contracted by foreign enterprises in China should be insured with PICC and they cannot take out insurance outside China.

If enterprises should be victims of an accident, PICC can pay out and the clients can be compensated at once. PICC's premium is very low. In Beijing, for example, insurance on a car is only 300 yuan (US\$80) a year, much cheaper than in many other countries.

PICC's insurance procedures are much the same as any other foreign company's.

First, all foreign businesspeople are invited to insure their funds, equipment, designs, patents and trademarks in China.

Second, the application form must be completed and a signature affixed. The insurance policy which the company then issues comes into effect upon payment of the premium. Last summer, on a cloudy afternoon, a prawn-farming joint venture in Dalian city sent a representative to the insurance company to insure the joint venture's assets against natural disaster. The applicant filled in the form, and prepared to transfer money into PICC's account the next day. That night, however, a heavy rainstorm

ruined the joint venture's dyke. The joint venture lost several hundred thousand yuan.

Third, with property insurance, if the client enterprise insures itself for a value higher than the market value of the property, the insurance company will pay out on the basis of the market value at the time of the loss, regardless of how many premiums the client has paid.

Fourth, according to China's law, the guarantee slip cannot be transferred without the agreement of the insurance company. In recent years many foreign investors have started large-scale joint ventures in China. Most of their funds were raised through international syndicated loans. For example, the Beijing Shangrila Hotel's 40 million yuan investment and the China World Trade Centre's 280 million yuan investment were raised from international bank groups with the help of the Bank of China. As the lending banks are bearing risks, they sometimes ask the debtor to transfer the right designated in the guarantee slip to them. Thus the Beijing Shangrila Hotel transferred its guarantee slip to the Bank of China with the agreement of the insurance company.

At present, PICC provides the following insurance services to foreign-funded enterprises.

- Construction projects all risks insurance, which covers all civilian buildings, industrial projects and public facilities. This is usually taken out by the owners or the contractors.

- Erection all risks insurance, which covers all types of machinery and equipment in factories and mines. This insurance is taken out separately or

jointly by the buyers and sellers.

- Property insurance is a popular policy derived from the traditional fire insurance in accordance with the conditions prevailing in China. The buildings, machinery, equipment, raw materials and personal effects owned and rented by foreign funded enterprises, and foreign business organizations in China can all be insured against natural disasters and accidents. However, under no circumstances will securities, bills, banknotes, documents, account books, drawings, guns, ammunition and explosives be covered under this policy.

- Machinery breakdown insurance for all types of machinery or equipment being completed, installed or already in operation. This is another widely used policy.

- Loss of profit insurance. This is an addition to the property insurance and machinery breakdown insurance. According to PICC's stipulations one of those two policies must be bought before a loss of profit insurance can be taken out. This insurance covers all the profits lost after an enterprise ceases its business.

- Transport insurance. Any loss or damage to raw materials incurred in transit will be indemnified. The applicant can transfer the endorsement of the insurance policy to the cargo receiver without consulting PICC.

- Liability insurance. This is vital for foreign investors and enterprises in China. According to Chinese law, joint ventures and wholly foreign-owned enterprises must take out one or more kinds of liability insurance to cover environmental pollution or injury to Chinese employees which they might cause.

The liability insurance includes four categories. 1. Public liability insurance. This insurance covers accidental death or injury to any third party while engaged upon work for which the insured is legally liable. 2. Products liability insurance. This covers claims against the enterprise made by

people who have consumed or handled the enterprise's products. This insurance is very important for the food industry. The Beijing Air Food Co., the first joint venture in Beijing, has had this insurance for several years. 3. Employer's liability insurance, which is compulsory under Chinese law. This is insurance against the enterprise's liability for medical expenses and compensation in case of death or injury caused to any employee on the job. 4. Professional liability insurance covers death or injury, and loss or damage to the property of a third party caused by accident or negligence on the part of the enterprise or its employees in the course of their work.

In addition, the liability insurance also covers traffic accidents. This insurance is divided into loss or damage cover and third party cover. The latter is compulsory in

many of China's larger cities. Last June, Hans Ziffer, a permanent representative for a West German corporation in Beijing, injured Xu Maodong, an employee of the China International Trust & Investment Corp. in a traffic accident. Xu had all her medical expenses covered through the German company's insurance.

■ Investment insurance (political risks insurance). This insurance has only recently been offered by PICC to all foreign investors in China. The scope of the cover is: (a) War, violence, insurrection, strikes and riots. (b) Confiscation or expropriation of property by government departments. (c) Client's inability to transfer the remittance laid down in the contract in consequence of restrictions imposed by government departments.

■ Employee's insurance in case of breaking contracts. This

insurance was offered following the request of the Beijing Lido Hotel. Many other enterprises have also taken out such a policy.

Previously it was common for the partners of foreign-funded enterprises to have disputes over insurance. The Chinese partners were opposed to insurance, because under the former structure of management, China's enterprises had no decision-making powers, and the factory director bore none of the losses in case of accident. To take out insurance, they believed, would only invite trouble. Some foreign partners said that it was a major task to persuade the Chinese partners to take out insurance.

The economic restructuring has made enterprises relatively independent socialist economic entities with more decision-making powers and full responsibility for their own profits and losses. ■



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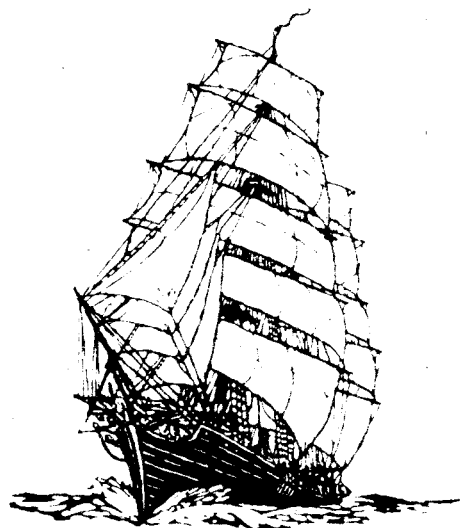
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Profiles of New Leaders



Yang Shangkun

New President of People's Republic of China

Yang Shangkun, a veteran revolutionary and senior army leader, was elected president of the People's Republic of China at the First Session of the Seventh National People's Congress on April 8.

He is the fourth president of New China after Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi and Li Xiannian.

From now on, Yang assumes two important posts simultaneously. As permanent vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission, he has been assisting Chairman Deng Xiaoping in pushing ahead with the reform of China's armed forces and the modernization of national defence.

Yang became a senior officer in the Red Army as early as in the 1930s. Since the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, he has taken up key posts

in the Communist Party, the government and the army. At the First Plenary Session of the 13th Party Central Committee last November, he was re-elected to the Political Bureau.

He headed a government delegation on visits to the United States, Canada and France last May and June. He stated the positions of the Chinese government and army in following terms:

"The present world is in need of peace and development, so is China.

"China opposes any form of arms race, either nuclear or conventional, either on the ground or in the outer space.

"China is convinced that with the growing strength of the forces for peace, a new world war can be avoided, and world peace can be safeguarded."

He told President Reagan, "It is China's hope that its relations with the United States will continue to develop on a stable basis and its relations with the Soviet Union will be improved gradually. At the same time, it also wishes to see an easing of the relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, between Eastern and Western Europe, and between the two opposing military blocs. China welcomes continued US-Soviet dialogue to reach agreement favourable to a relaxation of international tension and not to the damage of the interests of a third country."

In the capacity of the permanent vice-chairman and secretary-general of the Central Military Commission, Yang left his imprints by carrying out the major decisions of Chairman Deng Xiaoping, effecting a strategic change in the guiding principle for army building, pushing ahead reforms in the armed forces and reducing the armed forces by 1 million men.

After several years of work, the Chinese armed forces have step by step shifted from war preparedness at all times to peacetime construction centred on modernization.

In 1985 the Chinese government decided to cut 1 million men from its armed forces. Under Yang Shangkun's direction, the task was fulfilled only in two years. As a result, the armed forces cut 4,054 division- and regiment-level units, 31 corps-level units, and four greater military commands, and the staff at the headquarters was reduced by half.

At the same time, the People's Liberation Army has undergone a series of reforms. Field armies have been reorganized into group armies; an aviation arm is being added to the ground force; education and training are strengthened and

military equipment improved; many defence plants are turning out civilian products.

Yang is an advocate of younger officers in the PLA. By 1987, the average age of the commanding officers of the group armies had been lowered to 47, nine years younger than that of those commanding field armies five years before.

He pledged to deepen the reform in the armed forces. In a panel discussion at the recent session of the National People's Congress, he said that the Military Commission has organized a special group to work on a comprehensive plan for reforms with regard to army organization, equipment, personnel system, education and training.

With military spendings being cut year after year in the national budget over the past few years, Yang emphasized that the PLA should subordinate its interests to those of national construction. Only when the national economy improves can army buildup and defence construction be stepped up. He stressed that all departments should enhance their awareness of national defence, so should the people of the whole country.

He advocated that army units engage in production to reinforce their supplies.

Although advanced in years, Yang never sits long in his office. In the past few years, he was seen directing military manoeuvres and missile launching operations, inspecting military outposts in the remote areas and visiting special economic zones and cities open to foreign investment.

Born in Tongnan County, Sichuan Province, in 1907, Yang joined the Chinese Communist Youth League in 1925, and became a member of the Communist Party the following year. After 1925, he took part in the students and workers' movements in Sichuan and Shanghai. From 1927 to 1931, he studied at Sun Yat-sen University in Moscow.

After his return to China, he was head of the Propaganda Department and secretary of the Party organization in the All-China Federation of Trade Unions in Shanghai, head of the propaganda department of the Party's Jiangsu provincial committee and of the CPC Central Committee, and organized and led Shanghai's workers' movement and anti-Japanese movement for national salvation. Later he served as editor of the *Red China* newspaper, deputy head of the Party school in Jiangxi, director of the political department of the First Front Army of the Red Army led by Mao Zedong and Zhu De, deputy director of the general political department of the Red Army, and political commissar of the Third Red Army Corps with Marshal Peng Dehuai as the commander.

From October 1934 to October 1935, Yang Shangkun took part in the Long March and attended as a non-voting delegate the historic

enlarged meeting of the Party's Political Bureau held in Zunyi, Guizhou Province. After reaching northern Shaanxi, he headed the political department of the Shaanxi-Gansu Detachment and later of the field army.

In 1937, he was secretary of the North Bureau of the Party Central Committee. After 1945, he served as secretary-general of the Military Commission of the Party Central Committee.

After the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, he served as director of the General Office of the Party Central Committee, deputy secretary-general of the Party Central Committee, and alternate member of the Secretariat of the Party Central Committee.

He became a member of the secretariat of the Guangdong provincial Party committee before the start of the "cultural revolution" (1966-76). In 1966, he became a target of attack and was removed from all posts and thrown into prison.

In 1978, he was rehabilitated and served successively as second secretary of the Guangdong provincial Party committee and vice-governor of Guangdong, first secretary of the Guangzhou city Party committee and chairman of the city revolutionary committee (mayor).

In September 1980, he was elected vice-chairman and secretary-general of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. In July 1980, he was secretary-general of the Military Commission of the Party Central Committee, and became permanent vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission the following year.

He was member of the Party's Eighth, 11th, 12th and 13th Central Committees. At the First Plenary Session of the 12th Party Central Committee in 1982, he was elected to the Political Bureau.

A sports enthusiast, Yang Shangkun likes swimming.

His wife, playwright Li Bozhao, died a few years ago. She was one of the few Chinese women who took part in the world-famous Long March.

Wan Li

New Chairman of NPC Standing Committee

Wan Li, who has been first vice-premier of the State Council, was elected on April 8 chairman of the Standing Committee of the Seventh National People's Congress (NPC), China's parliament, to replace 86-year-old revolutionary veteran Peng Zhen.

To enhance socialist democracy and strengthen legal building, Wan said, the NPC,



China's highest legislative body, should play a more effective role, raise the efficiency of its Standing Committee, and promote exchanges with parliaments in other countries.

Wan Li, 71, was known nationwide for his courage a decade ago in first introducing the household responsibility system with remuneration related to output, which greatly improved the life of local peasants in east China's Anhui Province. Almost at the same time, in China's most populous province of Sichuan, Zhao Ziyang, then secretary of the provincial Party committee, embarked on a similar road to promote the rural economy.

Elated, farmers in China invented a popular saying, "If you want more grain, turn to Zhao Ziyang; if you want more rice, turn to Wan Li."

In fact, Wan Li won national popularity even before that. In 1975, as minister of railways, he chose to follow Chinese senior leader Deng Xiaoping in saving the declining national economy which was greatly affected by the chaotic "cultural revolution."

Acting against the gang of four, Wan led the workers and cadres on the railways in criticizing ultra-Left ideas and anarchism and in restoring normal railway operations. But in April 1976, when Deng Xiaoping was persecuted by the gang of four, Wan was also dismissed from office.

After the downfall of the gang of four, Wan first served as secretary of the Anhui provincial

Party committee. In 1980 he became minister of the State Agricultural Commission, and he did a lot in pushing the rural reform. He concurrently served as chairman of the Central Afforestation Commission. He has been vice-premier of the State Council since 1980 and served as acting premier when Premier Zhao Ziyang was on visits abroad.

He was elected member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in 1977 at its 11th National Congress, member of the Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee at the Fifth Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee in 1980, member of the Political Bureau and of the Secretariat of the CPC Central Committee in 1982 at its 12th National Congress, and member of the Political Bureau again in 1987 at its 13th National Congress.

From the period between 1949 when New China was founded and 1966 when the "cultural revolution" began, he served as vice-minister of engineering construction, minister of urban construction, and deputy mayor of Beijing. Under the leadership of Premier Zhou Enlai, he guided the construction of Beijing's 10 major projects, including the Great Hall of the People. He also served as honorary president of the China Urban Development Scientific Research Society in 1984.

Wan Li was born into a poor peasant family in 1916 in Dongping County, Shandong Province. His mother worked hard to support the education of her only son. He graduated from a normal school in Shandong's Qufu, hometown of Confucius.

Wan joined the CPC in 1936 and during the War of Resistance Against Japan (1937-45), he served as secretary of a CPC county committee and head of the propaganda department and of the organization department of a CPC prefectural committee. During the War of Liberation (1946-49), he served as a member and secretary-general of the Party committee of the Hebei-Shandong-Henan Area. After the liberation of Nanjing in April 1949, he was deputy director of the Financial and Economic Committee of the Nanjing Military Control Commission, head of its economic department and director of its construction bureau.

Wan Li is a tennis enthusiast. He began playing tennis when he was 12 years old. He now plays tennis two or three times every week.

In 1986, Wan Li was awarded an Olympic gold order, presented by Juan Antonio Samaranch, president of the International Olympic Committee, for his contribution to the development of sports in China.

He is also a bridge fan and won a 1984 world bridge "Solomon Award." He is now honorary president of the Bridge Association of China.



Deng Xiaoping

Supreme Commander of China's Armed Forces

Deng Xiaoping, chief architect of China's reform, was re-elected chairman of the Central Military Commission of the People's Republic of China at a plenary meeting of the First Session of the Seventh National People's Congress on April 8.

Hence, he continues to command the three million-strong Chinese People's Liberation Army.

Deng has held the post since June 1981. At the 13th National Party Congress five months ago, the veteran Chinese leader expressed his wish to quit the Party Central Committee and its Political Bureau to help rejuvenate the Party leadership. He was persuaded to keep the post of chairman of the Military Commission of the Party Central Committee.

A veteran revolutionary, statesman, military strategist and diplomat. Deng was a founder of the People's Republic and the most powerful and influential leader of the country after Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai passed away.

He guided the country to step out of the

disasters of the "cultural revolution" (1966-76) and embark on the correct path of socialist modernization. He initiated and guided the implementation of the reform and the open policy, leading the country into a new period of development.

He was twice chosen, in 1978 and 1985, by the American *Times* magazine as the most influential person in modern world affairs. A 1986 survey of 8,000 people in Beijing showed that among the living Chinese and foreign statesmen, Deng Xiaoping won the greatest number of votes to become the "most liked man of influence."

Deng has had a colourful career with many twists and turns. In the past 60 years of great upheavals, he weathered three major setbacks because he insisted on upholding the correct stand.

During the "cultural revolution," he was twice persecuted. From the very beginning of that catastrophe, he, as general secretary of the Party Central Committee, and Chairman Liu Shaoqi of the People's Republic were labelled and criticized as the "top capitalist roaders inside the Party."

He was dismissed from office and sent to do physical labour in a tractor plant in east China's Jiangxi Province. He, his ailing wife and aged step-mother spent three hard years there.

The exposure of the Lin Biao counter-revolutionary clique led to Deng's rehabilitation. With the support of Premier Zhou Enlai, he resumed vice-premiership in 1973. After Zhou was hospitalized, Deng in January 1975 took up the posts of vice-chairman of the Party Central Committee, vice-premier of the State Council, vice-chairman of the Military Commission of the Party Central Committee, and chief of the General Staff of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, to be in charge of the day-to-day operations of the Party and state.

When working as a benchworker back at the tractor plant, Deng pondered over what had happened in China and its future. He set about correcting the mistakes of the "cultural revolution" and took major measures to bring order out of chaos immediately after he was in charge of the day-to-day operations of the Party and state.

However, his efforts were strongly opposed by the then powerful gang of four. In April 1976, a million people in Beijing gathered at the Tiananmen Square to mourn the death of Premier Zhou Enlai and at the same time expressed their opposition against the gang of four and their support for the correct line as advocated by Deng Xiaoping. He was labelled as the "chief backstage boss" of the incident and was dismissed from all his posts both inside and outside the Party.

The year 1976 witnessed the deaths of Mao

Zedong, Zhu De and Zhou Enlai, founders of the People's Republic, and the downfall of the gang of four. At the time, problems and difficulties were enormous and the national economy was on the verge of collapse, and the then attention of the Chinese people was focused on where China should go.

Deng Xiaoping again took up leadership in July 1977. Showing the courage and wisdom of a strategist, Deng advocated "seeking truth from facts," "emancipating the mind" and taking the practice as the sole criterion in judging truth. This helped people eliminate their ossified ideas. The Resolution on Certain Questions in the History of Our Party Since the Founding of the People's Republic of China, which was written under his guidance and adopted at the Sixth Plenary Session of the 11th Party Central Committee in 1981, completely negated the "cultural revolution" and corrected the mistakes Mao Zedong made in his late years while appraising his contributions to the Chinese revolution.

While handling such touchy problems, Deng Xiaoping saved the country and at the same time prevented a new ideological confusion and social chaos.

The emancipation of mind became the precursor of the well-known Third Plenary Session of the 11th Party Central Committee which was held at the end of 1978. From then on, he led the Chinese people on to a new path of building socialism with Chinese characteristics. He has been the chief architect of all the major decisions in the past decade.

Deng Xiaoping was born on August 22, 1904 in a rural family in Guangan County, southwest China's Sichuan Province. He was originally called Deng Xixian, and he changed the name to the present in 1927 when the Kuomintang started to massacre Communists and when he had to work underground as a Communist Party member.

At the age of 16, Deng and a group of other Chinese students went to France on a work-study programme with an idea of saving China through boosting China's industry. He was there for five years and later became a revolutionary. He joined the Chinese Communist Youth League in 1922 and the Chinese Communist Party two years later. Many of his fellow students in European countries later became important leaders of the Chinese Communist Party, and the most influential was Zhou Enlai.

At the beginning of 1926, Deng left France for the Soviet Union to study in Moscow's Oriental University and then Sun Yat-sen University. Among his fellow students was a young man called Chiang Ching-kuo, who later ruled Taiwan for a

dozen years.

Deng returned to China in 1927. The first place where he began his revolutionary activities in China was the Sun Yat-sen Military and Political Academy in Xian under the headquarters of Feng Yuxiang's united forces. He was the chief of the political section of the school and concurrently a political teacher as well as the secretary of a Chinese Communist Party organization there. A large number of junior military officers and Party and government officials were trained at this school which was actually set up by Communists. And some of them later became generals leading the Red Army forces in northern Shaanxi Province.

In the following two decades of wars, Deng was known as an all-powerful army commander.

As a representative of the Party Central Committee, the young Deng Xiaoping went to Guangxi in south China and led the Bose and Longzhou Uprisings in 1929 and 1930 respectively, established the Seventh and Eighth Armies of the Red Army and the revolutionary base areas along the Zuojiang and Youjiang rivers.

He took part in the world famous Long March from October 1934 to October 1935, covering some 12,500 kilometres, during which he attended the historic enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee held in Zunyi, Guizhou Province, as the Secretary-General of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee.

During the War of Resistance Against Japan, the Communist Party and the Kuomintang cooperated for the second time, and the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army was reorganized into the Eighth Route Army of the National Revolutionary Army. Deng became deputy director of the Political Department of the Eighth Route Army. From 1938, he served as the political commissar of the No. 129 Division, one of the three major troops of the Eighth Route Army, with Marshal Liu Bocheng as its commander. There they worked together for 13 years.

During the eight-year anti-Japanese war, the Liu-Deng army took the Mt. Taihang as its base area to fight Japanese invaders. They directed many major battles and sent 38 regiments to join the 100-regiment battle against Japanese aggressors, which was organized by the Eighth Route Army.

In 1947, the 120,000-strong Liu-Deng army crossed the Huanghe (Yellow) River and advanced into the strategically important Dabie Mountains in central China, marking the beginning of a full-scale counter-offensive mounted by the People's Liberation Army against the Kuomintang army.

Together with Marshals Liu Bocheng and Chen Yi, Deng Xiaoping, secretary of the Front Committee of the Party, directed the famous

Huaihai Campaign, one of the three major campaigns during the Liberation War (1946-49), which in 65 days wiped out 550,000 enemy troops. They again directed their 1 million troops in crossing a 500-kilometre section of the Changjiang (Yangtze) River in April, 1949, and capturing Nanjing, the seat of the Kuomintang government.

After that victory, Deng and Liu led their troops in liberating southwest China until the peaceful liberation of Tibet in 1951. Deng worked in southwest China for three years as secretary of the Southwest Bureau of the Party Central Committee, military commissar of the Southwest Military Command and vice-chairman of the Southwest China Military and Political Commission.

Mao Zedong once praised Deng as a "rare talent." He served at key posts of the Party, government and army, and became a vice-chairman of the National Defence Council, chief of the General Staff of the army, vice-chairman and chairman of the Central Military Commission after the founding of the People's Republic from a political commissar of a field army in the war years.

Deng was elected member of the Party Central Committee at the Seventh National Party Congress in 1945, and became member of its Political Bureau in 1955. At the Eighth National Party Congress in 1956, he was elected general secretary of the Party Central Committee and he served on that post for seven years.

He was re-elected vice-chairman of the Party Central Committee at the 11th National Party Congress in 1977, and was elected a Standing Committee member of the Political Bureau and chairman of the Central Advisory Commission at the 12th National Party Congress in 1982. From 1952 to 1980, he twice served as vice-premier of the State Council. He became chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in 1983.

Deng is familiar with international developments and worked out China's independent foreign policy of peace. For years, he has been busy with diplomatic activities. He has visited many countries and met at home foreign heads of state and government and other foreign guests. At the age of 76 in 1980, he was interviewed by the Italian woman journalist Oriana Fallaci for eight hours.

He led delegations of the Chinese Communist Party in talks with Soviet leaders between 1956 and 1963. As head of the Chinese government delegation, he addressed the sixth special meeting of the United Nations General Assembly in 1974 and gave a comprehensive explanation about the theory on the three worlds.

He advanced the concept of "one country, two systems" to solve the Hong Kong and Macao issues

left over from history, which is also a fair and reasonable principle that may be used for solving the Taiwan issue and realizing the reunification of the motherland.

Deng himself seldom mentioned his own experiences. His daughter Deng Lin said that she learned of her father's past only through the tabloids of the "red guards" during the "cultural revolution."

Deng Xiaoping only talked twice about himself as reported by the Chinese press. When meeting the Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci, he said, "It would be quite good if I'm assessed as 50 percent achievements and 50 percent mistakes. But one thing is sure that I have a clear conscience so far." He wrote in the preface of the English edition of *Collection of Deng Xiaoping's Writings* printed by Pergamon Press, a British publishing house: "I am a son of the Chinese people, and I cherish a profound love for my motherland and my people."

His hobbies are jogging, swimming and playing bridge. At the age of 80, he spent one hour and a half swimming in the sea at a stretch. He smokes and likes to enjoy Beijing opera and watch football matches. Sometimes, he takes time out to cook traditional Sichuan hot dishes. According to his son Deng Pufang, his father cooks better than his mother.

He married Zhuo Lin during the anti-Japanese war, and they have two sons and three daughters.

Li Peng

China's New Premier

Li Peng, who has served as China's acting premier for almost five months, was appointed premier of the State Council at a plenary meeting of the First Session of the National People's Congress (NPC) on April 9.

The fourth premier since the founding of New China in 1949 after Zhou Enlai, Hua Guofeng and Zhao Ziyang, Li Peng now heads a government that takes care of a country with a population of more than 1 billion and a country that is undergoing various reforms.

In his government work report at the current NPC session, he outlined the targets for the government work in the next five years, which are to maintain a sustained and steady development of the national economy, accelerate the development of science, technology and education, promote the ongoing reform of enterprises and gradually establish the dominant role of the new economic



structure in the national economy, implement a strategy of economic development for the coastal regions and open wider to the outside world, streamline government organs, overcome bureaucracy, raise work efficiency and build a clean government, and further improve the life of the people.

In the next five years, China will continue the reform and the opening to the outside world, and the national economy will continue to grow with vigour and vitality.

However, Li Peng's government also faces many problems, including the slow growth of farm production, grain production in particular, a fast population growth, price hikes, especially that of food products, low efficiency and bureaucracy.

Li Peng did not avoid these problems and challenges. He analyzed them and advanced measures to overcome them. He pledged to work hard for the prosperity of China.

Li Peng, 59, entered the highest leading body of the Chinese Communist Party at the 13th National Party Congress last November and became one of the five Standing Committee members of the Political Bureau of the Party Central Committee, one of the highest policy-makers for the Party and the country. Three weeks later, Zhao Ziyang

resigned from premiership and Li became the acting premier with the approval of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress.

As a specialist of power industry, Li Peng worked for most part of his life in this field.

He was sent to study at the Moscow Power Institute in 1948, one year prior to the founding of the People's Republic, and was chairman of the Chinese Students Association and an outstanding student there.

After returning to China in 1955, he worked as chief engineer and director of two large power plants in northeast China and as deputy chief engineer in the Northeast China Electric Power Administration.

After 1966, he became director of the Beijing Electric Power Administration and ensured a normal power supply to Beijing and Tianjin despite the turmoil of the "cultural revolution" (1966-76).

He served as vice-minister and minister of power industry and first vice-minister of water resources and electric power in the 1979-1983 period.

During those years, he travelled more than 20 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities, and inspected some 100 power stations and construction sites. He shocked foreign experts with his knowledge about electricity when inspecting a power station abroad.

He became a member of the Party Central Committee at the 12th National Party Congress in 1982, and was elected a member of the Political Bureau and of the Secretariat at Fifth Plenary Session of the 12th Party Central Committee.

He has served as vice-premier of the State Council since 1983 and a member of the leading group under the Party Central Committee in charge of finance and economy to supervise such industrial sectors as energy, transportation and raw material supply. He had served concurrently as minister in charge of the State Education Commission since 1985.

Li Peng has often appeared on the sites of rescuing disasters victims. He went to Tangshan in 1976 when the city was hit by a strong earthquake and organized the restoration work of power supply facilities there. In the summer of 1982 when the Huanghe River swelled to threaten the safety of the surrounding areas, Li flew to Qinghai Province directing the rescue operations to prevent the flood from damaging the Longyangxia Dam, the largest across the Huanghe River. He went to Heilongjiang Province, northeast China, last May to participate in directing the fight to put out the forest fire in the Greater Hinggan Mountains.

He also inspected the construction of the Qinshan Nuclear Power Station in east China's

Zhejiang Province and the Guangdong Nuclear Power Plant, China's first ones.

A Western correspondent once asked him whether he was pro-Soviet. Li Peng replied, "You can not say that one is politically pro a particular country just because he has studied in that country. Many of the veteran revolutionaries in the older generation had studied in the Soviet Union. Can you say they are all pro-Soviet? I am a Chinese and a member of the Chinese Communist Party, and I act in accordance with the line of the Party and the interests of the motherland."

Li Peng was born in October 1928. His father Li Shuoxun joined the Communist Party in its early years and took part in the 1927 Nanchang Uprising, an armed uprising led by the Communist Party. He died a martyr in Haikou, Hainan Island, after he was arrested by the Kuomintang when he went to chair a meeting of the local guerrillas in the autumn of 1931.

His mother Zhao Juntao was also one of the first members of the Chinese Communist Party. She was an educator and died in 1985.

The late Premier Zhou Enlai and his widow Deng Yingchao had the 11-year-old Li Peng sent to Chongqing in 1939 to study at the Yucai School run by Mr. Tao Xingzhi, a very famous Chinese educator. Li Peng studied in the Yanan Academy of Natural Sciences and an industrial school in Zhangjiakou. He joined the Communist Party in 1945.

According to people close to Li Peng, Li is affable and sociable. Among his friends, there are not only political figures, experts, scholars and public figures, but also ordinary people. He also finds time to do household chores. He cooks good Sichuan hot food. He has a good command of Russian and has studied English on his own.

His wife Zhu Lin was a graduate from the Harbin Foreign Languages Institute, and now works at the Ministry of Water Resources and Electric Power. Li Peng married Zhu Lin in 1958 and they have two sons and one daughter.

Li Xiannian

New Chairman of CPPCC National Committee

Veteran Chinese leader Li Xiannian, who has just ended his five-year term as president of the People's Republic of China, was elected chairman of the Seventh National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) on April 10.



The CPPCC is a patriotic united front organization formed to promote socialist democracy, multi-party co-operation and political consultation under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, and exercise the function of supervising state policies. The chairmanship of the CPPCC National Committee has been held consecutively by the late Chairman Mao Zedong, the late Premier Zhou Enlai, Deng Xiaoping and Deng Yingchao.

Upon election, Li Xiannian said that the CPPCC will uphold socialism and patriotism, unite people in all circles and work to invigorate the nation and promote the reunification of the motherland.

He noted that the CPPCC is composed of many experts, scholars and other personnel of talent, who have made great contributions to the socialist cause and enjoy respect from the people.

Li has been known in China as an outstanding Communist revolutionary, statesman, economic planner, and one of the founders of New China. He has held important posts and distinguished himself in economic planning.

During the ten chaotic years of the "cultural revolution" (1966-76), Li was criticized for opposing the anti-Party clique of Lin Biao and the gang of four. He assisted the late Premier Zhou Enlai in running economic affairs of the country, trying to limit losses caused by the turbulences.

Li worked as a close associate of Deng Xiaoping when the late Premier Zhou was seriously ill and Deng was placed in charge of day-to-day work of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in 1975. He supported Deng's idea of readjusting the national economy, which had been seriously damaged by the "cultural revolution," and reorganizing work in various fields. When Deng was again persecuted, he was also forced to leave government work. After the downfall of the gang of four, he and Marshal Ye Jianying strongly demanded rehabilitation of Deng Xiaoping and Chen Yun.

Since the Third Plenary Session of the 11th CPC Central Committee in 1978, Li joined other leaders in leading the Chinese people to readjust the national economy and strive to modernize the country.

Born into a poor peasant family in Hongan County, Hubei Province, in 1909, Li started to work as a carpenter's apprentice when he was only 11 years old. At the age of 17, he joined in the revolution in his hometown. He joined the CPC in 1927 and took part in the famous Huanggan-Macheng Uprising in the same year. He served successively as secretary of a district Party committee, secretary of a county Party committee and chairman of a county workers and peasants democratic government.

Starting from 1931, Li served as regiment, division and army political commissar of the Communist-led Red Army and directed several important campaigns, making his contribution to setting up the Hubei-Henan-Anhui and Sichuan-Shaanxi Revolutionary Bases.

When the Red Army started its world-famous Long March in 1934, Li was an army political commissar of the Fourth Front Army. He led a vanguard detachment of the Fourth Front Army to meet the main force of the Red Army in western Sichuan Province. During the Long March, Li endured numerous hardships and three times crossed the desolate marshland bordering on Sichuan, Gansu and Qinghai provinces.

In the autumn of 1936, over 20,000 Red Army men were ordered to twice cross the Huanghe (Yellow) River in Gansu Province and form the

Western Route Army, in which Li was an army political commissar. For over half a year, this army engaged in a mobile warfare in the Hexi Corridor. It was intercepted by large enemy forces and most of its officers and soldiers laid down their lives or got lost during the fierce battle. Defying starvation, the 700 remaining troops led by Li arrived in Xinjiang after crossing deserts and mountains.

During the eight-year War of Resistance Against Japan, Li served as commander of the Henan-Hubei Column and commander and political commissar of the 5th Division of the New Fourth Army, and secretary of the Party committee of the Hubei-Henan-Anhui Area, helping set up the Hubei-Henan base of resistance against Japanese aggression, which had a population of over 20 million and an armed force of 60,000 soldiers.

After Japanese surrender in 1945, Li, as commander of the Central Plain Military Area, fought hard against Kuomintang troops. During a withdrawal, his troops were besieged by Kuomintang forces. Faced with great danger, Li led his army to break out of the encirclement and reach safety. Later, his troops carried out a guerrilla warfare in Hubei, Henan and Shaanxi provinces, pinning down a large number of Kuomintang troops. When the PLA launched its great counter offensive, Li again led his troops to recover the central plains.

After the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, Li served as secretary of the Party committee and chairman of the people's government of his home province of Hubei as well as secretary of the Party committee and mayor of Wuhan City, commander and political commissar of the Hubei provincial military command, deputy secretary of the Central-South Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, and vice-chairman of the Central-South Military and Administrative Committee.

Li had been member of the Party Central Committee from the Seventh National Party Congress in 1945 to the 12th National Party Congress in 1982. He was member of the Political Bureau and of the Secretariat of the Eighth Central Committee, member of the Political Bureau of the Ninth and Tenth Central Committees, member of the Political Bureau and vice-chairman of the 11th Central Committee, and Standing Committee member of the Political Bureau of the 12th Central Committee.

Li persists in jogging every morning to keep fit. He married Lin Jiamei, a doctor. They have three daughters, who now work as doctors, and one son, who is now in the People's Liberation Army.

Sales of Duty-Free Goods Increase

In recent years, with the implementation of the open policy the sale of duty-free goods, which has operated in the West for a long time, has become one of the most recent businesses that earn much needed foreign exchange for China. According to Zheng Zhixing, deputy general manager of the China Duty-Free Goods Co., the company's business volume and profit for 1987 increased by 25 percent from the year before, its average per-capita foreign exchange earnings ranked the country's highest and the company scooped in a net income of US\$10 million.

Zheng, 44, is one of the founders of China's developing duty-free goods business. He said that the industry made a late beginning but is now developing rapidly. Since the establishment of Zheng's company in 1979, it has set up 45 duty-free stores in the airports and harbours of Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, Tianjin, Dalian, Guangzhou, Xiamen, Fuzhou and Yingkou.

The duty-free shops at the Beijing and Shanghai airports are the largest in China and offer the widest variety of goods. The sales also chalked up in duty-free shops at the Guangzhou, Dalian and Xiamen airports and the Tianjin, Dalian and Guangzhou harbours.

The China Duty-Free Goods Co. is concentrating its efforts towards meeting tourist demands for wide variety of goods and has already established business ties with over 30 representative offices overseas and brought in commodities from 100 duty-free commodity manufacturers in the United States, Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Spain and Hong Kong. It stocks 3,000 products in 16 varieties, including cigarettes, liquor, cosmetics, clothing and household electrical appliances.

Famous-brand and latest-style commodities on the international duty-free market can also be bought in China's duty-free stores.

As in other countries, China's duty-free goods business is managed and controlled by the state. Prices are basically the same as those on the Hong Kong market. Tourists can buy duty-free goods using Chinese foreign exchange certificates, special RMB cheques, US dollars, Japanese yen, Hong Kong dollars and several other currencies.

In addition to the duty-free shops for tourists and seamen, the company last year established duty-free stores in Beijing, Shang-

hai and Shenyang to serve diplomatic personnel living in China, foreign experts, financiers and reporters. Diplomatic personnel living in China can buy duty-free goods on presentation of a declaration form approved by Chinese customs. Other foreigners staying in China for more than six months can also purchase certain duty-free goods such as tape-recorders, radios, refrigerators, television sets, carpets and motor vehicles in line with customs stipulations in the above-mentioned three cities.

To promote the development of the duty-free business, the company plans to open duty-free markets in Beijing and Shanghai. If possible it also hopes to rent one or two duty-free shops overseas.

by Yao Jianguo

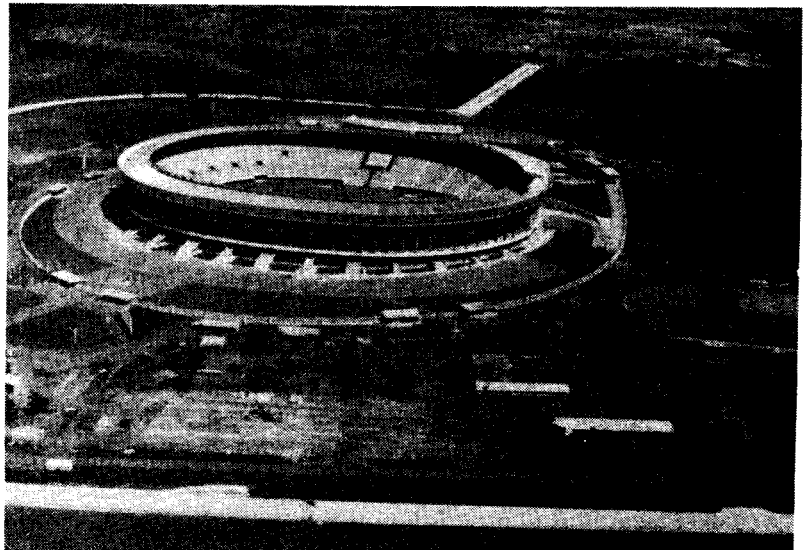
China's Foreign Aid in 1987

According to statistics collected by the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade, last year China sent 2,910 experts and technicians to 62 countries to work on 146 projects. Of these

projects, 36 were completed.

In addition, China offered assistance to 104 projects previously completed by way of participation in management and administration, bilateral loan

Bird's-eye view of the Zimbabwe Stadium.



agreements and the supply of components and spare parts through barter trade. The Chinese side also organized the implementation of various forms of technological co-operation to seek new channels through which it would be able to offer foreign aid.

The Tanzania-Zambia Railway, which China invested heavily into, ran at a loss after its completion due to poor administration. After Chinese experts began participating in its management and administration in 1983, the railway started showing profits and continued to make profits each following year. By the end of June 1987, US\$24 million had already been earned.

With China's assistance, the Rwanda Cement Plant with an annual production capacity of 50,000 tons was completed in 1985. Due to the lack of competent technological and managerial personnel, the Rwanda side asked Chinese experts to help manage the plant. In the first year, 31,771 tons of cement were produced. The 1986 output reached 52,577 tons, exceeding designed capacity, and last year's output amounted to 58,000 tons. In these three years, US\$8.5 million in profits were earned.

China's foreign aid operations began in 1951. By the end of last year, China had helped 94 countries to complete a total of 1,190 projects.

by Li Wanming

Japanese Patent Invalidated

The Examining Committee of the China Patent Bureau recently declared as invalid the design patent for the electric vacuum flask which the Sharp Company of Japan won through the China Patent Bureau on April 30, 1986. This is the first decision

to invalidate a patent since the establishment of the China Patent Bureau.

The electric vacuum flask is a new design allowing automatic heating and preserving; it began to enter the world market in the early 1980s. When developing the new product, the Shanghai No. 1 Vacuum Flask Factory discovered that the product design patent applied for by Sharp was similar to that of a vacuum flask made by the Matsushita Co. of Japan and carried in a Japanese publication in 1982. Sharp was thus violating the terms of Article 23 in China's Patent Law that designs awarded patent rights should not be similar to a design already used or published before the application is submitted.

Receiving a letter from the Shanghai factory, the Examining Committee of the China Patent Bureau immediately put the case up for investigation and prosecution to safeguard China's Patent Law.

Last March, the Examining Committee handed over related documents and copies to Sharp and asked them to state their case. But the company made no answer. According to the regulations of China's Patent Law, the Examining Committee decided to declare the patent right invalid. ■

Northern Ireland Seeks Co-operation

A trade delegation from eight of Northern Ireland's oil, electrical power, machinery and electronics companies visited China in late March to look for new opportunities of trade and co-operation.

Peter Viggers, the delegation leader and under secretary of the State Northern Ireland Office, said that the aim of the visit was to

advertise their products to China and to seek wider trade and co-operation opportunities. He said trade with China has great potential as the country has a big market and offers more preferential policies.

During the visit, some of the companies represented by the delegation expressed an interest in several Chinese investment projects and they will study the projects after their return to their own country.

"We welcome Chinese investment in Northern Ireland," Viggers said. "We have the right conditions for providing production and export bases for Chinese companies." Chinese raw textile materials, electronic components and bamboo and wooden furniture may be processed in Northern Ireland to better suit the requirements of the European market, he said.

by Yao Jianguo

News in Brief

■ A Hungarian trade exhibition will be held in Shanghai on June 6-11. Thirty Hungarian enterprises will exhibit machinery, construction equipment and agricultural products.

At the same time, Hungarian experts will also hold 20 seminars in which reports will be delivered on food processing machinery, underground engineering work, oil and natural gas production, information and cold storage technology.

■ By the end of 1987, China's foreign exchange reserves totalled US\$15.236 billion. Of this sum, state foreign exchange stock amounted to US\$2.923 billion. China's gold reserves equalled 12.67 million ounces and the state's foreign debt balance stood at US\$8.413 billion.

Album of Deng's Life and Work

The Life of Deng—in Pictures

(Available in Chinese, English, French, Japanese and German)

Compiled by: *The Department for Research on the Literature of the Chinese Communist Party and Xinhua News Agency*

Pages: 304

Published and Distributed by:

The Central Party Literature Publishing House

China's first picture album on the life and work of Deng Xiaoping over the past 67 years was released in Beijing in February this year.

The book, which took two years to produce, was co-edited by the Department for Research on the Literature of the Chinese Communist Party and Xinhua News Agency.

Now it appears in both Chinese and English, and will soon be

published in French, Japanese and German. The Chinese album comes in two versions—one with the more complicated Chinese script, the other with simplified Chinese characters.

Deng Xiaoping himself wrote an inscription for the album in which he says, "I feel greatly honoured that I, as a member of the Chinese nation, have become a world citizen. I am a son of the Chinese people. I deeply love my motherland and its people."

The album contains 500 or so illustrated photographs, half of which have never before been published, and a 20,000-word biography of Deng, the chief architect of China's current reform programme. It is the most complete and accurate biography of Deng ever printed by Chinese publishers.

The 500 pictures were selected from more than 10,000, and compiled as a tribute to Deng's 70-year career as a revolutionary. To collect these pictures, the editors of the album visited archives, museums and memorial halls across the country, as well as Deng's relatives, family members and comrades-in-arms.

The album describes how Deng, while studying in France, wrote articles criticizing imperialist and anti-Marxist theories for the magazine *Red Light*, the mouthpiece of the European branch of the China Socialist Youth League.

The earliest picture of Deng appearing in the album dates back to March 1921 during his stay in France. In Lyon 1925, it was given to one of Deng's comrades-in-arms, Liu Puqing, who carefully kept it for 40 years and returned it to Deng in 1965.

Many photos show Deng at home with his family and friends. There are wartime shots with his wife Zhuo Lin and photos of him playing billiard and cards, swimming and mountain-climbing.

The biography of Deng provides many details about the internal Party struggles of the 1930s. For example, Deng was at the time dismissed from his leading post and received disciplinary action from the Party's Temporary Central Committee in 1933, because he resisted the "Leftist" line and persisted in adhering to Mao Zedong's correct argument. Because he was well known by Wang Jiaxiang, then director of the General Political Department of the Red Army, and Luo Ronghuan, then director of the Organization Department of the army's General Political Department, Deng was transferred and appointed secretary general to the General Political

A photo from the album, captioned "Grandpa and grandson, 82 + 1 years old."

YANG SHAO-MING



(Continued to p.39)

Tibet and Others

Since attending a hydroelectric power conference in China in April 1986, I have subscribed to *Beijing Review* and find it keeps me up to date on China, where I now have several friends.

The misinformation about Tibet, and the intrusion of Western troublemakers and governments which really know nothing about Tibet and have no interest in the truth about Tibetan people are most unfortunate.

I found Tibetan people working alongside the Hans in all hydroelectric stations, and women alongside men in responsible positions.

Before the Hans came to Tibet, the Dalai Lama had one small 125 hp power plant which furnished only a few lights for the Potala Palace.

Now Tibet has a modern hydro and geothermal power supply which serves much of the central population and operates well in a very hostile environment.

Lhasa is a modern city; it has stores for everything from electric motors, radio parts, books and food—kids go to school—soldiers play with the kids—and monks in the temples do nothing.

I cannot make a judgement on freedom of religion, but all the people are now free to prosper; they watch TV in two languages, and have enough to eat and a place to live.

A high-ranking Tibetan government official talked with us for several hours one night, and we got away from technical talk to politics. He was very open and outspoken and when questioned about Tibetans maintaining their own identity he said it was a problem but they were going to great lengths to help Tibetans live their own lives in the modern environment with tourists etc., and they have pretty well done away with the old feudal serfdom,

slavery and female subjugation.

Keep it up *Beijing Review*. Do not become too Western and slick; I like China as it is. I am still amazed how you feed a billion people and keep most of them so well-ordered and happy.

Gene Newman
Wash. USA

On Two 'Notes From the Editors'

Two recent "Notes From the Editors" call for some comments. It is my sincere hope that you will air them in "Letters."

1. In "Notes From the Editors," *Beijing Review*, No. 50, 1987, entitled "Productivity and Ideology," you make reference to the "Leftist" mistakes during the "cultural revolution" concerning, among other things, the principle of distribution according to work. It is said that "cultural revolutionaries" were wrong in asserting that this principle constituted an instance of "remnant bourgeois rights," and that this absurd theory has now disappeared.

I beg to disagree. The mistake made by "cultural revolutionaries" in connection with the sound principle of distribution according to work during the first stage of communist society, i.e. socialism, was not their labelling it as "remnant bourgeois rights." Their mistake was that—in line with their generally idealistic way of thinking—they believed that regardless of the level of development of the forces of production, they could do away with this historically unavoidable phenomenon at will, e.g. by way of boisterous political campaigns.

It was these futile efforts on the part of "Leftists" that resulted in the disastrous consequences mentioned in the "Notes" under review.

Karl Marx's unimpeachably

correct theoretical exposition of the necessity to uphold the principle of "from each according to ability, to each according to work" for a time after the socialist revolution while recognizing it as an instance of remnant bourgeois rights is not absurd. It should not "disappear," and I am confident it has not "disappeared."

2. In "Notes From the Editors" in NO. 51, 1987, "Consultation and Dialogue," mention is made of the problem of people grumbling that in China one still cannot enjoy the living standards of the general populace in developed countries. The author goes on to say:

"After talking with leaders or theorists, they come to realize that China is still in the primary stage of socialism and its productivity is still low, and that although reforms have boosted the development of the productive forces and benefited the people, it is still unrealistic to try and compete with the living standards in developed countries."

To contribute effectively to the political economic education not only of the grumblers, but of the people as a whole, I think Chinese leaders and theorists ought to say something else about the glaring differences in living standards in the world today.

The starting point of any discussion on the subject needs to stress a basic fact behind these differences—a fact long ago recognized by Marx, Engels and Lenin and made more self-evident by developments since their times. The fact is that, in the final analysis, living standards are based on plunder and exploitation of the rest of the world. Our affluence even today pre-supposes poverty in the third world.

Once this basic fact has been firmly grasped, discussions may start on a whole range of questions such as:

Is it worth emulating the kind of

material well-being won by centuries of oppression, plunder and exploitation of other countries and their peoples?

Will it be objectively possible for China to attain even the present level of living standards of developed countries without itself accepting a share of the plunder — just as European countries laid the foundations for their present levels of development by sharing in England's plunder?

Should a comparison of living standards in China and developed countries be used at all as a kind of yardstick for progress in China's modernization and socialist construction?

Might not the Chinese people, on their laborious path through the primary stage of socialism, create for themselves new standards for well-being, which would make any such comparison

meaningless?

Gotfred Appel
Nakskov, Denmark

How China Develop

I was delighted to read the article "Choice Based on History and Reality" in *Beijing Review*, Vol. 30, NO. 44, 1987. Once again, Chinese economists and sociologists are taking a realistic approach.

How are China and other third world countries to develop? That is the key question.

The article could also have mentioned that economic superiority is no accident. Rich countries are, of course, technologically ahead of poor countries. But there is also the matter of unequal exchange of equal values.

The product of an hour's socially necessary labour in a rich country has an exchange value on the world market of the product of an average 20 hours' socially

necessary labour in a poor country. Compare automobile production with tea production, for example. No wonder the rich countries are rich!

General Secretary Zhao Ziyang, in the same issue of *Beijing Review*, said: "Planning should be done according to the principle of commodity exchange and the law of value." He was referring to China itself. China's internal economy cannot thrive on unequal exchange of equal values.

The same thing applies on a world scale. The world economy cannot thrive on an unequal exchange of equal values. But it will take some time for rich countries to learn this!

China is reinstating the law of value as its key law of economic development. This is not just of major importance to China's own development.

Ivor Kenna
London, England

(Continued from p.37)

Department of the Red Army.

Deng later took charge of the compilation of *Red Star*, the mouthpiece of the General Political Department. In December 1934, prior to the Zunyi Meeting, he was again appointed Secretary-General of the Party Central Committee.

Some photos showing the difficult times Deng endured during the chaotic period (1966-76) were taken and developed by Deng's daughter. The photographs had to be reproduced from old photos because the original negatives were lost during the "cultural revolution."

Other important historical events have also been recorded here. There is one photo of Deng

leading a Chinese delegation attending the Sixth Special Session of the UN General Assembly in April 1974. The late Premier Zhou, who was seriously ill at the time, saw the delegation off at Beijing Airport where he shook hands warmly with Deng. The picture was discovered in a newsreel taken by the Central Newsreel Film Studio. Other such "discoveries" add an exciting touch to the album.

About one quarter of the photos in the album were taken after 1979. There is a photo of Deng meeting delegates from the Research Centre of Strategic and International Issues from Georgetown University in the United States when he first put forward his reunification formula "One country, two systems."

In 1985, Deng was named "Man of the Year" by the US magazine *Time*. In its first issue for 1986, *Time* carried an article on Deng Xiaoping's role as leader of a second revolution.

Many of the photos show the work of the Party nucleus headed by Deng in their efforts to open up a new era in China. The Party nucleus included Ye Jianying, Chen Yun, Li Xiannian, Zhao Ziyang and Hu Yaobang.

"This is no ordinary photo album," said Li Qi, director of the Department for Research on the Literature of the Chinese Communist Party and editor-in-chief of the album. "It is not only of great historical value as a document of Party literature, but also as an artistic work."

by Zhou Shu

Facts and Figures on Tibetan Culture

Performing Arts Tibet has nine professional performing arts troupes. They include song and dance ensembles, a Tibetan opera troupe, a modern drama troupe and dozens of others smaller ones. Every year they hold more than 1,000 performances for Tibetan farmers and herdsmen.

The region has more than 3,000 professional artists. Among the most famous are Cedan Zhoima, a singer; Ngozho Doje, an orchestra conductor; Wangdui, an actor of modern drama; Balgyi, a dancer; and Namga, an actress of Tibetan opera. Most of the region's professional artists received training in other parts of China. In 1980, Tibet's first school of the arts was established.

Every August the Tibetan people celebrate the Yoghurt Festival, at which traditional Tibetan operas are performed. The custom has been handed down from the 17th century. In recent years, the Yoghurt Festival has become an arts festival including song and dance performances, modern drama, ballad-singing, story-telling, art exhibitions and academic discussions. More than 100,000 people take part in the festivities each year.

Film, Television and Radio About 25-30 films a year are dubbed into the Tibetan language. The construction of a film-dubbing studio in the region is currently under way. Last year Tibetan artists co-operated with artists from the Beijing Film Studio to make the film *A Female Living Buddha*. Most of the main roles and some of the technicians for the film are Tibetans. There are currently 662 projection teams in Tibet, showing films to the local people free of charge.

The Tibet People's Broadcasting Station was launched in 1960.

The station broadcasts in the Tibetan, and Han languages as well as Qamdo dialect. It also broadcasts Tibetan programmes to Tibetans living abroad and relays Hindi language programmes by the Central People's Broadcasting Station.

Almost one-third of Tibet's population of 1.8 million has access to television. TV sets and video cassette recorders are gaining popularity in Lhasa and some other major cities in the autonomous region. The telefilms *Keeping Promises* and *Ba Sang and His Brothers and Sisters*, performed by Tibetan artists, have been well received by viewers across the country.

Press Since the Tibet Publishing House was established in 1971, it has printed 43.5 million copies of 600 books. Every year it publishes about 50 books. Its large picture albums *Tangga in Tibet*, *Potala Palace* and *Sagya Monastery* were beautifully produced; its hanging charts for the four medical books won the Chinese Book Prize. The first 19 volumes of the ancient Tibetan folk epic *King Gesar* is one recent publication. The story has been handed down orally.

The collection, collation, video and audio recording of Tibetan music, dance, opera, ballads and folk tales — one of the state's main research projects — has been in progress for the past three years. A series of books about each of the above-mentioned fields will come off the press soon.

In recent years many books of Tibetan history, Tibetan literary classics and folk literature have won a large readership in the whole country.

Tibet Daily, in the Tibetan and Han languages, has a circulation of 50,000. The periodicals *Tibet*

Literature and Tibet Art & Literature are sold in 27 countries and regions. Tibetan writers Yexe Dainzin and Zhaxi Dawa and painter Yexe Xerao are well known both at home and abroad.

Library and Cultural Centres The autonomous region boasts 20 public libraries and 39 centres for carrying out cultural and recreational activities at the grass roots.

Cultural Exchanges In 1978 the Tibetan Song and Dance Ensemble visited five countries in northern Europe. In July 1987, it attended the International Traditional Artistic Festival in Britain. In 1983 and 1986, the Tibetan Opera Troupe visited Japan where it participated in academic discussions. In March 1987, it visited the United States. Last year *tangga* and other cultural relics from Tibet were exhibited in Paris for six months. Tibetan artists have also visited foreign countries with various cultural delegations and the region has received 14 foreign cultural delegations.

Preservation of Cultural Relics Since 1980 Tibet has received 12 million yuan in grants from the state and local government for the preservation of cultural relics. The state has classified many historic sites in the region as top priorities for preservation. They include the Karub neolithic ruins in eastern Tibet, the ancient castle of Yumpa Lagang to the southeast of Lhasa and the 10th century Guge Kingdom ruins in western Tibet.

Education Tibet now has three institutes of higher learning, 64 middle schools, 14 secondary vocational schools and 2,300 primary schools, with a total of 148,000 students. Preparations have been started for the construction of the Academy of Tibetan Medical Sciences. In addition, special classes and middle schools for Tibetan students have been established in 17 provinces and municipalities

outside the region. The rate of illiteracy in Tibet dropped from 98 percent in the 1950s to 60 percent in 1987.

Research on Tibet In 1985 the China Tibetan Research Centre was established in Beijing. Doje Cedain, the former chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Region

was appointed the head of the centre. In 1986, the Society for Tibet Study was established in Lhasa. In the same year, it held the first symposium. Professor Dungkar Losang Chinlei, a famous Tibetan literature expert, is the president of the society.

by Gasang Namje

man once more took up his singing.

Zhaba soon became one of the key figures at the King Gesar Research Centre established by the autonomous government. Each morning, after bathing himself in the warm sunshine for a few minutes, he would start chanting *King Gesar* in front of a tape recorder.

In the summer of 1984 in Lhasa's Norbu Lingka Park, folk artists from seven provinces and autonomous regions met to give a performance of *King Gesar*. Zhaba sang of young Gesar becoming a hero after a horse race before a large, excited audience. Sometimes Zhaba would sit cross-legged on a cushion and sing the story while fingering Buddhist prayer beads; sometimes he would stand up and make emotional gestures. His voice would rise and fall as the plot developed.

In the spring of 1985, an

Folk Singers Revive Tibetan Epic

The grand Tibetan epic, *King Gesar*, handed down verbally through generations of poets, tells the legendary story of the heroic King Gesar, who freed his people from the torture of evil powers. The epic without doubt represents the most brilliant product of ancient Tibetan culture. However, opinions differ about the length and contents of the epic. Some say it has seven episodes and some 12, and others believe that there can be as many as 18, 25, 31, 60 or even 70 episodes.

For thousands of years the epic has been chanted by singers of the Tibetan nationality or other nationalities. Although the epic is always the same, the details are often varied. So far there is no complete authoritative written version.

Zhaba Ngawang Jiacao is one of the many folk singers invited to make recordings as part of the efforts to collect as many versions as possible.

Zhaba could sing the epic when he was only nine years old. It was said his chanting could "brighten the eyes of listeners and stir their blood." In the early 1950s, he cut short his career as a minstrel to become a factory worker. However, during the "cultural revolution" he was accused of "singing the praises of kings and aristocrats" and severely criticized. In 1979 Zhaba, then in his 70s, came to Lhasa where he was

recognized as a once well-known epic singer. When some people asked him to sing the story of King Gesar, he was so moved that his eyes filled with tears. But remembering what he suffered during the "cultural revolution" he did not sing. People tried to reassure him that those things would never happen again: "Sing as you like. Sing us the great deeds of the king." After this the old

Zhaba is singing "King Gesar."

XU XIANGJUN



international conference on epic poetry was held in Finland. Scholars from about 20 countries watched the video of Zhaba singing the epic and were carried away by the old man's enchanting performance. The written version of Zhaba's *King Gesar* was included among the published epic works displayed at the conference.

The following year, Zhaba went to Beijing and won first prize at a national meeting awarding those who had contributed to the work of compiling *King Gesar*. He was praised as one of the "national treasures of Tibet."

On November 3, 1986, Zhaba returned slowly to his bedroom in the afternoon after singing two episodes from the epic. He wrapped his legs under a checked rug and sat down against the wall. He kept crooning, with his left hand shifting the beads and his right hand resting on his knee. When his young grandson returned from school, he found the old man had passed away, along with his stories of *King Gesar*.

Jiangbian Jiacao, an expert on *King Gesar* and Tibetan literature, was very moved as he spoke of Zhaba's death. Homer was praised by Dante as the king of poets for his *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, but Zhaba's *King Gesar* is the equivalent of 50 *Iliads* both in length and content. Compared with the world famous Indian epics, it equals 15 *Ramayanas* or three *Mahabharatas*. In terms of characters, it has five times the number of Chinese characters in the Chinese classic *A Dream of Red Mansions*. In the last seven years of his life Zhaba recorded more than 24 episodes (400,000 lines and 6 million words). He left more than ten episodes untold.

Fortunately Zhaba was not the only one who could sing the epic. The peasant woman Yumei said that she could sing 70 episodes of *King Gesar*. She is 32 years old and the only woman who can sing the

epic. Among the stories she recorded for the research centre, many have not appeared in any handwritten or block printed versions, nor have they ever been sung by other folk singers. Zhaba, for instance, recorded nine tapes to tell the story of the "Menling Battle," but Yumei used 19 tapes to complete her story.

Yumei is totally illiterate. She can not write her name nor does she remember the names of shops and streets she frequently visits. But she can remember hundreds of names of places, people, gods, as well as the names of weapons and war horses in the epic. She began to sing the epic at 16.

Songzhu, a herdsman from Qamdo in the eastern part of Tibet, can sing 40 episodes of *King Gesar*. As he sings, he closes his eyes and fingers prayer beads. He loses himself completely in the story, and people are greatly impressed by his witty and wise words.

Ngawang Jiacao, aged 75, is now the oldest epic singer still living. A very learned man he has completed writing nine volumes of *King Gesar*. When he sings the epic, he places a bronze mirror in front of him and gazes into it.

How can these folk singers, most of them illiterate, chant so many episodes of the epic? The late Zhaba once explained that one day when he was a small boy he fell asleep in the woods while attending a flock of sheep. In his dream, God came to him and gave him his instructions. Ngawang Jiacao said that he could see the epic story in his mirror.

Of course these explanations are unbelievable to modern ears. Whatever the explanation, these folk singers are the only ones who can revive the epic.

In recent years, the King Gesar Research Centre has gathered 2,300 tapes and more than 300 handwritten or block printed copies of the epic. There are now

52 volumes of *King Gesar* published in the Tibetan language, with a total run of 2 million. Another 14 editions of the epic have been published in the Mongolian language and 16 editions in Chinese. Many research papers and works have also been published. A magazine—*King Gesar Study*—has been set up to publish the latest research into the work which is now proceeding on a large scale. A complete edition of *King Gesar* is hoped to be published when this work is finished. ■

