

A CHINESE WEEKLY OF NEWS AND VIEWS

Beijing Review

北京周報

Vol. 31, No.21

May 23-29, 1988

Marriage and Family Life





The Tenghu Lake Holiday Village in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, is the first development of its kind to be owned by Chinese farmers. Since the village was built three years ago, Zhuhai has become a comprehensive tourist, agricultural, industrial and trade centre. Combining the natural beauty of south China's waterside villages with modern facilities, it attracts both Chinese and foreign tourists, particularly newly wealthy Chinese farmers.

Tourists are free to taste the oranges when visiting the orchards.

by Xue Chao



Boating.

by Zhong Jinqun

Living by the water-side.
by Zhong Jinqun



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COVER: The implementation of the contract responsibility system injected new life into the Tai'an Tractor Factory in Shandong Province. The director (centre) talks with technicians.

Lian Haisheng

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK

Marriage and the Family

■ The revised Marriage Law of 1980 outlaws the old practice of arranged marriages and gives the Chinese people free rein to choose their own spouses. But there are still problems. In some areas arranged marriages are making a comeback; more importance is being attached to economic factors; the care of senior citizens is a growing concern as is the spoiled only child (p. 19).

Food Prices Raised in Major Cities

■ As part of the country's economic reform, the Chinese government has raised the price of pork, eggs, vegetables and sugar sold in state-run shops in Beijing and other large cities. The cities' residents will receive subsidies to offset the price increases (p. 6).

Contract System Revitalizes Jilin Enterprises

■ Trial implementation of the contract system by state-owned enterprises in northeast China's Jilin Province over the past few years has injected new life into the local economy, which had by the end of 1987 registered massive growth (p. 15).

China's Possession of Nansha Indisputable

■ The Nansha Islands have belonged to China since ancient times. The Vietnamese authorities have been trying to justify their recent activities in the islands, but their attempts will meet with failure (P. 4).

The Truth Behind Lin Biao's Death

■ Lin Biao, former vice-chairman of the CPC Central Committee and defence minister, died in a plane crash in Mongolia in 1971. His sudden death was once described by foreign news agencies as "China's political mystery." The article, an eye-witness account of the events surrounding the plane crash by a former Chinese ambassador to Mongolia, explains what really happened. (p. 22).

China's Sovereignty Over the Nansha Islands Indisputable

■ Until 1974 Viet Nam had always officially recognized the Xisha and Nansha Islands as Chinese territory since ancient times in all its government statements and formal notes, and all the maps and textbooks in public circulation.

■ It is not accidental that the Vietnamese authorities have adopted a contradictory and perfidious stand on the Xisha and Nansha Islands. It is well-known that since the southern part of Viet Nam was liberated in 1975, the Vietnamese authorities have become hot-headed and developed an inflated ambition to expand their territory.

by Our Guest Commentator Yin Zhiping

The Vietnamese authorities have recently been making one excuse after another for their aggressive activities in the Nansha Islands. It is a recognized fact that the Nansha Islands have belonged to China since ancient times. The Vietnamese authorities admitted this once. Their recent statements cannot alter the historical facts.

The Nansha Islands (also known as the Spratleys) are widely scattered in the South China Sea. Spanning about 500 nautical miles from south to north and 400 nautical miles from east to west, they consist of more than 230 isles, reefs, beaches and sand bars, of which more than 100 have been named. Some 20 islands protrude above the sea, the largest of which is Taiping Island, with an area of 0.43 square kilometres.

The Nansha Islands are situated in the key South China Sea lanes and are significant economically and militarily. The surrounding seas teem with tropical fish. The region also promises to be rich in oil.

The islands were first discovered, developed and administered by China. As early as the

200s BC, in Emperor Wu's reign during the Han Dynasty, the Chinese people discovered the Nansha Islands and gradually began to settle there. They worked hard to open up and develop the islands. During the Tang and Song dynasties (618-1279), Chinese people were already living on the islands and engaging in fishing and other productive activities. During the Song and Yuan dynasties (960-1368), China named the islands Wanlishitang. In the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1911), the Chinese government, in clear terms, put the Nansha Islands under the jurisdiction of Qiongzhou Prefecture (Hainan Island), Guangdong Province. In the early 1930s, France invaded and occupied nine of the Nansha Islands and made a territorial claim on the group. The Chinese government of the day lodged a protest with the French government. In 1939, the Japanese imperialists invaded and occupied the Nansha Islands. At the end of 1946, following Japan's surrender the previous year, the Chinese government sent high-level officials by warship to the Nansha Islands to take them over. A take-

over ceremony was held; tablet was erected to commemorate the occasion; and Chinese troops were sent to garrison the islands. In 1947, the Chinese government renamed the islands and put them under the administration of Guangdong Province. Thus the islands were wrested from foreign invaders and brought within the jurisdiction of the Chinese government. Troops from Taiwan, China, are still stationed on Taiping Island.

Since the founding of New China in 1949, the Government of the People's Republic of China has issued several statements on the foreign infringement of China's sovereignty over the Nansha Islands, reaffirming Chinese sovereignty. All the maps published by the People's Republic of China show the Nansha Islands as Chinese territory. In March 1959, China's Hainan administrative region established on Yongxing Island in the Xisha Islands the "office of the Xisha, Nansha and Zhongsha islands." For decades, Chinese warships, fishermen and scientists have carried out constant patrol.

research and fishing activities in the waters surrounding the Nansha Islands. All this proves that China is the indisputable owner of the islands.

This ownership has long been established without dispute by the international community. Since the start of the 20th century, all encyclopaedias and world maps published by the United States, the Soviet Union, France and many other countries recognize or show that the islands are part of China's territory. At the conference on peace treaties with Japan held in 1951 in San Francisco, Andrei Gromyko, head of the Soviet delegation, stressed that "the Xisha and Nansha islands are China's inalienable territory." In 1952 the Japanese government renounced all its "right, title and claim to Taiwan, Penghu Islands as well as Nansha and Xisha islands. Thus the islands were formally returned to China.

In October 1955, the International Civil Aviation Organization held a meeting in Manila, attended by delegates from the United States, Britain, France, Japan, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, the Philippines, South Viet Nam and Taiwan, China. The meeting adopted a resolution, No. 24, asking the Taiwan authorities to strengthen meteorological observation on the Nansha Islands. No one voiced any opposition to the resolution or expressed any reservation.

Until 1974 Viet Nam had always officially recognized the Xisha and Nansha Islands as Chinese territory since ancient times in all its government statements and formal notes, and all the maps and textbooks in public circulation. For instance, at a meeting with the interim charge d'affaires of the Chinese embassy in Viet Nam on June 15, 1956. Ung Van Khiem, vice-foreign minister of the Democratic Republic of

Viet Nam, declared: "According to Vietnamese data, the Xisha and Nansha Islands are historically part of Chinese territory." The then-acting director of the Asian department of the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry was also present at the meeting. He cited Vietnamese data and said: "Judging from history, these islands were already part of China at the time of Song Dynasty."

In a declaration issued on September 4, 1958, the Government of the People's Republic of China proclaimed the breadth of its territorial sea to be 12 nautical miles and made it clear that "this provision applies to all territories of the People's Republic of China including... the Dongsha Islands, Xisha Islands, Zhongsha Islands, Nansha Islands and all other islands belonging to China." On September 14 the same year, Vietnamese Premier Pham Van Dong affirmed in a note to Zhou Enlai, premier of the Chinese State Council, that "the Government of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam recognizes and supports the declaration of the Government of the People's Republic of China on China's territorial sea made on September 4, 1958." Maps of the world published by Viet Nam in 1960 and 1972 and textbooks it published in 1974 all recognized the Xisha and Nansha islands as Chinese territory. All this is on the record in black and white.

After 1975, the Vietnamese authorities changed their stand. They raised territorial claims to China's Nansha Islands through revised maps and statements by the Foreign Ministry. They flagrantly sent their troops to invade some islets and reefs of Nansha Islands and installed various military facilities there in an attempt to create fait accompli and permanently occupy them. Especially since the start of this year, they have stepped up their seizure of islands and reefs of the

Nansha Islands, invading and occupying nine of them. Viet Nam has sent a steadily increasing number of naval vessels to the waters around the Nansha Islands to obstruct the scientific survey being carried out by China. On March 14 the Vietnamese wilfully provoked an armed clash.

It is not accidental that the Vietnamese authorities have adopted a contradictory and perfidious stand on the Xisha and Nansha Islands. It is well-known that since the southern part of Viet Nam was liberated in 1975, the Vietnamese authorities have become hot-headed. They call Viet Nam the third-ranking military power in the world and have developed an inflated ambition to expand their territory. Viet Nam sent its troops to invade Kampuchea and launched armed provocations along the Sino-Vietnamese border. Its stepped-up occupation of Nansha Islands constitutes a grave threat to peace and stability in the region.

The brazen encroachment upon the Chinese Nansha Islands by the Vietnamese authorities has aroused strong indignation from the Chinese government and people. In recent years, the Chinese government has issued many statements justly demanding that Viet Nam withdraw from the islands and reefs which it illegally occupies. In the statements China reserves the right to recover all these islands at an appropriate time.

China does not need a centimetre of Viet Nam's territory, but it does not allow the Vietnamese authorities to arbitrarily encroach upon its territory. The Vietnamese authorities should change their aggressive and expansionist policy as quickly as possible and return to the correct stand which Viet Nam held before 1974. If they act wilfully, they will suffer as a result of their actions. ■

Food Prices Jump 30-60%

Prices for pork, eggs, vegetables and sugar sold at state-run shops in Beijing were raised 30 to 60 percent on May 15. The increases are part of the national effort to make farm produce prices more rational, a spokesman for the Beijing municipal government said.

At the same time the government will grant subsidies of up to 10 yuan a month per person, the spokesman said. The measures are aimed at stimulating farm production and encouraging people to change their diets.

To avoid drastic fluctuations in supply, rations for the four main non-staple foods for the month of May will be sold at unchanged prices until June 10.

The price hikes are expected to add 6.41 (about US\$1.75) to the average person's monthly food bill, while the average wage-earner will need to spend 9.62 yuan more a month to support 1.5 people.

The subsidy will be 10 yuan a month for workers and retired workers, 8 yuan for college students, and 7 yuan for special or technical secondary school students, the spokesman said.

In Shanghai the official price of pork went up 60 percent, while egg prices rose 30 percent.

Many shoppers were heard complaining about the increases, but some seemed happy with the higher prices because more good cuts of pork were available.

"Consumers have different attitudes about the increases now," a local price official said. "In the past, everyone complained and seldom were shoppers pleased with price hikes."

In the past, the government subsidized state-run grocery shops to keep prices stable, the official

explained, but from now on, these subsidies will be cut.

Vice-mayor Zhuang Xiaotian, who is in charge of market supply, told complaining shoppers the city government will do its best to control price hikes. Shanghai Party secretary Jiang Zemin and mayor Zhu Rongji discussed the issue with 1,800 local officials and publicized the new government policy a few days before the new prices went into effect.

The city government planned to supply an additional 200 tons of pork and 100,000 kilogrammes of eggs to the market every day to head off panic buying.

Alfonsin Pays Friendly Visit

Chinese Premier Li Peng held two-hour-long talks in Beijing on May 14 with visiting Argentine President Raul Alfonsin. The leaders discussed US-Soviet disarmament and other international

issues as well as bilateral relations between China and Argentina.

Reports said the talks were full and friendly, with agreement on a wide range of issues.

Li said some progress has been made in the US-Soviet disarmament talks. This has eased the international situation although the arms race is continuing.

Even if the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to reduce their strategic nuclear weapons by 50 percent, Li said, each side would retain enough nuclear weapons to destroy the world several times over. They still possess more than 90 percent of the world's nuclear weapons and they are developing sophisticated space weapons. Therefore, the whole world should remain vigilant, the Chinese leader added.

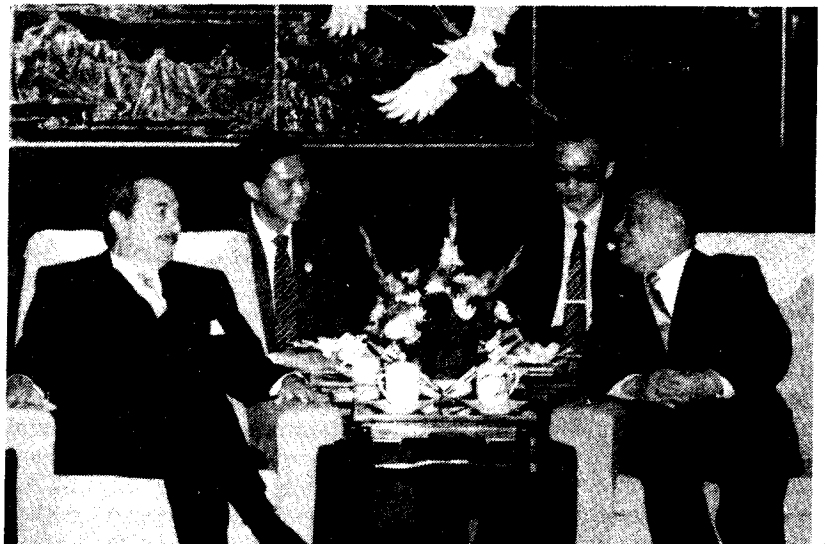
Alfonsin said the arms control talks between the two big nuclear powers fall short of what people are demanding, but that negotiations are the correct approach.

Alfonsin then briefed Li on the efforts made by the six-nation group for world disarmament and the eight-nation group for peace in Central America.

In response, Li expressed his

China's President Yang Shangkun meets Alfonsin on May 13.

TANG MENGZONG



appreciation for the efforts made by Argentina and the other members of the six-nation group.

Alfonsin said that Latin American countries are confronted by debt problems and other economic difficulties. They hope to reverse their worsening economic and trade situation through collective action.

Li said the debt problem is a result of the irrational international economic order. He said it is up to the creditor countries to settle the problem, for which they bear the major responsibility.

"China has all along supported the reasonable demands by the debtor countries on the creditor states," he said.

Zhao Ziyang, general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC), met Alfonsin the same day. Zhao said that as a result of China's reforms and opening to the outside world, the country has made progress in its urban construction and industrial and agricultural development, and has improved the living standards of its people in the past 10 years. China's current policies, which have proved to be suited to its conditions, can facilitate the country's economic development, Zhao said.

"Only by sticking to such policies can China become economically developed through the efforts of the next few decades.

He said that the 13th CPC National Congress last autumn and the first session of the Seventh National People's Congress this spring have ensured continued implementation of the policies.

Alfonsin said Argentina is also pursuing policies aimed at furthering its development and the happiness of its people.

Zhao noted that China and Argentina share more common points than differences. He said he is pleased with the establishment of official links between the CPC

and the Radical Civil Union, the ruling party of Argentina.

In a meeting with Alfonsin on May 15, Chinese senior leader Deng Xiaoping said it is too early to claim that the 21st century will be "the century of the Pacific," "we need at least another 50 years of effort."

He said, "We face two problems: peace and development. These are our paramount aims. We hope there will be peace for at least 50 years, and this is possible. Both of our countries should make use of this period and achieve much in our development and construction. I believe 'the century of Latin America' will appear in the future."

Alfonsin agreed with Deng's statements. He said Latin American countries, especially Argentina, want to co-operate with China toward the realization of a peaceful and fair world.

Deng said the third world as a whole is the largest force for peace. Any progress in the third world means a gain for the forces of peace.

In the past, "we were worried about a new world war," he said. Since the 1970s, we have changed our view, finding that the forces of peace outweigh the forces of war. A new trend has appeared: confrontation is being replaced by dialogue. It is now more popular to solve conflicts in the world through peaceful means. ■

Party Promotes Enterprise Law

The Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party has released a circular which calls on all Party organizations and members to study, promote and implement the country's enterprise law.

The law, which governs state-owned industrial enterprises, was ratified at the first session of the Seventh National People's Congress last month. It explicitly defines the legal status of enterprises and establishes a uniquely Chinese enterprise management system.

The law guarantees enterprises the right to have, use and dispose of the property the state has authorized them to manage, while maintaining state ownership of the property. In other words, enterprises will decide by themselves, according to law, their management and development strategies. The law permits property transfer among enterprises, including mutual investment, shareholding and mergers.

All production and management activities are legal and permissible unless prohibited by law.

The enforcement of the enterprise law will involve various reforms which focus on the separation of government administration and enterprise management. The lack of this separation is still a major obstacle to making enterprises more productive and profitable, the circular said.

Government streamlining, which focuses on changes in functions, must be systematically carried out, it continued. Everyone concerned—including newly established institutions, existing government departments and corporations with administrative powers—must strictly enforce the enterprise law, respect the legitimate rights of enterprises, eliminate bureaucracy, improve efficiency and upgrade services to enterprises.

Economic planning and reforms in the areas of finance, tax, foreign trade, scientific and technological management and the monetary system should be aimed at creating conditions under which enterprises can

compete on equal footing; enabling more enterprises to be directly involved in the international market; and improving their ability to compete.

Labour and welfare reforms must be carried out to create a system of social guarantees which is compatible with Chinese conditions, the circular said.

Government legal and supervisory departments should protect the legal rights and interests of the state, enterprises, managers and workers. Combating improper requests for donations or payments should be an important aspect in enforcing the enterprise law. The legal rights and interests of directors and managers must be guaranteed, while workers and staff members must be permitted to play their full role as the masters of their enterprises.

Communist Party organizations in enterprises should supervise and guarantee the implementation of policy rather than lead the enterprises as in the past. The role of Party organizations in enterprises is different from that of Party committees in central and local governments.

Currently, Party organizations in enterprises should assume their political responsibility of guaranteeing the smooth implementation of the enterprise law, the circular said. ■

Youngsters Grow Taller & Heavier

Chinese young people are, on average, taller and heavier than they were 10 years ago, a recent national survey shows.

The survey, launched in 1985, looked at the physical characteristics and general health of 1 million students between the ages of 7 and 22. The students belonged to 28 nationalities and came from all over China's mainland.

The survey found that Han nationality male students between the ages of 7 and 18 in 16 provincial capitals averaged 3.13 centimetres taller and 2.17 kg heavier than students in this category 10 years earlier. Their female counterparts averaged 2.45 cm taller and 1.43 kg heavier than their predecessors.

In rural areas, youngsters are showing even faster physical development. Males averaged 4.58 cm taller and 2.98 kg heavier, and females 3.33 cm taller and 2.33 kg heavier than rural students 10 years previously.

The trend held for students from minority nationalities. Tibetan male students between the ages of 7 and 17 were 5.6 cm taller and 5.02 kg heavier than their counterparts 10 years ago.

The study was jointly conducted by the State Education Commission, the State Physical Culture and Sports Commission, the Ministry of Public Health and the State Nationalities Affairs Commission.

In a commentary on May 7, the day the survey results were published, *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily) said all of society wants to see more attention paid to the healthy growth of children, because that is where the nation's future lies.

Both schools and families should set examples for children in words, behaviour and thought. The schools have a duty to foster in children patriotism and a sense of respect, the paper said, adding that this should be the basis of ethical education.

Since China launched its open economic policy, "things both good and bad have come in. We should help children heighten their ability to distinguish good from bad, and right from wrong."

Anything harmful to a child's healthy growth should be banned by law, the commentary said. It

also advocated "democratic and scientific" teaching methods. Teachers should respect their students' dignity, meet appropriate student demands and promote exchanges with students, it added. ■

Students Lack Good Books

Beijing middle school students are complaining that they do not have enough good books to read.

Li Shu, a student at the Beijing No. 109 Middle School, said reading in one's spare time is an important way to obtain knowledge but that there are currently few good books around. Instead, more novels about sex, violence and murder are appearing on the book stands.

Students from Tiantan Middle School said they need informative books, books about history and classics that are suitable for them to read, but they find such books difficult to get.

At a recent meeting of the education bureau of the city's Chongwen District, many teachers said publishing houses should stop producing books of low taste, which may seduce young people into imitating bad behaviour.

Parents, too, are critical of writers who spend too much time writing about adolescent love. Yang Bailin, father of a middle school student, said such stories may lead some youngsters to do silly things.

Zhang Mei, a student at the Beijing No. 101 Middle School, said students are criticized for dwelling too much on early love, but society must share the blame. "It is almost impossible to find a film or a novel that doesn't deal with love." Moreover, most of the novels dealing with student love affairs are "made-up lies," she said.

Zhang and her classmates complained that the price of books is often too high for students. They have to turn to magazines for reading material, but there are few good ones suitable for them.

To make matters worse, school libraries are poorly stocked because of shortages of funds, and many public libraries refuse to serve middle school students.

At a recent forum on children's education initiated by the city's Institute of Education, parents and educators pointed out that a generation raised on good books will likely be a promising one, while bad books could lead naive young people into vice. They called on writers, publishers and society generally to provide more intellectual nourishment for youngsters. ■

Brilliant Children Get Head Start

Eleven is usually a carefree age with a lot of playing and even some spoiling by parents. But for Xie Yanbo, it marked the beginning of college life far away from home.

He is not alone. In the past decade, 407 children like Xie, averaging 14 years of age, have been enrolled in a special class for exceptionally gifted children at the Chinese University of Science and Technology (CUST) in Hefei, Anhui Province.

Initially, there were questions about whether the children could bear the heavy burden of college studies or adapt physically and psychologically to college routine. Today, however, few doubt the success of the programme.

Of the 190 who have graduated from what is called the "juvenile class," 143 have been accepted for master's or doctoral programmes in China and abroad; 67 completed their undergraduate studies one to two years faster

than usual.

One-third of this year's graduating class of 40 has been admitted into graduate schools in the United States. An additional 20 percent will be studying with leading Chinese scientists as graduate students. (The programme is open only to science majors.)

Before Xie entered the university in 1978, he spent five years at an elementary school in the Hunan provincial capital of Changsha. He was so short that he had to stand on a stool to write on the blackboard.

After four years at university he ranked first in the examination given by the Institute of Theoretical Physics under the Chinese Academy of Sciences. He became, at the age of 15, China's youngest postgraduate student.

Five years later he got his doctorate in theoretical physics and became the youngest person in China to acquire the degree.

"I'm not the most outstanding among my classmates," he said in a letter to his teacher, Zhu Yuan, written from the United States where he is involved in a post-doctoral programme.

Regardless of the accuracy of his assessment, he is certainly in outstanding company.

Xie Min, for example, entered the university in 1979 and was later sent to study in Sweden. In 1983, the "straight A" student finished his undergraduate studies and in 1987 he obtained a Ph.D. in statistics two years earlier than usual. According to news papers in Hefei, he is the youngest Ph.D. in his field of study.

CUST, founded in 1958, is one of China's leading schools of higher learning. Its "juvenile class," an innovation in China, aims to shorten the education cycle as much as possible for young people with exceptional talent.



YANG FEI

Li Chunli, a middle school student in Beijing, has written a play called "The Sea Through Spectacles," which is being made into a movie by a film studio in Guangdong.

The students in the class are granted more freedom in their studies than other students. They can elect their own courses, including courses in other departments or universities.

The programme aims to provide an all-round, balanced education with additional stress on the development of moral character, study habits and aesthetic tastes, as well as sports and physical labour.

"We are still in the experimental stage," said Xin Houwen, CUST vice-president.

Xin said there are some problems, such as an overreliance on examination results to decide who should be enrolled and too limited options for study.

In the future, Xin said he hopes engineering students will be included in the programme as the country needs many engineers and inventors to help in its modernization drive.

As a result of the success of CUST's programme, China's State Education Commission has decided to establish on a trial basis "juvenile classes" in 12 other universities, including Beijing University and Qinghua University in Beijing. ■

Phone Network Grows in Beijing

Beijing residents and visitors to the capital are finding it easier to meet people over the telephone than to use the city's overcrowded buses and underground railways.

The capital, now equipped with 470,000 telephones, ranks first among China's cities with about 9.2 telephones per 100 residents.

In the past four years, Beijing's telecommunications capacity has increased 2.3 times and the technological level has also improved, an official of the telecommunications bureau said. "Almost all of the telephones installed during that time are programme controlled telephones, which are more efficient than conventional models and now account for 40 percent of the city's total."

At the same time, more than 75 percent of the city's international calls can be dialled directly and 55 percent of the domestic long-distance calls are automatically or semi-automatically controlled.

"Unfortunately, these achievements don't seem to be sufficient," the official said. Although 90,000 telephones have been installed during the past five years, more than 70,000 applicants are still waiting. And officials predict that telephones will continue to be in short supply during the next few years. The current cost of installing each telephone in the city is about 1,000 yuan (US\$370). ■

Weekly Chronicle - (May 9-15)

POLITICAL

May 9

■ During a meeting with visiting Irish President Patrick John Hillery, Chinese President Yang Shangkun says that China must try to improve itself. To attain this goal, the Chinese people wish to co-operate with other countries.

May 11

■ At a weekly news briefing, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman rejects Seisuke Okuno's recent remarks in defence of Japan's past aggressions in China.

Okuno, director-general of Japan's National Land Agency, told an audit committee of the Japanese House of Representatives on May 9 that Japan had not intended to invade China.

Since the beginning of this year, some people in Japan, including a cabinet minister, have shown no inclination to be introspective about the invasion, the spokesman says.

ECONOMIC

May 9

■ A carbon black joint venture has been set up in Shanghai between the Shanghai Coking Plant and Cobot Corp. of the United States.

The US\$29-million project will be the first of its kind in China. Scheduled to go into operation in 1991, the plant will be the largest in the country, producing 30,000 tons of carbon black a year.

■ At a meeting of 10 city mayors held in Xian, Premier Li Peng says vegetable supply must be improved by allowing all sectors—state, collective and private—to get involved in production and marketing.

He says the ability to produce and supply vegetables as required will be one criterion for judging mayors and city governments.

Mayors of major cities includ-

ing Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin and Guangzhou attend the meeting.

May 10

■ The Shanghai municipal government decides to set up a foreign investment work committee to streamline procedures.

The committee, headed by mayor Zhu Rongji, has the power to examine, approve and co-ordinate foreign-funded projects involving capital investment of US\$5-30 million.

CULTURAL

May 10

■ Chen Jiasheng, 66, a professor at Liaoning University in north-east China, has been invited to be the first head of the school of trade and finance in East Asia at the University of Colorado in the US city of Denver.

The school was set up last year.

May 13

■ A national conference on cultural work opens in Beijing. Speaking at the opening ceremony, Minister of Culture Wang Meng says that the key task of cultural work nationwide is to speed up and broaden reforms in the organization of artistic troupes. He says the reform must be geared to the ongoing development of political and economic structural reforms.

SOCIAL

May 13

■ The 11 crew members and 105 passengers of Xiamen Aviation's flight 2510 land safely at Xiamen Airport early in the morning after being hijacked to Taiwan the previous day.

The Civil Aviation Administration of China's Boeing 737-200 was hijacked by two people during a flight from Xiamen to Guangzhou. It landed at Taiwan's Qingquangang air force base at about 10:30 pm Beijing summer time. ■

FRANCE

Socialist Mitterrand Re-Elected

Francois Mitterrand's re-election as France's president could mean the end of antagonism between the country's left and conservative wings and the start of moderation in French politics.

France's Socialist president was elected for a second seven-year term on May 8. Francois Mitterrand received about 54 percent of the popular vote, compared with 46 percent for his rival, Conservative Prime Minister Jacques Chirac. Mitterrand, 71, is the first French president to be elected twice by universal suffrage. Before 1962, French presidents were chosen by indirect election.

The principles which guided Mitterrand's previous term in office helped him win the election. His call for social policies based on mutual aid complies with voters' desire for both stability and flexibility, while his stand in favour of national unity corresponds to France's recent trend towards political centrism. Moreover, Mitterrand's conduct during his first term of office, especially the last two years, won him broad support among the people. He tried to avoid involvement in partisan disputes, shied away from unnecessary interference in government work, and sought to speak with one voice with the Conservative prime minister on most foreign policy and defence issues.

During the last phase of the campaign, Chirac surprised the French people with his success in gaining the release of three hostages who had been held in Lebanon for three years and 23 hostages held in New Caledonia. But these successes, which became one of the hottest campaign issues, failed to gain the prime minister

the votes he needed to win. The major factor in Chirac's defeat lies in the rise of the ultra-rightists and Mitterrand's policy of uniting the middle-of-the-roaders. The traditional conservatives are declining in number as a result.

Mitterrand appointed former Socialist Agriculture Minister Michel Rocard as the prime minister of his new government on May 10. Chirac handed in his resignation in a brief meeting with Mitterrand the same day. Rocard, 57, leader of the social democratic wing of the Socialist Party, was expected to appoint a broad-based, non-ideological team, possibly including moderate conservatives, in line with Mitterrand's plan to build centre-left regime. Rocard said in a brief statement on taking office that fighting unemployment would be one of his priorities.

Mitterrand has the power to call new legislative elections. But in pre-election interviews he said he would instead try to form a government immediately including non-Socialist cabinet ministers. He said he would dissolve the assembly only if the government falls.

The new Mitterrand government will have the choice of putting forward an aggressive programme and risking immediate defeat—followed most likely by a new election—or playing cautiously until the assembly recesses from June until September.

Besides setting up the government, the immediate tasks facing

Mitterrand include arresting the growth of the ultra-right wing and boosting the national economy to prepare for the establishment of a single European internal market by 1992.

Although France will continue to be ruled by a Socialist president and the Socialist Party, it should be noted that the party has changed a lot in the past seven years. Although it still calls for social equality, it has, at least temporarily, abandoned its earlier plans for realizing the goal by means of nationalizing the economy and redistributing wealth through tax reform. Mitterrand is open about this deep change in the Socialist Party. Former Prime Minister Pierre Mauroy described it as the modernization of the left wing and the revamping of the Socialist Party.

From the election results, politicians have concluded that France's centre-left forces, led by the Socialist Party, account for 34 percent of the nation's voters. The centre-right forces, dominated by the traditional conservatives, account for 36 percent. The other 30 percent is divided among the other parties and factions, all of which are dissatisfied with the present situation.

In the future, the power in France is likely to shift between the centre-left and the centre-right, while administrative policy remains about the same. In other words, France is moving towards a bi-partisan political system, as in the United States and Britain. During the 30 years since the establishment of the Fifth Republic by Charles de Gaulle, France has lived with sharp contradictions between the left and conservative wings. Neither was willing to share power with the other. Today, Mitterrand stands out as being determined to break

this tradition by uniting the centrist forces. His re-election indicates that France is leaving behind the traditional antagonism

between the left and the conservatives and setting out to establish a country of moderation.

by Ma Welmin

JAPAN

Takeshita Visits Western Europe

Japanese Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita recently paid an 11-day visit to Western Europe and he plans to return there soon. The tours are aimed at strengthening relations between Japan and Europe, the weakest link in the triangular relationship among Japan, the United States and Europe.

The April 29-May 9 visit by Japanese Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita to Western Europe will be followed by another next month. After visiting Italy, the Vatican, Britain and Federal Germany, Takeshita will return to Europe before the June summit meeting of major industrial countries in Toronto, Canada, this time to visit France, Belgium and the Netherlands. Such quick successive visits to Europe by a Japanese prime minister are rare in Japanese diplomatic history.

Observers in Japan say that while the visits are partly aimed at exchanging views with West European leaders before the Toronto meeting, Takeshita's main purpose is to improve Japanese-West European relations.

Japanese-US relations have been the main pillar in Japan's diplomatic policy—Japanese-European relations have been comparatively neglected—and about 40 percent of Japanese foreign trade is with the United States. Japan's direct investment in Europe is only 5 percent of its investment in the United States. Takeshita said in Italy that he hopes his European tour will give a new impetus to European-Japanese relations and establish a balance in the triangular relations

among Japan, the United States and Europe.

The authors of Japan's diplomatic policy considered that it was the right time for Takeshita to visit Europe because the long-time imbalance in Japanese-European trade relations has recently begun to improve. Although the European Community (EC) had a US\$20 billion deficit in its trade with Japan last year, its exports to Japan increased by 22 percent and Japanese investment in Europe started to grow. As a result, Europeans' resentment against Japan has been eased.

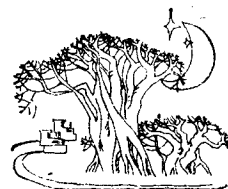
Observers believe that Japan is adjusting and strengthening its relations with Western Europe for both political and economic reasons. Takeshita's goal in seeking to balance the triangular relationship among Japan, the United States and Europe is to expand Japan's diplomatic sphere and raise its international position. The move is also a concrete step in Japan's plan to develop from simply an economic big power into a political one. In his talks with Italian Premier Ciriaco de Mita, Takeshita said Japanese foreign policy is based on the principle of contributing to the world through promoting co-operation and cultural exchanges and increasing development aid. He also said that Japan will take

more initiative on the questions of Afghanistan, Kampuchea and the Iran-Iraq war. This means that Japan will try to use its economic strength to gain a greater voice in world affairs.

The EC's efforts to establish a unified European internal market before 1992 have made Japan appreciate Western Europe's economic vitality. The region has more than 300 million people and accounts for 40 percent of total world trade. Sharpening economic disputes between Japan and the United States and the rise of US trade protectionism have alerted Japan to the need to reduce its dependence on the US market and to squeeze into the even larger EC market.

Takeshita said in Italy that Europe's unified market should be open to all the other countries. This reflects Japan's worry about being shut out of Europe and its eager desire to improve its economic relations with the EC. With these concerns in mind, Takeshita made concessions during his visit on some economic disputes between Japan and Europe. He agreed to reduce high import duties on Scotch whisky, to further open Japan's market to the Europe and to increase Japan's direct investment in the region. Considering the extent of Japanese economic strength and political influence, it would be more beneficial for Western Europe to strengthen its co-operation with Japan than to get entangled in economic disputes. Because of this, Takeshita's tour will likely be successful.

by Sun Dongmin



POLAND

Strikes Pose Challenge to Reform

Recent strikes for higher wages by transport, steel and shipyard workers in Poland are proving to be a knotty problem for the government.

Poland's economic reform, which entered its second phase this year, has run into trouble. An imbalance between price and salary increases has been reflected in a wave of strikes that has shaken the country.

The strikes started on April 25 when 300 transport workers in Bydgoszcz and a nearby town walked off their jobs to press for higher wages. The walkouts ended within 12 hours after authorities granted the workers a 63 percent pay rise.

But the next day, thousands of steel workers went on strike at the Lenin Steel Works near the southern city of Krakow, also demanding higher wages. The labour unrest spread to other factories, including the Lenin Shipyard in the northern city of Gdansk, the birthplace of the banned Solidarity union.

Rising consumer prices were the immediate cause of the walkouts. The deeper cause seems to be that Poland's economic reforms have yielded fewer results than people had expected.

Poland launched its reform programme in 1982 and the country's economy subsequently recovered from a serious crisis caused by an earlier wave of labour unrest and the ensuing economic sanctions imposed by the West. But in recent years, economic growth has slowed while inflation has increased. The government planned to reform the country's pricing system over the

next three years, starting with a 36-percent rise in prices this year. But some enterprises, taking advantage of decision-making powers granted to them by the government, raised prices by a larger margin. Prices rose an average of 42 percent in the first quarter of this year, and although wages have gone up by an average of 45 percent, people still complain, especially those whose wage rises have not kept pace with prices.

Neither the government nor the people are happy about the unbalanced rates of increase. The government is concerned that pay increases, by outpacing price rises, are disrupting its reform blueprint, which is aimed at developing the national economy. Most Poles, however, take pay rises for granted but oppose price hikes, especially when wage scales fail to keep pace with price scales.

Poland's economic reform programme is a bold and resolute venture, but its achievements may not be apparent for two or three years. The government has made clear its position on the current situation. First, it holds that since the power to decide wages has been transferred to lower levels, it is up to enterprises and local governments to decide how best to meet the wages demands, given their economic capacity. The government will not give funds to enterprises that assume sole responsibility for their profits and losses.

Second, the government has said that no concessions should be made to any unreasonable demand. It has explained that to increase wages by 50 percent, as some strikes demanded, will worsen inflation, thus putting a premature end to the reforms. The government has also said it will step in to end strikes that violate the law.

Finally, the government has asked for special reform powers. The country's Council of Ministers consented to a draft proposal to grant the request, which aims to pull Poland out of its economic slump. The powers are designed to help the government resist excessive increases in prices and wages, accelerate the reforms and improve the nation's economic balance.

Meanwhile, the government has denounced the opposition forces, which have been particularly active since the outbreak of the strikes, as "trying to change the existing social system."

The latest wave of labour unrest started to subside as workers at the Lenin Shipyard called off their strike on May 10, and the government remained determined to carry out its reform programme. Polish leader Wojciech Jaruzelski said that his government will not be subdued by the resistance of anti-reform conservative forces and will not back down under pressure from adventurists and saboteurs. Moreover, he said, "Poland will neither rescind the policy of openness, democratization and national reconciliation nor return to a chaotic and anarchic state."

by Wen Youren



BELGIUM

New Government Faces Big Tests

Belgium's new coalition government, formed after almost five months of negotiations, will face many challenges in the coming months.

Belgium's new centre-left government led by Wilfried Martens was sworn into office on May 9, thus ending the country's longest cabinet crisis since World War II.

The previous centre-right coalition, also headed by Martens, fell on October 19 last year as a result of a linguistic dispute. It took 140 days of bargaining to work out the new deal.

The length of the crisis can be largely attributed to deep disagreements between the Flemish Christian Social Party, the largest party in the country, and the two major Socialist parties. After six years in opposition, the Socialists made gains in the December legislative elections, forcing the Christian Socialists to include them in the cabinet.

The bargaining led to a compromise among the two Christian Social parties, the two Socialist parties and the Flemish nationalist Volksunie. The new alliance holds 150 of the 212 legislative seats, more than the two-thirds majority needed to amend the constitution.

Belgium is linguistically divided into the Dutch-speaking north (Flanders) and the French-speaking south (Wallonia). The major political parties are split along language lines. The presence in the cabinet of the Socialist parties and the Volksunie — all of which stand for federalization — will undoubtedly affect cabinet policy.

Great progress can be expected in the federalization of national institutions. After the planned constitutional revision is implemented, the national government will transfer many rights to Flanders and Wallonia and form a third regional government in Brussels — Belgium's only officially bilingual city.

Flanders and Wallonia were given limited autonomy in 1980, but this has not kept linguistic differences from wrecking national politics. Observers in Brussels predict that the projected changes will ease national contradictions and encourage regional economic development.

In view of the large public debt and budget deficit, the government is not expected to substantially alter its predecessor's policy of restraint in the economic and social fields. The new coalition plans to give priority to reducing the high unemployment rate. The number of jobless has been hovering around half a million, or 12 percent of the country's total workforce.

The government is also expected to increase public investment in labour-intensive projects and to amend an earlier tax reform bill so that low-income wage earners can benefit from it.

Little change in foreign policy is forecast. The new coalition is expected to promote East-West detente, West European unity and

aid for developing countries. It plans to play a more active role in European construction, European defence and international issues.

The coalition's programme calls for the US-Soviet treaty on eliminating intermediate nuclear forces to be followed by early disarmament agreements in other fields. The government has announced that Belgium will never allow chemical weapons on its soil, shifting from the previous coalition's stand that the United States could station chemical weapons in Belgium if a crisis occurred in Europe.

But while the new government's programme reflects its good intentions and its desire to ease national and class conflicts, observers note that the country retains elements of instability. The linguistic disputes that have led to the fall of previous cabinets have not been fundamentally resolved. French-speaking Socialists, eager to enter the cabinet, reached a compromise on the issue with the Christian Social parties, but the compromise has caused dissension within the parties.

Moreover, if social problems such as the high jobless rate cannot be resolved effectively because of financial constraints, people will become disillusioned with the government.

Rivalry in two coming election campaigns — the country-wide municipal elections to be held in October and the elections for the European Parliament next January — will probably bring out differences among the political parties, preventing the cabinet from agreeing.

If history is a guide, one thing is sure. The new coalition government will face severe tests in the future; 15 Belgian cabinets have fallen since World War II.

by Le Zude

Contract System Animates Jilin Enterprises

In line with a State Council decision, economic structural reform this year will focus on implementing and improving management contract system in enterprises. Extensive trials of the system over the past few years have produced favourable economic results, as proved particularly by state-owned enterprises in Jilin Province.

by Our Correspondent Yue Haitao

China's northeastern province of Jilin, after introducing the contract responsibility system to its enterprises on a trial basis, registered massive growth never before witnessed in any other province. By the end of 1987, the province's total revenue reached 3.75 billion yuan, 3.2 times the figure for 1982.

Reform — Inevitable

Jilin Province covers an area of 180,000 square kilometres and has a population of over 23 million. Formerly, one of the country's poorest provinces, it drew more than 300 million yuan in financial subsidies from the central government each year before 1982. In 1981, the province's industrial sector registered virtually no growth. Of the 1,094 state-owned enterprises, 42 percent were operating at losses totalling 248 million yuan, more than any other province or autonomous region. This prompted the State Council to stop all financial subsidies to the province in 1982.

The only glimmer of hope came from the countryside. Jilin Province is a major grain producing area in the northern part of China. But before 1981, grain output was only around the 9-million-ton mark. In that year, the responsibility system linking remuneration with output was introduced to stimulate farmers' enthusiasm for production. In 1981, the province's total

grain output climbed to 15 million tons from 8.5 million tons the previous year, making Jilin the highest grain-selling province.

This success gave people food for thought. In April 1982, the provincial government decided to follow the example of the rural areas and introduce the contract system to industrial enterprises, and allow more of the profits earned by enterprises to be retained. By October, nearly half of the province's state-owned enterprises had implemented the system on a trial basis. By the end of the year, Jilin's industrial losses were down 60 million yuan, and revenue had increased by 126

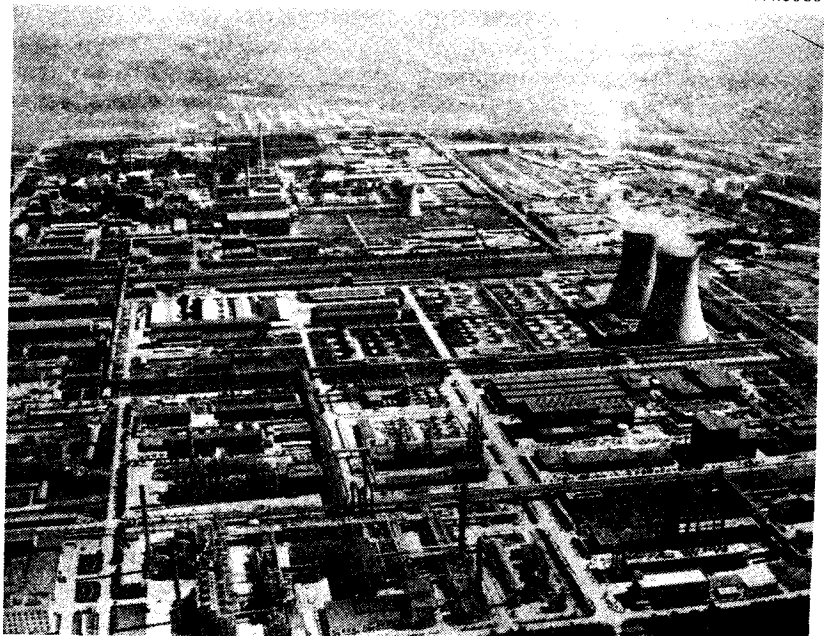
million yuan. Aided by measures for cutting expenditure in government bodies, the province struck a balance between revenue and expenditure for the first time in decades without subsidies from the central government. Since 1983, the contract system has been used throughout the province.

Power to Enterprises

The effectiveness of the contract system in China's rural areas and urban enterprises can be mainly attributed to the removal of two major obstacles which have for a

An aerial view of the Jilin Chemical Industrial Co.

YAN RUOGU





Manager Huo of the Jilin Chemical Industrial Co.

YUE HAITAO

long time stifled enterprise growth: Overconcentration of power and lack of autonomy for enterprises; and absolute egalitarianism of distribution. The system uses economic contracts to clearly define relations between the state and enterprises, and hand over to enterprises the power to manage property owned by the whole people and any economic benefits achieved through their operation.

Under the contract system, all people in an enterprise, from the director down to ordinary workers and staff, clearly understand their rights, interests and responsibilities. Good work will reap more benefits. Jilin's introduction of the system focused attention on large and medium-sized state-owned enterprises as they are the pillars of the province's finance and economy. The contract system has the following forms:

Contracts Based on Losses. This is the earliest form adopted, and is still widely used in China. The contract term is usually for one year. Provincial authorities initiated this system for enterprises running at a loss or reaping little profit. The authorities set limits for annual losses and issue financial subsidies accordingly for

each enterprise. At the end of the year, if the losses incurred exceed these limits, no more subsidies will be granted. If the losses fall below the limits, any remaining subsidies will be retained by the enterprise.

Contracts Based on Profits and Taxes to the State and Technological Upgrading. This form of contract applies to large state-owned enterprises urgently in need of technological upgrading. These enterprises have generally been in operation for some time and their equipment is outdated but they lack funds for upgrading. Under the system, these enterprises must, after meeting state tax requirements, use surplus profits for technological upgrading. Any remaining profits may be put at their own disposal.

Contracts Based on Progressive Increases in Profits Paid to the State. This applies to enterprises experiencing stable growth in production, marketing and profits. The term of the contract is usually two to four years. The government and enterprises discuss and decide on a base sum to be handed over to the state treasury in profits, and an annual growth rate. Any amount exceeding the progressive growth

rate may either be retained by the enterprise or shared between the state and the enterprise. To control excessive enterprise expenditure and encourage production expansion, the provincial government ruled that at least 60 percent of profits retained by enterprises should go towards enterprise construction. Of the ten key enterprises in Jilin Province, seven have adopted this form of contract system.

Contracts Combining Wage Payments With Economic Returns. This is the most comprehensive of all forms of the contract system. The contract extends over a term of four years. Because the employees' wages float with the enterprises' profits and taxes, the initiative of the workers and staff is more effectively stimulated. This contract form mainly applies to efficiently managed enterprises making fairly large increases in returns.

Encouraging Enthusiasm

"It is now not enough to just rely on people's political consciousness to develop commodity production. No satisfactory results will be achieved if the principle of distribution according to work is not implemented," said Feng Yongchun, a head of the H-acid workshop of the dye factory under Jilin Chemical Industrial Co., the largest industrial enterprise in the province.

Feng, with a 22-year background in the chemical industry, is a master technical worker of the highest grade. Under him are 30 workers operating 283 machines.

As a representative of the workers, Feng signed a contract with the workshop in 1982. As H-acid production fell short of market demand, the contract focused on increasing output. It stipulated that for every extra ton of acid produced, workers would

receive 10 percent of profits made in bonuses. Failure to meet the quota would result in pay cuts, and no more than the quota was produced, wages would remain at the 1981 level.

In the past, egalitarian bonus distribution stifled workers' enthusiasm. With the introduction of the contract system, the principle of distribution according to work has been implemented and the gap between workers' incomes has widened. Zhao Wenqin, a woman worker who joined the factory in 1970, and Xiong Youcai, who started work in 1980, are both filter machine operators. In the past they received identical wages and bonuses. But since the introduction of the contract system, Zhao has consistently exceeded her monthly job quota and received 120-130 yuan, twice of her wage, in bonuses each month. Xiong, however, is not as skilful as Zhao. He can just meet his assigned quota, for which he receives his basic pay. The potential rewards for hard work will undoubtedly encourage improvements in less productive workers.

Under the contract system, profit distribution in state-owned enterprises is guided by the principle that the state gets the larger share while enterprises and individual workers receive the smaller share.

Between 1983 and 1985, the Jilin Chemical Industrial Co. handed over 1.05 billion yuan in profits and taxes to the state, an increase of 22.7 percent from the three years prior to the introduction of the contract system. During the three years the company also retained profits of 153 million yuan, up 87 million yuan from the previous three years. Wages paid out to workers rose 57 million yuan, an average increase of 75 yuan per person annually.

Of the profits retained by the company, 60 percent was used for

equipment redevelopment; 20 percent went towards collective welfare funds used mainly for building and repairing housing for employees (the company built 300,000 square metres of residential buildings in the three years); and 20 percent went to increases in employees' wages.

Production vs. Consumption

Jilin's experience has proved that a strict adherence to the principle of profit distribution contributes towards co-ordinated macro-economic development and avoids excessive expenditure growth. In recent years, the growth rate of wages and bonuses paid out by many Chinese enterprises has exceeded that of productivity and profits and taxes handed over to the state, resulting in one of the major factors leading to inflation. In Jilin's case, however, this does not apply.

Between 1980 and 1982, the average annual salary per capita in Jilin was 12 to 36 yuan higher than the country's average, ranking 14th in China. In 1987, however, this figure was 108 yuan lower than the country's average

and 26th in China. The growth of the province's productivity and profits and taxes at the same time was the highest in China.

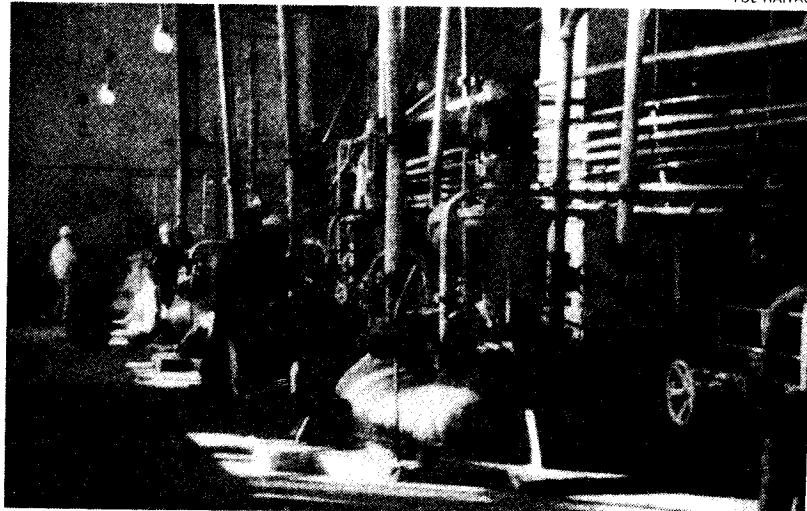
Analysing the reasons for this, former minister in charge of the State Economic Commission Lu Dong noted that the contract system brought enterprises under control. Under the system, salary growth must first of all be lower than the growth rate of economic returns; second, development funds must exceed consumption funds; and third, failure by an enterprise to meet targets for profits to be paid to the state will mean that the difference must be made up from its own funds. This helps strengthen internal controls in enterprises and curbs an excessive growth of social consumption.

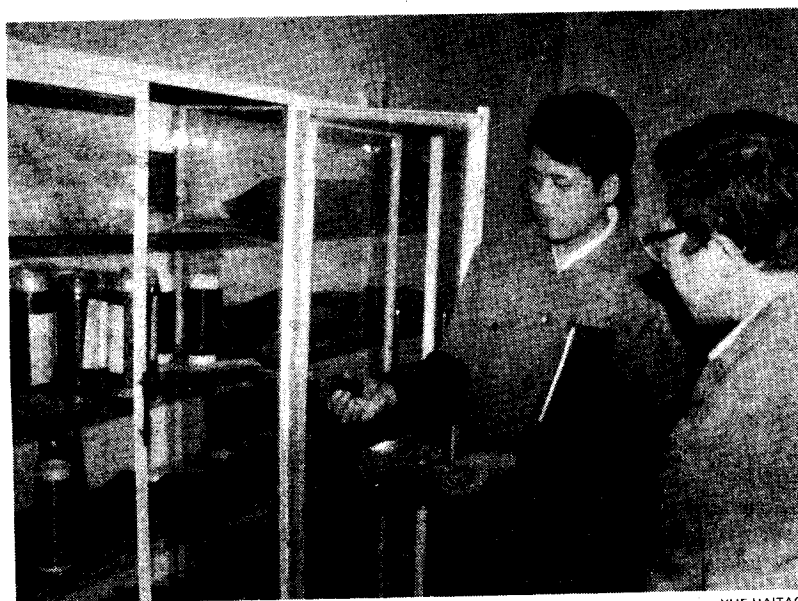
In the past, most investment in publicly owned enterprises was from financial allocations earmarked by the state. Under the contract system, however, enterprises must raise their own funds for equipment and production development through bank loans and other channels. This encourages strict budgeting and attention to economic efficiency in enterprises.

The Jilin Carbon Factory, the

The H-acid workshop under the contract system.

YUE HAITAO





YUE HAITAO

New products turned out by the Jilin Carbon Factory since the introduction of the contract system.

largest of its kind in China, produces 40 percent of carbon products sold on the domestic market. One of the 156 key projects built with the help of the Soviet Union in the 1950s, the factory's equipment and technology urgently needed upgrading, but funds were scarce. Since it introduced the contract system in 1983, the factory has used 45.39 million yuan of retained profits to upgrade equipment; the fund accounted for 80 percent of the total investment in new equipment and enabled the factory to complete 15 large technological upgrading projects to boost production. The factory's average annual growth rate of sales and profits and taxes to the state was 30.5 percent and 31.4 percent respectively.

Improvement Needed

Jilin's contract system still leaves much to be desired. One main problem is that the selection of enterprise contractors has not been incorporated into the competitive mechanism. Directors and managers, as the representa-

tives of the employees making up the collective of contractors, are all appointed by higher administrative authorities. This year

Jilin's contract system still has much to be desired. One main problem is that the selection of enterprise contractors has not been incorporated into the competitive mechanism. Directors and managers, as the representatives of the employees making up the collective of contractors, are all appointed by higher administrative authorities. This year some enterprises will begin to invite bids for contractors in an attempt to encourage competition.

some enterprises will begin to invite bids for contractors in an attempt to encourage competition.

The distribution principle under the contract system is meant to get rid of egalitarianism and the tradition of "everybody eating from the same big pot." However, this is not an easy task.

Li Jingyi, head of the H-acid workshop of the Jilin Dye Factory, said, "Jealousy, which we also call 'red-eye disease,' often obstructs our efforts." After the workshop implemented the contract system, workers received more bonuses which displeased staff in other departments. In the past, maintenance workshop workers saw their services to production workshops as a duty and never charged for them. But now the H-acid workshop has to pay for their services.

When this correspondent visited the H-acid workshop, the machines in the workshop were to undergo a major overhaul. The head and section chiefs of the maintenance workshop were smoking, drinking tea and eating fruit in the office of the head of the H-acid workshop. "This is only the beginning," Li said. "Tomorrow, when they actually start work more workers will arrive and you can't expect them to finish the work on time without spending 1,000 yuan or so on refreshments." This practice of equal sharing of benefits is common in other enterprises.

As an ideal, "an equal share for everybody" is commendable. The problem is people now often want to share the fruit of labour without sharing the work. ■



Marriage and the Family

by Liu Ying

After the birth of New China in 1949, the People's Republic constitutionalized the system of people's democracy, wiped out exploitation and oppression, and introduced socialist public ownership. All these laid a solid foundation for fundamental changes in the Chinese people's attitudes to marriage and the family. The first Marriage Law of socialist China, promulgated in 1950, is a landmark in this change.

Over the last three decades and more, China abrogated arranged and mercenary marriages and encouraged freedom of marriage. Polygamy was eradicated, and monogamy permitted. In the meantime, China abolished the patriarchal system and removed the authority of the father over the family to normalize the relationship between parents and children and between husband and wife.

Problems

In spite of the progress, problems still proliferate. The older feudal marriage and family systems exist alongside the spreading of Western approaches to the family. The chaotic "cultural revolution" (1966-76) wrought havoc in the marriage and family structure. Arranged and mercenary marriages made significant comebacks in some remote rural places. There were also reports of abductions and trafficking in women, and of parents arranging marriages for their children.

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Women, children and the aged are ill-treated in some families. Tiring household duties are a heavy and remorseless burden on women, to the extent that they are now seen as a social problem hampering the further improvement of the quality of family life.

The feudal idea of men being superior to women leaves many couples who already have a daughter to go to tremendous lengths to beat the government's "one child" family policy in the hope of having a boy. On the other hand, families with only one child face a formidable task in trying not to spoil the child.

With the improvement in living standards, life expectancy has risen, producing the problem of an ageing population needing more and more care.

The reforms and open policy of recent years have also brought changes to the family system. People are beginning to make new demands of their personal lives

and to question the very fundamentals underlying the family system.

Marriage

The Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China promulgated in 1980 stipulates that "marriage must be based upon the complete willingness of the two parties. Neither party shall use compulsion and no third party is allowed to interfere." Allowed free marriage, people base their choice of a spouse on love. Because of China's poverty, however, economic considerations play an important part in that choice. This is particularly true in the more remote and rural areas, where arranged and mercenary marriages are still made.

In China today, most couples, where both spouses have similar incomes, education and status, enjoy a happy and harmonic life. According to a survey in Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Nanjing and Chengdu in 1982, this kind of family makes up the vast majority of families after 1949.

In the cities, women are better educated and enjoy admirable

One of the 99 couples to tie the knot at a group wedding ceremony in the Great Wall Hotel in Beijing on February 14.

XUE CHAO





ZHENG SHUFU

Su Fuchun (right) and his new bride Yin Gulping, both farmers from Shunyi County, Beijing, planting a tree to commemorate their wedding.

for 0.82 percent of the women who married between 1946 and 1949 (the percentage was 31.77); women who married men introduced to them by their relatives accounted for 18.35 percent in 1966-76, and for 27.07 percent in 1946-49; women who married men introduced to them by their friends accounted for 45.65 percent in the 1966-76 period, as against 25.5 percent in 1946-49; women who got married through independent meetings accounted for 34.59 percent in the 1966-76 period, as against 15.21 percent in the 1946-49 period.

Divorce

Although the divorce rate is not very high in China, it is increasing rapidly. In 1978, some 170,449 couples divorced; the next year it was 192,894 couples; 180,378 couples one year later; 186,891 couples in 1981; and 210,930 couples in 1982.

An increase as such is not inherently bad. In encouraging

social, economic and political positions. Generally they look for men with a good education, a good job and even a good family background.

In the cities, women usually find husbands in one of four ways —

(1) Parents' arrangement. Although the arranged marriage *per se*, which was very common before China's liberation in 1949, is rare today and non-existent in some cities, the 1982 survey revealed that of 4,874 married women surveyed 861 (17.65 percent) married men chosen by their parents.

(2) Relatives' (including parents) introduction. When a woman gets to know a man through an introduction by her parents or relatives, she dates him for a while to see whether he is good enough. The 1982 survey found that 22.55 percent of married women met their husbands in this way.

(3) Friends' (including school-mates, colleagues and neighbours) introduction. Women who married men introduced to them by their friends made up 35.96 percent of the married women surveyed in 1982.

(4) Independent meetings in schools, work-units or leisure pursuits. Such couples made up 23.82 percent in the 1982 survey.

Other figures are also available, which show great changes over time. Between 1966 and 1976, women who married by their parents' arrangement accounted

He Suqing (left), a middle school teacher in Taiyuan, Shanxi Province, has been looking after her paralysed mother-in-law for 19 years.



freedom of marriage, China includes freedom to divorce. It is vital to women's emancipation. In the feudal marriage system, only the man could initiate a divorce.

Many of the divorces are the results of arranged and mercenary marriages made during the "cultural revolution," of the piling-up of unanswered petitions from previous years, and of infidelity.

A survey of divorced women who married during the "cultural revolution" found that 80 percent liked the husbands who had been chosen and forced on them by their parents. These women then demanded a divorce after the promulgation of the Marriage Law in 1980.

Many petitions for divorce were not granted in the "cultural revolution," so there was a jump in their number in the following years.

While most people remain sexually faithful to their spouses, some stray. Many individual traders and workers, riding the economic reforms to affluence, establish liaisons with colleagues and employees and may well divorce their first spouses to remarry. Men doing so accounted for 25 percent of the divorces in the past two years.

At the time of divorce, 70 percent of the people are aged between 30 and 35, and 70 percent of the divorces are initiated by the women.

Family

According to a survey of 4,384 families in 1982, the average family size was 4.08 people, slightly larger than the national average of families during the third census. Going further back though, the average family size is one person fewer than the average in the grandparents' time.

According to the 1982 survey,

families of three made up 26.16 percent of the total, families of four 27.62 percent, and families of five 19.11 percent. Together that is 72.89 percent of the total.

Nuclear families made up 66.41 percent of the total. Families with three generations living together accounted for 24.29 percent.

With the establishment of socialism in China, the feudal family system altered and the relationship between family members improved. The major change was the power axis, which shifted from father-son, to father-mother.

Shifting Power-Axes

The traditional Chinese family is paternal, with inheritance passing from father to sons. But this is changing. With the establishment of socialism in China, the feudal family system altered and the relationship between family members improved. The major change was the power axis, which shifted from father-son, to father-mother.

Where the husband and wife play the leading roles in the family, one finds a more harmonious co-operative relationship between the spouses in raising children and managing the house. It is therefore more common in China today.

This shift is due to the emancipation of women. In New China, women's roles both in the home and outside have been enhanced. This can be seen in a number of ways.

Women have found independent sources of income. Like men, women take part in production in the countryside. After the intro-

duction of the contract responsibility system, women's roles in agriculture and sidelines became more conspicuous. In the cities, the overwhelming majority of women work outside the home. According to the 1982 survey, of the 4,660 married women, 3,811 (81.79 percent) have a job. According to the 10 percent sample survey in the 1982 census, working people made up 51.94 percent of the total population, and 90.92 percent of the people of working age. Of the working population, women accounted for 43.7 percent. Women are playing a very important role in China's socialist construction, and their position in the family has strengthened.

Women with jobs have found support both inside and outside the home. Traditionally all house work was done by women. The family is now often co-managed by both spouses. Women's positions in the labour force are protected by law and government policy, and any discrimination against working women invites public criticism.

Women have more say in family affairs. According to available statistics, family affairs in 50 percent of the families formed before 1949, were decided by both spouses; but for families formed before 1982, about 90 percent have joint decision making. Love-based marriages and joint management of the family have reinforced the intimacy between husband and wife. ■



A Special Mission History Entrusted to Me

This is an eye-witness account by the author, a former Chinese ambassador to Mongolia, of events surrounding the plane crash 17 years ago in which Lin Biao, former vice-chairman of the Chinese Communist Party and defence minister, died in his attempt to flee the country. Xu's reminiscences of the incident, which include an account of an inspection tour to the area of the crash and subsequent diplomatic negotiations with Mongolia, shed much light on the once mystery-shrouded death of Lin Biao.

by Xu Wenyi

It was about 2 o'clock in the early morning of September 13, 1971, when the Administration of China Civil Aviation (CAAC) Trident plane No. 256 crashed near Ondor Haan, Mongolia. Aboard the plane were Lin Biao, who was attempting to flee China by air, his wife and son and six others, and all of them were killed in the crash.

This was a grave incident in the history of the Chinese Communist Party, and a major case in the history of China's diplomacy as well. It was described by foreign news agencies as "China's political mystery."

The incident occurred at a time when Sino-Mongolian relations were improving and the two countries had just exchanged ambassadors. I was only 20 days in my post as Chinese ambassador to Mongolia and history made me a witness to the incident.

Urgent Meeting With Mongolian Vice-Foreign Minister

I arrived in Ulan Bator, capital of Mongolia, on August 20, 1971, by international train from Beijing to Moscow. On August 24 I handed my credentials to Jamsrangiyin Sambuu, chairman of the Presidium of the People's Great Hural, and began to make a series of courtesy calls. All went smoothly in a friendly atmosphere.

Totally unexpectedly, the Mongolian Foreign Ministry telephoned at 8 am on September 14 to say that Vice-Foreign Minister D. Erdenebileg had asked for a meeting with the ambassador at 8:30 am. Wondering what had happened, I immediately drove to the ministry, accompanied by interpreter Liu Zhenlu.

After a brief exchange of amenities, Erdenebileg said he was authorized by his government to notify me of the following:

"At about 2 o'clock in the early morning of September 13, a jet plane crashed at a place 10 kilometres south of the Berkmine in Khentei Province, Mongolia. After learning of the incident in the morning, the departments concerned immediately sent people to the spot. They collected evidence which shows that the plane belonged to some unit of the Chinese People's Liberation Army. Unfortunately, the nine people aboard, among them a woman, all died.

"On behalf of my government, I hereby register a verbal protest against the intrusion into our territory by a Chinese military aircraft."

After pointing out that the weather was getting warmer now and that the bodies of the dead needed to be buried in some manner, the vice-foreign minister said emphatically: "From this occurrence we have good reason to believe that a Chinese military

aircraft has intruded into our territory. The departments concerned are continuing their inspection and we reserve the right to make further formal representations on the matter. I hope the ambassador will advise the Chinese government of our position and we expect a formal explanation in the immediate future of the reasons for the Chinese military aircraft's penetration into our territory."

I thanked him for notifying me of the matter. "It is no doubt a regrettable thing that our plane, for reasons not clear yet, crashed in Mongolian territory at a time when relations between our two countries are moving towards normalization," I said. "But I would like to know what the Mongolian side will do to the plane out of humanitarian considerations. Will the Mongolian side please help investigate how the Chinese plane entered Mongolia by mistake? As to the verbal protest raised by the vice-foreign minister, I cannot accept it before I have a thorough understanding of all the facts. But I will inform my government of it."

To my question whether we could send people to the area of the air crash, Erdenebileg replied: "We can grant your request. As for why the Chinese plane entered our territory, I believe the ambassador will try to give the Chinese government the opportunity to offer an explanation in

the immediate future. I congratulate you, Comrade Ambassador, on your beginning to perform your duties, and I believe you will work for the improvement of the relationship between our two countries and make contributions to it."

Using the Special Line

It was already 9:30 when I returned to the embassy, and immediately I called together the leading members of the embassy and briefed them on my meeting with the Mongolian vice-foreign minister. I said that what was urgent to do at the moment was to inform our government of the incident and ask for instructions.

But before long, the comrade in charge of confidential work came and told me that the Mongolian telegraph office said the cable could not be sent out immediately because of troubles on the line and that it would take at least four hours to get the cable through. The embassy did not have a transmitting set at the time; all its cables had to be handled by the Mongolian telegraph office. But how could such an urgent matter be delayed for that long?

When it seemed that we could do nothing but wait, I suddenly remembered that the embassy had a special direct telephone line to Beijing, which had been sealed for more than two years. If the line could be used again, the problem would be resolved, I thought.

The special, high-frequency line was first laid between Beijing and Moscow and then between Beijing and Ulan Bator in the 1950s, when China and the Soviet Union maintained a close relationship of friendship. It had not been used since Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated and Sino-Mongolian relations became cool. Now I decided to make an international long-distance call to our Foreign Ministry asking for approval to use the special line because of the

urgency of the situation. Finally we got the ministry's permission and successfully reported back to Beijing through the special line all we knew about the plane crash. The time was 12:20 in the afternoon.

As I learned later, that morning a meeting chaired by Ji Pengfe, then acting foreign minister, was going on in the Foreign Ministry in Beijing, discussing how to carry out then-Premier Zhou Enlai's instructions on Lin Biao's fleeing, sizing up the situation and considering necessary diplomatic countermoves. The meeting did not end when our report arrived. Ji quickly went over the report and then told the participants: "The plane has crashed and the people aboard died. What a wonderful end!"

The report was rushed to Zhongnanhai, the headquarters of the Party Central Committee and the State Council. The news that "the plane has crashed and the people aboard died" gave great relief to Chairman Mao Zedong and Premier Zhou, both of whom had spent a sleepless night after learning that Lin Biao had fled. Zhou expressed appreciation for the embassy's decision to use the special telephone for quick communication with Beijing under the emergency circumstances.

Message From Beijing

At noon on the 14th we were anxiously trying to contact Beijing when we received a call from the Mongolian Foreign Ministry saying a plane was ready and demanding to know when the embassy staff would leave for their inspection of the site. The embassy originally decided that Comrade Sun Yuxian and two aides would go to the spot while I would stay at the embassy waiting for word from China. Considering the insistent Mongolian inquiries, I thought that going to the spot was

a matter of grave importance, and that it would be unwise to take any action before receiving instructions from Beijing. So we asked the Mongolian side to postpone the departure of the plane under the pretext that we were not ready for departure. Two hours later the Mongolians called again to urge us to leave. This time we told them the plain truth—that we were waiting for instructions from Beijing. After this they stopped urging us to depart.

At about 6 pm, instructions arrived at long last: the ambassador must take aides and inspect the site in person. At this I suddenly felt that the matter was much more serious than I had thought. By that time the Mongolian Foreign Ministry was already closed for the day and I decided to break with routine procedure. I requested an immediate meeting with Erdenebileg. He had an appointment with foreign guests that evening, so the meeting was arranged for 8:30 pm and took place in his office. I said to him that I had been told by my government to inform the Mongolian government that the plane that had crashed at about 2 o'clock on the morning of the 13th had probably entered the People's Republic of Mongolia because of loss of direction. We were sorry for this and were grateful for the Mongolian government's willingness to provide us with a plane and appoint a high official to escort us to inspect the site. I would personally head the team going to the spot and we would appreciate Mongolian assistance.

The Mongolian vice-foreign minister, after listening to my statement, wanted me to clarify whether our explanation of the intrusion of the plane could be understood as a "formal reply." I answered yes, and he further asked me if it was a "final reply." I told him that this was an instruction my government gave to me after it

received the first report from the embassy, and therefore it was a formal reply, but I did not take it as a final reply. He enquired where the crashed plane had taken off and where it was heading. I told him frankly that I could not answer his questions at the moment and instead I asked him whether the Mongolian side had obtained any further information about the crashed plane that could be provided to the embassy. He replied that there was none at that moment but that they would inform us if there was anything new.

Erdenebileg was a bit dismayed that the embassy did not send anybody quickly to the site of the crash. He said that more than 50 hours had passed since the plane had crashed and that by the time we got to the spot another 10 hours would pass. He said he did not think we could raise any questions if the corpses had deteriorated too badly. I asked him whether it was possible for the Mongolians to cremate the bodies and let us carry the ashes back. He said cremation was not the custom in Mongolia and therefore it was unlikely that the bodies could be cremated there. He asked us to wait for news of the plane that would carry us to the crash site and to make preparations for the trip.

I reported the meeting to Beijing as soon as I had got back to the embassy. I also asked if it would be all right to bury the bodies at the site, if cremation proved impossible, and transport the remains back to China at an appropriate time in the future. On the morning of the next day, instructions came: do the utmost to cremate the bodies and bring the ashes back; if cremation is indeed difficult, then take photographs as evidence, bury the bodies deeply on the spot and erect a stele. The remains would be brought back to China later.

The Scene of the Crash

At about 1:30 on the afternoon of September 15, the Mongolian Foreign Ministry notified the embassy that the plane would leave for Ondor Haan in half an hour. Sun Yixian, the second secretary of the embassy, Shen Qingyi, the interpreter, Wang Zhongyuan and I had got everything ready, waiting for departure. I brought with me a briefcase, inside which there were a camera and a radio apart from some daily essentials. We hurried to the airport. T. Gotov, head of the consular section of the Mongolian Foreign Ministry, O. Gursed, special commissioner of the second section, Colonel Sanzhaa of the Mongolian Frontier Interior Administration Bureau, some specialists in fields such as aeronautics, law and medical examination, and journalists and photographers, were waiting beside an Il-14 plane. It took off at 2:45 pm and arrived at a simple airport in Ondor Haan, capital of Khentei Province, after a one-hour flight which covered 300 kilometres. A vice-governor of the province and the head of the airport authority met us. After brief greetings we slipped into two cars and a limousine and started for our destination. After a nearly two-hour ride on the bumpy road we arrived at 6 pm.

The crash site was situated in a basin some 70 kilometres northwest of Ondor Haan. The sandy basin was 3,000 by 800 metres. It was open and flat, covered everywhere with weeds. The plane must have been landing from north to south. It landed exactly in the centre of the basin and crashed in the southern part of the basin. The burned area of the grassland was 800 metres in length and 50-200 metres wide, resembling a ladder. Looking around, I found remains of the plane, big and small, scattered around the dark

grassland. The corpses, covered with white cloth, were especially striking. Around us Mongolian guards were strolling on the endless, deserted plain. It made a desolate picture. Escorted by Mongolians, we walked around, inspecting the spot.

A strip of grass about 30 metres long south of the landing point had been scraped away by the belly of the plane. Parallel to this, on the western side, was a 20-centimetre-deep groove cut by the right wing of the plane. To the south, the rut disappeared and the burnt area started. There were more and larger fragments of the plane and they were scattered more widely. Some 200 metres from the landing point there was a piece that connects to a hatch, and 20 metres to the southwest of that fragment there was a piece of the left wing of the plane which bore the figures 56. At about 320 metres from the landing point there was the door of a hatch, on which was pinned a plastic sign saying "Passengers Stop Here." An engine lay 30 metres away from the door. Going further southward, we saw a chunk of the right wing which bore the two Chinese characters "Zhongguo" (China). The remains of the nose of the plane, which was badly burnt, were found about 530 metres away. A piece of the right wing, on which was painted the two Chinese characters "Ming Hang" (Civil Aviation), lay 20 metres east of the nose of the plane. Beside the character "Hang" (Aviation) there was a big hole, which was about 40 cm in diameter. An undercarriage lay 80 metres south of the plane's nose and 200 metres south of that a tyre lay intact in the unburnt weeds. Some 60 metres northwest of the nose was the tail. There was an engine to its south and another to its east. The five-star Chinese flag and the plane number "256" on the tail were quite clear. These markings

showed without any doubt that the plane was China's CAAC aircraft No. 256.

About 50 metres north of the nose of the plane, nine bodies were spread out with their effects, which had been piled up by the Mongolians. Most of the bodies were on their backs, faces pointing skyward and burnt beyond recognition. We numbered the corpses from one in the north to nine in the south and took photographs of them from all angles for future identification. Later we learned that No. 5 was Lin Biao; No. 8 was his wife, Ye Qun, the only female of the nine; and No. 2 was their son, Lin Liguo, whose No. 0002 Pass for the Air Force Courtyard was found on the spot. No. 1 was Yang Zhengang, the driver of Lin Biao's limousine, No. 3 was Liu Peifeng, and No. 4 was special mechanic Shao Qiliang, who wore a leather jacket and was the only one whose clothes were not totally burnt. No. 6 was air mechanic Zhang Yankui and No. 7 was another mechanic, Li Ping. No. 9 was the pilot Pan Jingyin. Unlike the bodies in most airplane crashes, these bodies were not burnt to bones; instead, their torsos were basically intact. They were seriously burnt and deformed, with their flesh broken and bones exposed. This was caused by the impact and sudden fire when the plane crashed. Because of the carbon monoxide intoxication that accompanied the fire, the corpses went cherry red beneath the skin and because of exposure in the open for too long, they had all swollen up like people made of wax. It was noteworthy that none of the nine wore wristwatches or shoes. It seemed that they had prepared to avoid being hurt before the emergency landing.

My initial impressions about the spot were: First, the Mongolians had basically preserved it well. They covered the bodies with white cloth to prevent decompo-

sition. They admitted that some documents and personal effects such as watches had been gathered and preserved, but they did not go into details. Second, the plane made an emergency landing for reasons unknown to all and the passengers of the plane apparently prepared for the landing, but the aircraft lost its balance when it landed and the right wing touched the ground, causing an explosion and fire. Third, there was a PIA mark, which represents Pakistan International Airlines, on a rug in the plane. This indicated that the plane was bought from Pakistan. But we did not know who the crew members were or why it had crashed in Mongolia. I felt all the more confused after seeing the spot.

The Burial of the Bodies

It was dark when the inspection was completed. Our Mongolian escorts insisted that it is not the Mongolian custom to cremate bodies and therefore the corpses had to be buried. They proposed to choose a grave site immediately, dig the grave that evening, and bury the bodies the next day. I agreed. According to Mongolian custom, the site of a grave must be on high land where there is sunlight all day. This is supposed to be auspicious. Leading us around to look for a site, Colonel Sanzhaa finally chose an area on high land northwest of the main part of the plane. He moved a team of soldiers to the area immediately and asked me to demarcate with a shovel the limits of the grave in accordance with the direction he designated. By then night had already fallen and gusts of autumn wind were blowing, making me feel chilly although I was in my leather coat.

By the time we got back to Ondor Haan it was past 10 o'clock in the evening. We were all staying at the same hotel. After washing

up, we went downstairs to have meal. During the meal Gotov spoke of writing a formal report on the inspection of the spot. I said we should discuss the burial to take place the next day. I made four suggestions. The first one was to erect a marker beside the grave and inscribe the following words: Tomb of the Nine Comrades Killed in the Crash on September 13, 1971, Embassy of the People's Republic of China to Mongolia. My second suggestion was to follow the Mongolian custom and put a fragment from the crash, such as the wing which bore the sign CAAC, on the grave. Third, I asked for the return of the documents and property of the dead, for which we could offer a receipt. And fourth, I said it would be appreciated if the Mongolians could draw a sketch of the spot and mark the latitude and longitude. Gotov said that they would have to study these proposals and report to his superiors. It was midnight when the meal was over. We were about to go to bed when the Mongolians asked to talk about the formal report of the incident, which would include records of the on-the-spot investigation, the examination of the bodies and the burial. The talks lasted until 3 am.

On September 16, the weather was fine. At 10 am, escorted by Mongolians, we went back to the crash site. Mongolian soldiers placed nine coffins beside the corpses. We took photographs of the bodies from different angles and then put them into the coffins. The Mongolians then carried the coffins to the grave, which was situated on an eastern slope of a rise 1.1 kilometres west of the site. The grave was 10 metres long, 3 metres wide and 1.5 metres deep. Just before the burial, Gotov suggested that a black and red cloth be placed on the coffins according to Mongolian custom. I gave my consent and thanked

them for their kindness.

The Mongolians proposed that we continue our discussions while the soldiers were burying the bodies. The talks, conducted in a limousine, mainly centred on the Document on the Burial of the Crew of a Crashed Plane of the People's Republic of China, drafted by the Mongolians. To avoid an argument given the

circumstances, I said that the document, as a supplement to the first report that was proposed, could be simpler and dwell only on how and where the nine bodies were buried. Then the conversation turned to what should be taken from the plane and placed on the grave. Wang Zhongyuan suggested a broken piece from the engine, to which the Mongolians

agreed. When everything was settled, Sun, Shen, Wang and I bowed three times to pay our respects to the dead. When I thought about this later, I felt it was ridiculous, but at that time we were in a foreign country and unaware of the truth, and we had to do as we did. I hope people will not blame us for that.

(To be continued)

Sichuan: A Long Way to the World Market

by Our Correspondent Yue Haitao

In 1986, the World Bank bought a pair of white marble lions valued at US\$5,000 from the Huaxin Marble Co. Ltd. in the inland province of Sichuan. Although a relatively minor event, it marked the difficult, long passage Sichuan has travelled to find a place in the world market.

Located in Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan, the Huaxin Marble Co. was jointly founded on December 1, 1984 by the Macao Taishun Co. and four Sichuan enterprises. With 29 million yuan in fixed assets and circulating funds, the joint venture has 40 stone quarries and 14,000 employees. The largest and most successful of the province's 55 joint ventures, Huaxin now mainly produces marble and granite slabs and other products.

Sichuan's finely textured marble and granite are among the province's traditional export commodities. Four years ago, Huaxin's present acting general manager Zhang Guangzhen travelled to 140 counties in the province to investigate local marble and granite resources. He estimated that Sichuan's marble and granite reserves will meet demand for at least 1,000 years. However, the present mining and processing capacity is very low due to backward equipment and technology, and most of the mining is

done by farmers with little education.

According to a market report by the Spanish Stone Materials Association, the consumption of building materials by the world building industry has dropped each year since 1980. However, the consumption of marble and granite increased by an annual 22 percent and the hotel boom in China made it possible for marble and granite to enjoy a ready market at home. Zhang determined to make the most of these conditions to exploit Sichuan's stone resources.

With over 100 million people, Sichuan offers cheaper labour than the coastal provinces. In 1984, Zhang signed contracts with more than a dozen small local stone quarries which agreed to pay 75 yuan for each cubic metre of marble or granite excavated (each worker can mine 2 cubic metres a month).

To upgrade the technological level of his enterprise and attract funding, Zhang decided to seek co-operation from overseas businesses. In August 1984, he travelled to Guangzhou in search of a partner and soon clinched an agreement with the Macao Taishun Co. They agreed to invest US\$3 million (the Macao side contributes 51 percent) towards purchasing equipment for four

production lines.

However, after Zhang submitted the application for approval he found he had to fight his way through mountains of red-tape. Zhang battled for 99 days at getting his report endorsed by 64 different units. At the final checkpoint the official in charge found an excuse for not passing the report. After three days of persistent effort the last stamp was finally added and a business licence was issued on December 1 that year.

Zhang then went to Italy to buy equipment and, while there, signed an agreement with a manufacturer in only three days. A month later the equipment arrived in Shanghai. Weighing 540 tons, it cost 30 percent less than the budgeted figure at US\$706,500.

Turnover

With programme controlled devices, micro-computers and convertible manual and automatic systems, the imported equipment was well suited to Huaxin's needs. The four production lines formed are able to produce 40,000 square metres of granite slab, 60,000 square metres of marble slab and 20,000 pieces of carved craft work

a year. The rough flaming production line is the first of its kind in China and the marble production line is able to produce the largest marble slab in China.

The production lines went into operation in July 1986 and netted 994,900 yuan through exports worth US\$559,900 and sales of products valued at 2 million yuan on the home market. Each shareholder received an extra dividend equivalent to 7 percent of his investment. In 1987, the venture earned US\$1,019,400 in foreign exchange and made a profit of 1,525,000 yuan.

According to Zhang, the Ma Man Kai family of Macao has established 12 joint ventures in China's inland areas. Huaxin is the most profitable and the only one with no management personnel from Macao.

Sichuan's marble and granite slabs, originally processed in China's coastal cities, had to bear the high cost of transport and processing fees. Now the rocks excavated by Huaxin can be roughly processed in the locality and then shipped to Chengdu to be processed into semi-finished products for export from coastal ports. This not only saves transport costs but also cuts expenditure on processing. Today each cubic metre of stone processed by Huaxin costs only US\$100 while the price of each cubic metre on the world market is US\$300.

Huaxin's products have now entered the markets in Japan, the United States, Singapore, Federal Germany, Portugal, Spain, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Hong Kong and Macao. One product has even found a market in Italy, an established exporter of marble. By the end of last January, Huaxin had received orders valued at US\$8 million and registered US\$1.1 million in foreign exchange reserves (including sales by the company). This

year it is expected to earn US\$3 million in foreign exchange.

In 1986, Huaxin was cited by the provincial government as one of Sichuan's first five export-oriented joint ventures and was granted preferential treatment in taxation and other areas. Huaxin's success has raised Sichuan's confidence to open wide its doors to the outside. Jiang Minkuan, former governor of the province, called Huaxin the first swallow brining spring to Sichuan.

Impetus and Resistance

Known as the land of plenty since ancient times, Sichuan is rich in natural resources, including natural gas, water and minerals. Chemical, machine-building, nuclear and military industries have a solid foundation here. The province's existing industrial fixed assets total 200 billion yuan, the second highest in China. In 1987, most of China's 34 export products with an export value exceeding 100 million yuan each, were made using raw materials from Sichuan. With the large potential market for Sichuan's products and the province's cheap labour a bright future for its economic development is in sight.

Even though it has the Changjiang (Yangtze) River navigation route, Sichuan is geographically isolated from the rest of China. It still takes four to five days to sail downstream from Chongqing to the sea, a factor which has kept many foreign business people away. Huaxin's success goes to show that the low cost of Sichuan's products can offset the high cost of shipping and make it possible for foreign investors to turn a profit.

To date, 55 Sino-foreign joint ventures and 18 co-operative enterprises have been established in Sichuan with a combined investment of US\$140 million. The 44 joint ventures now in

operation are running smoothly. However, the existing investment scale is too limited for such a large province.

When the central authorities formulated a strategy for developing export-oriented economy in the coastal areas, inland Sichuan quickly responded to the new situation. It is currently expediting the construction of its power industry and other infrastructural facilities in an effort to improve its investment environment and attract more foreign investment.

Zhang Haoruo, the present governor of Sichuan Province, was formerly vice-minister for Foreign Economic Relations and Trade. His appointment was seen as a sign that this important inland province would open up even more. Xu Shiquan, director of the foreign affairs office under the provincial government, said: "Although Sichuan is geographically isolated and its infrastructural facilities are inferior to those in coastal areas, the provincial government is determined to stick to the policy for the development of an export-oriented economy."

Despite determined leadership, however, the province still faces problems, particularly in the inefficiency of the rigid management system. Conservative ideas nurtured in Sichuan's years of isolation, also hinder the process of advancement. Director of Huaxin's general office said in Chengdu it takes at least half a year to complete the steps necessary to obtain an exit visa even it does not cost the state any money.

It is not an easy task for an inland area to open to the world. But while its geographical location cannot be changed, unfavourable conditions can be countered. Huaxin is proof of this. The biggest problem, the gap between the management system and the way people think, presents a challenge to all-round reforms. ■

Beijing's Bird Markets

"SHI DAI"

(Times)

The four big bird markets of Beijing attract more than 10,000 people a day. The markets provide many unusual sights.

Birds in the Beijing markets can be divided into three categories:

— **Ornamental birds.** These birds generally have pleasing shapes and beautiful plumage. Examples include the parrot, linnet and red-billed leiothrix.

— **Song birds.** These birds have good voices. They include the lark, babbler, rice-bird and crested myna. A lark in one market can distinctly imitate the sounds of 13 animals. The most popular songbird in the market is a crested myna which can speak some simple words in Chinese. When someone said, "Hello, Myna, what time is it now?" It replied, "I have no watch." The spectators rocked with laughter at these words.

— **Bird with unique skills.** One of these birds snatched a coin from a person, flew off with it in its mouth, and put it in its master's hand. It was amazing to watch the bird fly off and land on the orders of its master. It would also dive suddenly and then fly upward without the least hesitation when ordered to do so by its master.

The bird markets offer a choice of accessories for keeping pet birds, such as cages, small porcelain pots for birds feed and the feed itself.

Keeping pet birds used to be the major way for the Manchu nobles to divert themselves in feudal times. This may have been related to their earlier hunting and nomadic life. As the Manchu culture spread to other nationalities, the practice of keeping pet

birds also spread, especially in Beijing. Today there are many Manchu descendants in Beijing, and many experts on keeping pet birds are of Manchu descent.

But most of those who keep pet birds, train birds, enjoy the sight of birds and run businesses related to birds are ordinary people. Many are retired workers. Some are young workers and youth awaiting jobs. In the bird markets, old people are delighted to discuss their similar tastes and interests.

(Issue No. 2, 1988)

On Some People Becoming Well Off First

"LIAO WANG"

(Outlook Weekly)

It has been several years since the Chinese government started encouraging some people to become well off first. There is a heated debate among ordinary people about whether this policy is suitable for China today.

Some people say, "In the present circumstances, those who have become well off first act badly against their conscience. Many of them have grown rich by stealing, grafting, taking more than their share or travelling around selling goods for more than they are worth. We law-abiding people cannot become rich. Encouraging those with indecent motives to become well off first means cutting our flesh to feed them."

People who hold this opinion provide many examples to back their argument. For instance, a certain person resigned from his office job and has become rich by trafficking in smuggled goods; a person in a certain unit has obtained more than 100,000 yuan under the guise of starting a company. As for street pedlars, they buy cheaply and sell widely, cheating people left and right. "These rich people cannot be considered as a force that can develop the Chinese economy in a healthy way," say these critics,

who include many low-income older workers, government functionaries and teachers.

People who work in the economic field generally hold the opposite opinion. They consider that rich is better than poor. Everyone can benefit from the country's prosperity. Units and people who become well off first can carry others to prosperity along with them. Industry naturally develops from small to large; business develops from poor to good; and a country develops from a closed to an open-door policy. They also cite many examples to illustrate their point such as farmer entrepreneurs Yu Zuomin and Lu Guanqiu, who have led their neighbours to prosperity.

The critics say newly rich people are basically evil—in the pursuit of riches there is no benevolence—while those who favour the policy consider the rich to be ground-breakers. Both sides can cite instances to support their point of view; neither side sees the whole picture. Their remarks pertain to all men and women, old and young—making no distinction between the wise and the foolish, the worthy and the unworthy, the hardworking and the lazy, the humble and the privileged, the good people and the villains.

Those who believe that people who become well off first are

models to be emulated must take as examples people such as the farmer entrepreneurs mentioned above, who have prospered through honest work and lawful business operations and not people who have become well off through graft and embezzlement.

People who do nothing have no grounds for complaint against those who become rich, say those who respect the well off. Those who think the wealthy are evil hold a contrary opinion.

In fact, it is not a Chinese tradition to be blindly jealous of the rich. Take the wealthy overseas Chinese Tan Kah Kee, for example. He donated a large

amount of money for schools in his hometown after getting rich in Southeast Asia, and won widespread acclaim in China.

It is a good thing for the poor to become prosperous. But it is bad that some people have become rich through dishonest means. All statements must be based on this point. Unhealthy tendencies must not be encouraged. If we seem to be encouraging people to become well off first irrespective of the means and blindly consider that prosperity means glory, this would chill the enthusiasm of the people for building socialism.

(Issue Nos. 8-9, 1988)

Marriages Between Chinese and Others

"ZHONGGUO FUNU BAO"

(Chinese Women's News)

From 1984 to 1986, Shanghai's civil affairs departments handled 2,401 marriages involving foreigners, overseas Chinese and compatriots from Hong Kong and Macao. A survey of 794 couples married in 1986 showed that 90 percent of brides and only 10 percent of grooms were Chinese citizens.

The marriages between Chinese and others in the city came about in the following ways:

—People already married to foreigners, overseas Chinese and Hong Kong and Macao compatriots introduced their relatives, friends, schoolmates and former colleagues to their new friends.

—Some Chinese were introduced to their future spouses by interpreters, guides and managers of units dealing with foreigners, such as Sino-foreign joint ventures, hotels, foreign trade enterprises and travel services.

—Some couples fell in love after meeting at dances, banquets

or while travelling.

After receiving their marriage licences, many foreigners were excited and praised the new and dynamic atmosphere in China brought about by the reforms and open policy. Their marriages show how far China has opened up to the outside world.

But problems related to these marriages should be brought to the whole society's attention.

—Some couples did not know each other before they got married. They depended on a go-between. Their married life is unhappy because of a lack of deep mutual understanding and different languages, habits and customs.

—Great disparities in age and experiences make it hard for old husbands and young wives to eliminate the physical, mental and emotional barriers between them and get along in daily life.

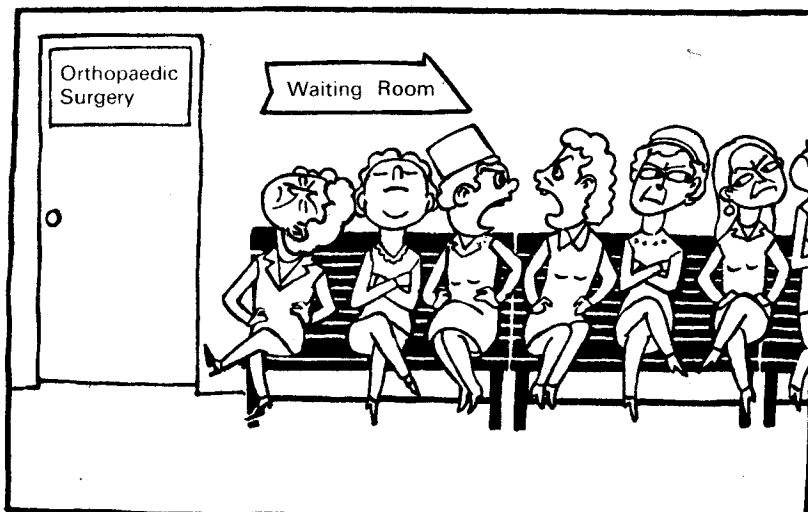
—Some people regard marriage simply as a means to go abroad. They toy with prospective spouses or find themselves toyed with.

In recent years, marriages between Chinese citizens and others have steadily increased. This is a good thing. With regard to the problems, it is necessary to adopt a correct attitude and handle them carefully and skilfully. Only in this way can the marriages develop in a healthy manner and the legitimate rights and interests of both spouses be safeguarded.

(December 14, 1987)

In an occupational diseases hospital for service trades.

GAO FENG



More Sino-Foreign Space Co-operation

According to a reliable source, China and Brazil are at present holding talks for jointly building a remote sensing satellite, and the agreement is expected to be signed early in July.

This will be the first co-operation in the field of space technology between the two countries. According to the agreement, the two countries will invest in joint research and co-operate in manufacturing the satellite which will be launched in the early 1990s. China and Brazil will then use the satellite to survey and monitor farming, forest, geological and hydrological resources as well as environmental change.

It is reported that China has already established contacts in this field with government and non-government organizations from 14 countries and regions and signed contracts with French, Federal German, US and Italian governments for scientific and technological co-operation on space research. It also established

co-operative relations with the United States' NASA, France's CNES, the European Space Agency (ESA), Federal Germany's DFVLR and PSN of Italy.

China began to develop its own space technology in the late 1950s. Since the launch of its first man-made satellite in April 1970, 22 satellites have been successfully launched.

According to an official of the Chinese Academy of Space Technology, co-operation between China and other countries has promoted the development of China's space technology and enabled space technology to better serve mankind. For instance, since the establishment of co-operative relations between China and Italy's PSN in May 1982, the two countries have gathered invaluable data on the absolute attenuation of electric waves at the KU wave band, and radio position determination and jointly published papers at international symposia.

In 1984 China and DFVLR of the Federal Republic of Germany began co-operating on research into 15 space technological projects for civil applications. In July 1987, China reached an agreement with the MBB/ERNO company of the Federal Republic of Germany to co-operate on research into technology for a large-capacity communications satellite. The German company will assist China with the design of some satellite devices.

Last year, China contacted ESA, seeking co-operation on the establishment of a space station in the future. The two sides are currently discussing the feasibility of co-operation and exchange of space technology.

In March 1987 China began to offer recoverable satellite services. In August 1987, Chinese satellite carried two micro-gravity experimental devices for Matra of France. Now, China has been approached by 10 foreign companies from five countries interested in using its recoverable satellites. One contract to carry protein crystals on a micro-gravity experimental programme for the Introspace Co. of the Federal Republic of Germany has already been signed and will soon be carried out.

by Yao JIanguo

One of Matra Company's two experimental devices installed in a Chinese recoverable satellite.



Machine Tool Exports Expand

China National Machine Tool Corp. (CNMTC) recently began conducting import and export business, thus becoming China's sole specialized foreign trade company dealing with machine tool import and export.

Established in 1979, the company is the largest of its kind in the country. In its early years, the company mainly co-operated with the China National Machinery



Quan Yilu.

and Equipment Import and Export Corp. (CEMC) to handle barter trade with East European countries. Over the past few years, its annual trade volume topped 40 million Swiss francs. In 1985 the company began to provide industrial technology and machine tools for key construction and technological transformation projects and has to date supplied 129 key construction projects in the machinery, automobile, weaponry, electronics, aviation and shipping industries with complete sets of equipment and technology. In particular, it has undertaken the task to supply machine tools for 80 percent of the automobile projects in the 1986-90 period.

One of the important measures adopted by the Chinese government in the past two years has been to allow the company to handle imports and exports and expand the export of machine tools.

According to general manager Quan Yilu, Chinese machine tools are cheaper than those produced in Europe and America and only a little more expensive than Taiwan and South Korean products due to their better quality. He said Chinese machine tool exports increased slowly mainly because of inflexible foreign trade systems and poor after-sale service.

Together with more than 100

machine tool manufacturers, research institutes and automobile and tractor factories, the company has set up united corporations, namely, the Transfer Machine and Special Technical Equipment United Corp., the Beijing EDM and Die-Manufacture Equipment United Corp., and Guang Yuan Machine and Tool Co. Ltd. It also established the Samco Machine Tool Corp. in Los Angeles with CMEC and Hong Kong's China Resources (Holdings) Co.

The company plans to adopt more flexible measures to meet client demands. At present the company is making preparations to open a machine tool maintenance and service centre for foreign machine tools in China or Chinese machine tools overseas.

Since the 1950s, China has imported about 1,000 sophisticated machine tools from the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany, Britain, France, Switzerland, Japan, the United States, Czechoslovakia, Canada and Hungary.

China now has about 100 large machine tool plants and several hundred medium-sized and small ones manned by several hundred thousand workers. The plants produce more than 100,000 machine tools a year, of which some 10,000 are exported. Last year China exported US\$120 million worth of machine tools to Hong Kong, Macao, Southeast Asia, Europe and North America.

News in Brief

■ The three northeastern Chinese provinces and Inner Mongolia will co-sponsor an export commodities fair from July 8-17 in Dalian, Liaoning Province.

The northeastern economic zone, which embraces Liaoning, Jilin and Heilongjiang provinces and the eastern part of the Inner

Mongolian Autonomous Region, is one of China's important agricultural and industrial production bases and ranks among the country's major producers of crude oil, rolled steel, power equipment and coal.

The last fair was held in Dalian in July last year. Business dealings valued at a total of US\$264 million were conducted at the fair and agreements were reached on 31 projects to attract foreign investment and establish Sino-foreign joint ventures.

■ Fushun city in Liaoning Province will hold its first foreign economic and trade fair on June 20-26. At the fair, the city will list more than 100 co-operative projects, ranging from energy exploitation and petroleum processing to the upgrading of raw material processing industries. For these projects, the city government will offer preferential treatment for taxation, loans and raw material supplies.

The city now has more than 1,300 enterprises in coal, petroleum, metallurgical, chemical, machine-building, textile and light industries. It ranks the 16th in industrial output value among the country's big cities. By the end of last year, contracts were finalized to import more than 200 projects and 10 Sino-foreign joint ventures were established, attracting US\$100 million in direct foreign investment.

■ The Beijing No.2 Motor Works, CITIC (Holdings) and the Hong Kong Shortridge Co. jointly established the Beijing Light Automobile Co. Ltd. on April 22 in Beijing. The joint venture, the fourth in China's automobile industry, involves an investment of 537 million yuan and has a 15-year term of co-operation. As one of China's main light-duty motor vehicle producers, the joint venture will produce 30,000 BJ-136 trucks and 10,000 new-model automobiles in 1990. ■

Agricultural Films Win Acclaim

China's two entries in the 15th International Agricultural Film and Telefilm Competition in West Berlin were well received by both audience and critics.

The six-day competition, which took place in late January, was open to films on agriculture, the environment and nutrition. More than 200 films from 39 countries took part.

The Chinese film *Endophytic Bacteria of Plants*, produced by the China Agricultural Film Studio, won the competition's top Golden Ear prize. The 17-minute film shows how Chinese scientists at the Wuhan Plant Research Institute discovered endophytic bacteria in monocotyledonous lily. The discovery, the first of its kind in the world, has opened a new vista for research on the microscopic organisms. The bacteria, which can be used as an ideal carrier in genetic engineering, is of great significance in cultivating fine plant breeds, especially grain crops.

It was the second time that You Weihua, the film's director, won the Gold Ear award. His *Psammophytes* won the prize in 1980.

Some critics said *Endophytic Bacteria of Plants* was one of the best popular science films at this year's competition. The film reports a scientific discovery and explains a complicated topic—how scientists use genetic engineering to influence the growth of maize, wheat and rice.

Another Chinese film, *One Mu for One Person*, also produced by the China Agricultural Film Studio, won the third prize for agricultural documentary films. (A mu is one-fifteenth of a hectare.—Tr.) This well-executed film is only 20 minutes long. It shows how some Chinese

farmers have become rich when they confronted the problem of too many people on too little land. The stories of farmers shown in the film left a deep impression on the audience.

Another Chinese film, *Reaping Rich Rewards: Innovation in the Countryside*, produced by Beijing Popular Science Film Studio, was also well received by the audience. In half an hour, the film shows how farmers in Haiyan County, Jiangsu Province, improved their crop output and animal husbandry.

China's first agricultural film was *Sericulture*, produced in 1918. Now China produces more than 100 agricultural films a year. Some of them are popular science films which are well received by the general audience. Examples of these are *Blue Blood*, about marine organisms, and *Planipennia*, about insects catching other insects.

Most Chinese agricultural films introduce to the farmers new farming techniques. Such films include *Techniques for Raising Pigs*, *Scientific Tree Planting*, *Zinc Fertilizer* and *Hybrid Rice*. To meet the needs of the rural areas, more than 2,000 copies of these films are produced.

Other films document agricultural production methods and farmers' lives or convey scientific and technical information. *Agricultural methods in Haiyan County*, *The Fengwei Mushroom*, *Prevent the Expansion of the Desert*, *Green Week in West Berlin* and a Chinese scenery series fall into this category. These films help broaden the vision of their audience.

In addition, China has more than 3,300 secondary agricultural technical schools, 7,000 agricultural middle schools and 40,000

technical schools for farmers at the township level. Agricultural films are much needed as teaching aids in these schools.

by Wang Jian

Folk Art Exhibition From Northeast

In winter, all the trees lining the snow-covered Songhua River in Jilin Province have an added beauty with their covering of icy crystals. The local people call them "snow willow."

Winter in China's northeast lasts six months. A folk painting exhibition named "Snow Willow" recently opened in the National Museum of Fine Arts in Beijing. The works on display reflect the life and customs of the local people in the long winter months.

The exhibition comprises 153 paintings, 70 percent of them depicting scenes of the countryside in winter. Folk artists draw from these scenes for their artistic images of the snow-covered mountains, villages and trees, children playing among the white trees, horse-drawn sledges passing through pure white forests, and fisherman catching fish and shrimps under white frost-covered trees.

These genre paintings represent the richness of the local life-style. *Spring Festival Shopping*, *Pickling Vegetables*, *Washing Ginseng Seeds*, *Catching Sparrows*, *Taking Vegetables From the Cellar*, *Frozen Steamed Buns Stuffed With Sweet Bean Paste* are all realistical depictions of peasant life.

Folk artists use white for the winter scene, and add bright colours such as red and gold to show the vibrancy of life in the countryside. The painting *In June* by 23-year-old Kang Meihua, a woman farmer, uses more than 40 colours. Clothes and sheets of various colours are spread out to



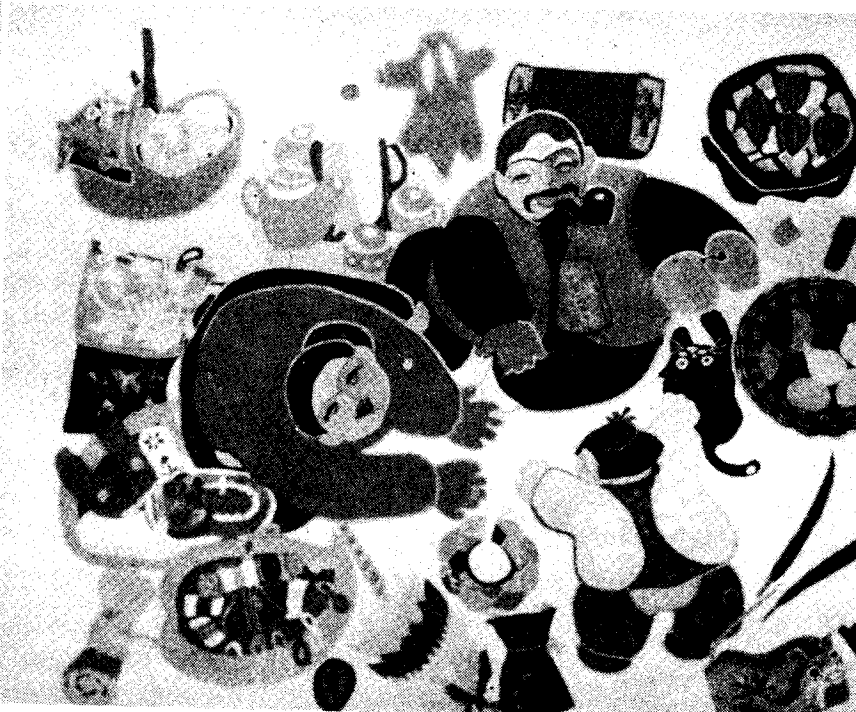
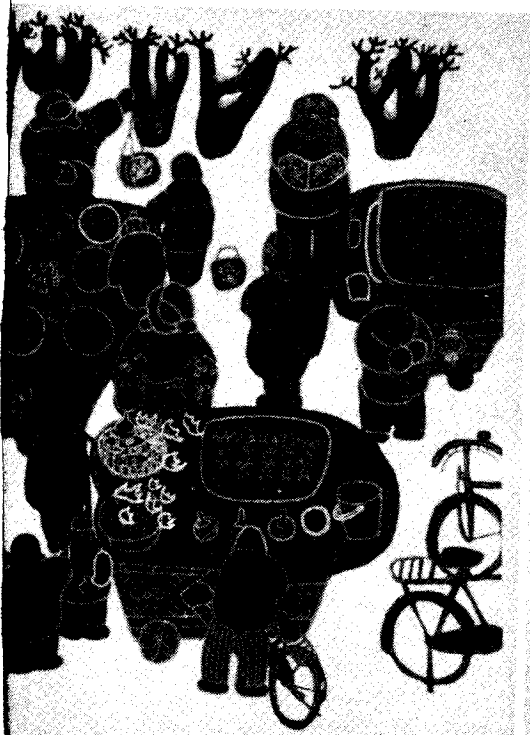
dry on the flower-covered grasslands by the riverbank. The colourful clothes attract many butterflies.

Some painters depict in one painting things which happen in different times and places. The painting *Frozen Steamed Buns*

Stuffed With Sweet Bean Paste shows how farmers steam the stuffed buns with bean paste and later freeze them and store them in a jar. The artist not only illustrates the process of filling the jar with buns, but also clearly shows the contents of the jar through a clever use of perspective. Using this

technique the painting becomes all the more vivid.

Jilin is one of China's 44 homes of modern folk painting named recently by the Ministry of Culture. Jilin has more than 4,000 folk painters and paper-cut artists. Every year professional artists from Jilin travel to the countryside



and spend two months or so giving farmers some guidance in painting techniques. They also organize the farmers to visit other homes of painting so that their simple style may develop and become more varied. In 1987, more than 1,000 paintings were drawn by amateur artists scattered across five counties and four districts under the jurisdiction of Jilin City.

by Wei Liming

Young Composer Makes His Debut

At a concert of symphonic pieces by composer Jiang Benyi held at the Beijing Concert Hall on March 16, the audience was fascinated by the powerful music and bold drum beats. During the break, everyone was asking each other what they knew about Jiang Benyi.

Jiang is a member of the Dandong Song and Dance Ensemble in Liaoning Province, northeast China. The Beijing concert, which featured three pieces composed in 1986 and 1987, was the first concert of his symphonic works. The pieces reflect his thoughts and feelings about life and his understanding of the world.

Rhapsody, a piece composed on the eve of his graduation from the Shanghai Conservatory of Music in 1986, received a China Records Prize. The piece, through its alternating and changing rhythms, conveys the composer's determination to go ahead amidst the contradictions of hope and loss, belief and confusion, struggle and failure, disentanglement and crises.

Mohe Images is about an ancient tribe in northern China. The Mohe people lived independently for more than 1,000 years. They believed in Shamanism and

conducted religious ceremonies at which a head shaman danced and communed with deities about life, war, harvests, the prevention of diseases and the safety of the people. This extinct tribe is recalled through a succession of images created by the composer.

Three-Movement Symphony demonstrates the composer's feelings—simple and bitter; wilful and bold.

Jiang's pieces are as forceful as a fierce tiger. He skilfully uses the orchestra—especially the brass section—to produce tremendous momentous, strong tones and excellent symphonic effects. Wang Zhenya, a professor of composition at China's Central Conservatory of Music, says Jiang's symphonic pieces have depth and strong character.

In the past few years, several young composers have emerged, stirring the musical circles with their styles and skills. At the national symposium on symphonic works held by the Chinese Musicians' Association in May last year, experts and scholars noted these composers' achievements in creating many excellent pieces. At the same time, the experts pointed out one shortcoming—an overemphasis on new techniques—which they believe the young composers will make efforts to correct.

The works at the concert reflect Jiang's efforts to improve. Compared with his earlier pieces, they are more realistic and acceptable. Some people see Jiang as a representative of the young composers who have made a self-examination.

But Jiang's pieces still overemphasize drums and other percussion instruments, which make them sound impetuous. Well-known composer Wang Lisan says Jiang is still influenced by foreign romanticists and contemporary composers. But Jiang is hopeful that he will succeed in finding a road of his own.

Jiang Benyi, 37, began to study music by himself when he was 18. When he was 20, he joined the Dandong Song and Dance Ensemble, playing instruments and working as a stagehand. He studied music composition while working. When he was 28, he was accepted by the Shenyang Conservatory of Music. Six years later, he went to the Shanghai Conservatory of Music for further study.

His name will become known through his music.

by Hong Lanxing

Chinese Women In the Running

The rise of women marathon stars and their achievements in recent international competitions show that China has become a world power in the women's marathon event.

On March 6, Zhao Youfeng from Jiangsu Province won the Nagoya International Women's Marathon in Japan, breaking the Asian record with a time of 2:27'56". On the same day, Xie Lihua from Jilin Province clocked 2:31'43" and won first place at the Asian Women's Marathon. More than 10 other Chinese women have come close to the mark of 2:30.

China's women's marathon event has made rapid progress since it first started in the country five years ago. Today China is ranked No. 8 among the 61 countries which have the event. Of the 10 top-ranking women marathon runners in Asia, China has five.

At China's national marathon in early April, many women runners showed great potential. Experts predict that women's marathon will be one of China's best events in future Olympic games.

by Zhang Wei