



People's China

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China's Revolution and the Struggle Against Colonialism

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

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

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

forces has been altered. Not since the colonial system arose have conditions been so favourable for the oppressed peoples to stand up and throw off the bonds that have been strangling them.

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

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

As an editorial in *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy!* stated on January 27th:

"It would be a mistake to under-estimate this feverish activity of the imperialists who are suffering defeat."

However, the victory of the Chinese people has proved to the world that by following correct revolutionary lines colonial or semi-colonial peoples can defeat their imperialist rulers and gain true national independence.

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

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

The working class must simultaneously unite with the broad masses of the petty bourgeoisie (especially with the revolutionary intelligentsia) for this class is also

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

However, this broad united front can only be successful when it is under the leadership of the working class and its vanguard, the Communist Party. While the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie can be allies of the working class in the anti-imperialist struggle, neither of these classes has the qualifications for leading the revolution. The national bourgeoisie, although oppressed by imperialism, still have many ties with the imperialist rulers and feudal landlords. They therefore tend to vacillate between the revolutionary and reactionary camps. Deep in their hearts they fear a real revolutionary movement of the people, and they are inclined to compromise with the enemy before the revolution has reached its final goal. The petty bourgeoisie are also unable to play a leading role in the liberation movement, for as a class they are also irresolute and often inclined towards opportunistic extremism and adventurism. It is the working class alone that can remain brave, confident, faithful, steadfast, thoroughgoing and unselfish throughout all stages of the revolution to its very end. This fact has again been conclusively proved in China, as it was earlier proved in other countries.

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

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

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

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

This above point is of especial significance for the people of Southeast Asia, who are increasingly threatened by the conspiracies of Wall Street. American imperialism has taken to ranting with great noise and hypocrisy about "national independence" for the "backward countries," thus hoping to confuse the politically naive into thinking that independence is something

which the imperialists can bestow upon them. But Titoism in Yugoslavia has already shown the world that bourgeois nationalism can only lead one back into the clutches of imperialism, which is precisely why we find American spokesmen advocating this brand of 'nationalism.'

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

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

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

These are the major lessons to be drawn from the great victory of the Chinese people. These lessons can, with judicious adaptation, be applied by all colonial and semi-colonial peoples in their fight against colonialism and for national independence.

The Road to Final Victory

A Survey of the Three and a Half Year War of Liberation

Tsai Ying-p'ing

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

The War of Liberation has reached a period of lull before entering its final phase, in which Chiang Kai-shek's forces will be pried out of their island retreats. The PLA is now preparing its ranks for this last offensive, and the people of China are confident that 1950 will bring the revolutionary war to a successful close.

This confidence is founded upon fact, and not upon wishful thinking. While it is true that the American imperialists are using every means at their disposal to reinforce the few remaining Kuomintang strongholds, even the reactionaries cannot help admitting that such efforts are futile. In the days when American aid flowed to Chiang in a far more generous stream than today, the PLA was not prevented from liberating a total of 8,474,500 square kilometres within the brief space of three and a half years. More than half of this area, or 5,511,700 square kilometres, was liberated in the half year ending December 31, 1949. During this six-month period, a population of 181,256,000 was liberated, exceeding the entire population of the African continent. Can it therefore take long to liberate the 11,233,000 people still under Kuomintang domination, or to free the last 1,122,500 square kilometres of Chinese territory?

But in the midst of the widespread optimism that peace can soon be won in China, the people do not forget the heroic and self-sacrificing struggles of the past, without which there could have been no such prospects of speedy victory today. It has become increasingly clear to all that without such a revolutionary army as the PLA, an army of the people that comes from the people, works for the people and forever remains with the people, there would have been no victories at all. As never before, there is now a general understanding of the profound truth which Stalin expressed as early as 1926 when he said:

"The Chinese revolutionary army constitutes the most important factor in the struggle of the Chinese workers and peasants for their emancipation."

Stalin placed special emphasis upon the fact that the Chinese Communists must strengthen their political work in the army, converting it into a pro-

pagator of revolutionary ideas. He also advised the Chinese Communist Party to pay great attention to military affairs, never relegating them to a secondary position for a moment.

At first, many Chinese revolutionary leaders did not appreciate the full significance of Stalin's advice. It was Chairman Mao Tse-tung and his close associates who carried out Stalin's suggestion and gradually built up the Red Army until it developed into the modern, invincible PLA of today.

But in the very early years from 1921 to 1927 (that is, from the birth of the Chinese Communist Party to the collapse of the Great Revolution), the Party centred its attention largely on strikes, petitions, demonstrations, protests and such non-military forms of struggle; it did not arm the people although there were many opportunities to do so. As a result, the revolutionary forces were decimated when the reactionaries launched their reign of terror against the people. The Great Revolution was thus brought to a halt by the counter-revolutionaries who had managed to seize military power.

This experience taught the people that when faced by an enemy that was heavily armed and supported by world imperialism, they had only one recourse—to take up arms in self-protection. And this is what the people did. Arming themselves, they carved out various small revolutionary bases which were gradually expanded and linked together. Never once did the people ever lay down their weapons again. That is the reason why they were able to withstand the ten years of civil war, the eight years of war against Japan, and finally to overthrow the reactionaries in the soon-ending War of Liberation.

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

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

"1. A disciplined party armed with the theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, employing the method of self-criticism and closely linked with the masses;

"2. An army led by such a party; and

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

From Defensive To Offensive

At the start of the War of Liberation, in July, 1946, many observers thought the People's Armies had no chance of victory, in view of the over-

whelming superiority of the Kuomintang troops, both in number and in equipment.

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

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

The ratio of military strength was 3.58 to 1 in favour of the counter-revolutionaries.

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

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

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



Back from the Front

Yen Han

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

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

PLA: took back 288 cities and county seats and lost 358,000 men.

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

General Liu Po-cheng, one of the brilliant military leaders in China, pointed out in late 1946 that:

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

In the first half of the second year of war, (July - December 1947), the war situation underwent a drastic change. After reducing the enemy's strength from 4,300,000 to 3,730,000 (taking into account 550,000 new recruits) and expanding its own forces from 1,200,000 to 1,950,000, the People's Liberation Army passed over to the strategic offensive.

The counter-offensive began on July 1, 1947, on the southern front where General Liu Po-cheng's army forced a breach in the Kuomintang defence line along the Lunghai Railway and poured south to the Tapiieh Mountains, deep in the enemy's rear. From then on, the main theatre of operations was shifted to the Kuomintang-controlled areas.

The powerful offensive of the PLA, which rapidly spread to every front, astonished the world. It threw Chiang and his American military advisors into utter confusion. New measures were improvised with the help of the American Advisory Group to check the advance of the PLA. But none of their schemes, either political, economic or financial, brought more than momentary respite.

By the second half of the second year of war, the PLA was ready to attack the Kuomintang's key strongholds and units. A number of cities of strategic importance, such as Kaifeng, Paochi, Weihsien, Yenchow and Szepingkai, fell one after another.

The Kuomintang defences were tottering.

A Decisive Year

The first basic change in the war came when the PLA went over to the offensive. The second occurred in the latter half of 1948, when the PLA began to place greater emphasis on modern positional warfare.

(Continued on page 27)

Liberation of Taiwan In Sight

Gen. Su Yu

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

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

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

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

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

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

Although Chiang Kai-shek has concentrated 230,000 regular troops (or about 300,000 men if special troops and regional troops are included), these troops are thinly dispersed throughout these islands and their fighting power is therefore very weak. Moreover, these troops are grouped into 44 divisions comprising 15 armies, which constitute 71 per cent of the total 61 divisions (340,000 troops) of Chiang's remaining forces. Most of these forces consist of defeated commanders and demoralized troops who fled from the mainland, their ranks in confusion, having many officers and few soldiers, or else they are the so-called "new armies" that have never been in battle.

Here one should recall the conditions prevailing in 1946 during the early stage of the Liberation War. At that time Chiang had more than three million troops, several hundred tanks, tens of thousands of heavy artillery pieces, and over one thousand planes. Forty of his armies, comprising more than one million men, were American-equipped and had been trained and directed by American imperialist generals in person. Chiang also controlled a vast area on the mainland and a large supply of manpower and natural resources, as well as all the large cities, communication centres and strategic points.

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

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

Speaking of East China, when the Liberation War began in 1946, the regular troops at Chiang's disposal consisted of 21 armies with 57 divisions, or a total of 493,000 troops. At that time, our East China Field Army had only about 70,000 men. In 1947, when Chiang Kai-shek launched his concentrated attacks on Shantung, he increased the number of regular troops deployed there to 30 armies with 74 divisions, or 545,000 men. If you add in the Kuomintang forces in Central and North Kiangsu and on north and south banks of the Huai River, then Chiang's strength totalled seven or eight hundred thousand men. The East China PLA Field Army did not then exceed several hundred thousand

troops. Under the brilliant leadership of Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and with the co-ordinated efforts of all the various military bases and field armies, plus the correct leadership of the Communist Party's East China Bureau and the all-out support of the East China people, we smashed Chiang's concentrated assaults. In addition to this, we also went over from the defensive to the offensive, completely recovered areas Chiang had occupied, liberated large new areas and cities in Southeast China and totally annihilated all Chiang's regular forces in the East China region. During these three years of war, our East China Field Army and local troops jointly inflicted 757,512 casualties upon Chiang's forces and captured 1,246,362 of his men. Another 65,157 Kuomintang troops were forced to surrender, while 40,811 of them revolted and came over. All together, Chiang lost 2,109,742 men in this theatre of operations. Among the war materials captured were 21,298 artillery pieces of various sizes, tens of times more than we had at the beginning of the war. Today, the bulk of our entire army has replaced its equipment with American-made arms. Besides, during the last six months, we have wiped out 64,778 bandits and armed special service agents which Chiang trained and sent out, thus basically cleaning out the local bandits.

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

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

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

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

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

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

** On Feb. 28, 1947, the people of Taiwan revolted against the corrupt Kuomintang rule. The uprising was touched off when the Kuomintang authorities assaulted some street hawkers, causing the death of several persons. This atrocity aroused the entire population, and the subsequent revolt swept the people's forces into power in 13 counties. The uprising was only suppressed some weeks later after Kuomintang military reinforcements arrived from the mainland.*



Where to go?

by Teh Wei

The Record Restoration of China's Railways

Liu Shin-hwa

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

With the resumption of these rail lines, of the 26,922 kilometres of railways that make up China's total network (including those on Taiwan and Hainan island), 24,794 kilometres had been liberated and 21,046 kilometres had been repaired.

Magnitude of the Task

The restoration of China's railways involved monumental task. Many of the lines had not been in operation since the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War. The rails had been carted away, the ties had been used as firewood and the roadbeds had been leveled and planted with crops. If the lines had not been torn up in the course of 13 years of war, they had seriously deteriorated due to the Kuomintang's negligence when it came to maintenance. In most cases, the retreating Kuomintang armies blew up the railway bridges and tunnels as they fled from an area.

For instance, when Northeast China was liberated, most of the rail lines, bridges and tunnels had to be repaired. Forty per cent of the sleepers needed replacement. Eighty per cent of the locomotives, 40 per cent of the passenger carriages and 25.7 per cent of the freight carriages had been destroyed by the Japanese or the Kuomintang. Maintenance had been so poor that with the first heavy rainfall, 100 kilometres of roadbed were washed out along the Suihua-Kiamusze line.

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

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

Rapid Restoration

The repair of rail communications was given a high priority on the list of tasks for 1949. Chair-

man Mao Tse-tung emphasized the importance of this task by raising the slogan: "Where the People's Liberation Army goes, the trains must go too!" The job of railway repair was raised to such an important level because this was a vital prerequisite for carrying the Liberation War to a swift conclusion and for restoring the nation's economy.

The workers did not disappoint Chairman Mao. From January 15 to March 31, 1949, they restored 1,080 kilometres of rail lines. Included in this figure were the railways in the Peking-Tientsin area as well as those running north to Shanhaikwan and west to Kalgan. North China was linked with Northeast China, thus furnishing a necessary condition for the Yangtze River crossing last April.

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

From October to the end of the year, another 2,655 kilometres of lines were restored. These included the Peking-Hankow, Canton-Hankow, Lung-hai, Chekiang-Kiangsi and Hunan-Kwangsi-Kweichow railways. China's railway network had then been basically restored.

In the course of this job of restoration, many outstanding records were established for both speed and efficiency—records that would have been astonishing even in the most modern and highly industrialized countries. For instance, the Huai River Bridge along the Tientsin-Pukow Railway was completely rebuilt within two months. The heavily damaged Tsingtao-Tsinan Railway (393 kilometres) was restored in a single month. It took only 30 days to rebuild the Hsian River Bridge along the Hunan-Kwangsi-Kweichow line, although the Kuomintang had been trying vainly to repair the bridge for four years. But the workers surpassed even their own previous records for speed when they relaid 12 kilometres of track in one day and repaired 45 metres of bridge span during another work-day. Such records would have been unthinkable in Kuomintang days.

Service to the People

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

To achieve this end, the railway administrative authorities introduced a series of reforms. In July, 1949, uniform passenger and freight rates were fixed in line with popular interests. During the Kuomintang days, since railways were all cut up and monopolized by bureaucrats, there had never been either uniform rates nor uniform administration. This had caused a number of difficulties in the transport of goods and had seriously hampered the exchange of commodities. Such a state of affairs was now put to an end.

Under the Kuomintang regime, goods were divided into only five grades and the difference in freight rates ranged merely from 1 to 5.06. Under such a system, it was cheaper to transport luxuries and light, non-essential goods than bulky commodities essential to daily life such as grain and coal. Such a system favoured only the upper classes and wealthy speculators.

Under the new regulations, goods were divided into 20 grades. The difference in freight rates between the highest and lowest grade is 1 to 200.

Freight rates for industrial and daily necessities are fixed at about the transportation cost, while the most essential materials such as coal and ores run

even below cost. This has led to substantial increases in the goods needed to develop industry and to ensure an adequate supply of daily necessities. Books, magazines and other materials for educational use are also placed in lower grades near transport cost. Luxury items and various non-essentials are transported at higher rates.

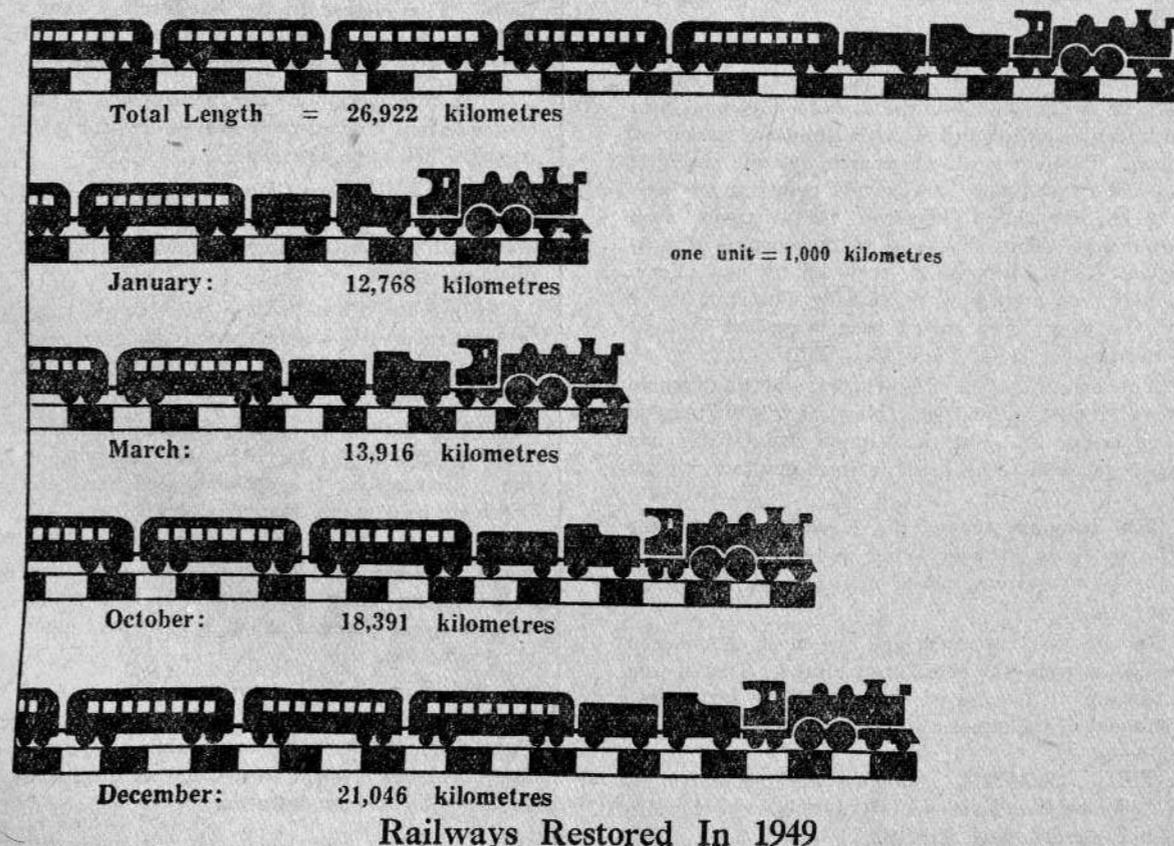
Traffic Efficiency

Traffic efficiency of China's railways went up sharply during the year of 1949. It was best illustrated by the considerable increase in traffic capacity along all rail lines. The load carried by the railways in Northeast China went up 70 per cent during the first eleven months of 1949. The railways of North China registered sharp increases after July. The load delivered by the Tientsin Railway Bureau shot up 53 per cent between March and December. This topped the highest capacity achieved in 1947 under the Kuomintang by 64 per cent.

There were many factors contributing to this achievement.

First and foremost was the considerable increase in the speed of the trains. The average travelling speed (including stops at railway stations) of freight and passenger trains in Northeast China last year was 23.7 kilometres per hour, as against the 21.7 kilometre record during the Japanese occupation. The freight trains of the Tientsin Railway Bureau ran at a speed of 19.9 kilometres per hour in December, compared with 15.1 in July.

(Continued on page 28)





New Year's Pictures — A People's Art



Tsai Jo-hung

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

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

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

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

Chinese peasants like to decorate their cottages with colourful woodcuts and paintings. Of course these woodcuts and paintings cannot compare in refinement and durability with standard types of fine art. Folk art is always coarse, and the peasants had only rough paper and crude printing methods at their disposal. Therefore the pictures soon deteriorated. This gave rise to the custom of putting up fresh pictures at each lunar New Year, which is now known as the Spring Festival. In a way, the New Year season became an art festival for the people. (See Page 18.—Ed.)

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

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

In the first category, and the most common in those days, were the religious pictures. The custom of hanging up images of gods about the house was an offshoot of the superstitious feudal society. Never-

theless, it showed that the people of old China could only find consolation through their faith in the supernatural. Disappointed by the men of the ruling class, they could only look to the gods for help. Since the peasants passed their days and nights in constant fear that some misfortune might enter their homes, which would spell complete doom, so it was only natural that the peasants looked upon Door-Gods as the guardian angels of their households. Since the peasants passed their days

Explanation of New Year's Pictures

(1) *Greet 1950*—An Inner Mongolian picture portrays the joy with which the people welcome this year of victory and plenty.

(2) *Ballot by Beans*—The people of the Liberated Areas have practised their right to elect representatives for more than ten years. Since a large section of the peasantry is still illiterate, beans serve as ballots in village elections. The mottos in the background read: "Look carefully at the man you vote for" and "Choose the best among these good people."

(3) *Production Brings Prosperity*—The peasants now rely on their own efforts for good fortune, not upon the gods.

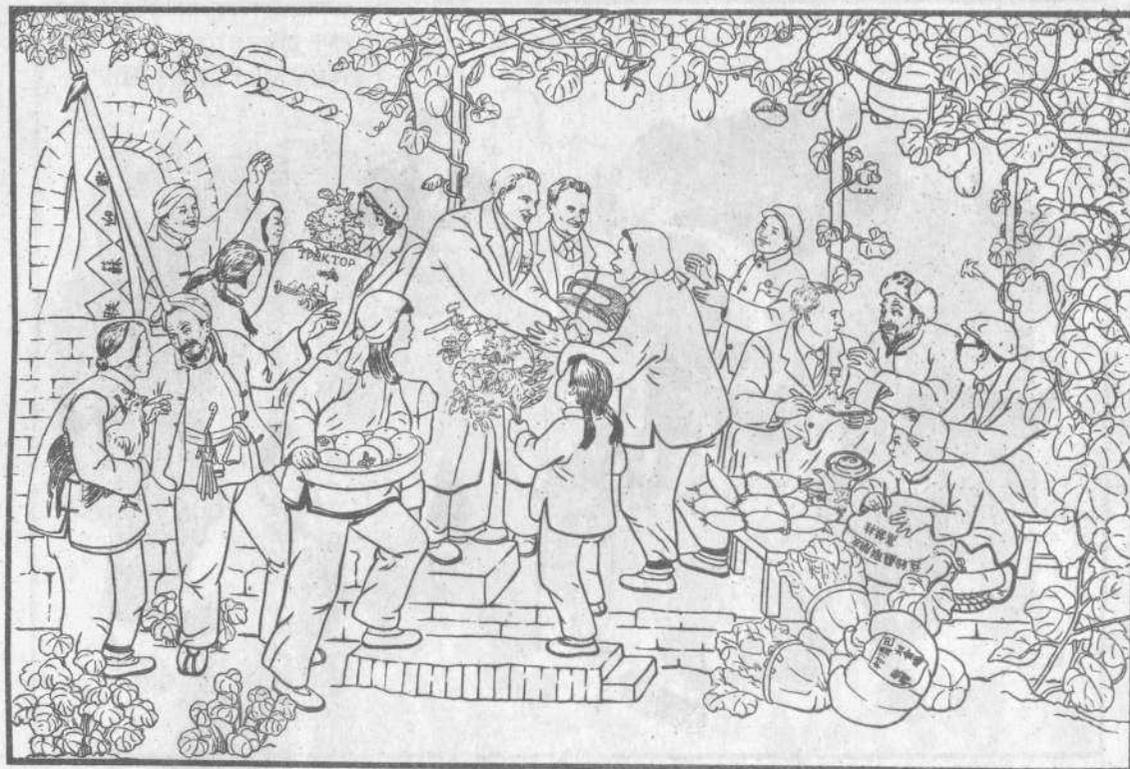
(4) *Knock Down Chiang Kai-shek*—Even the children understand Chiang's treacherous relationship with U.S. imperialism, as revealed by their games.

(5) *New Title-Deeds*—The final stage of land reform is reached when the new land-owners receive their title-deeds bearing a red official seal.

(6) *Villagers Welcome Soviet Friends*—The new spirit of Internationalism growing in the countryside is demonstrated as the peasants heap gifts upon Soviet visitors.

(7) *The First Tractor Arrives*—The peasants show great interest in the first tractor arriving from the Soviet Union, which heralds great changes ahead in the rural mode of production.

The two figures decorating the title of Tsai Jo-hung's article are heroic soldier of the People's Liberation Army and labour hero who have replaced the old Door-Gods as guardians of the peasants' homesteads.



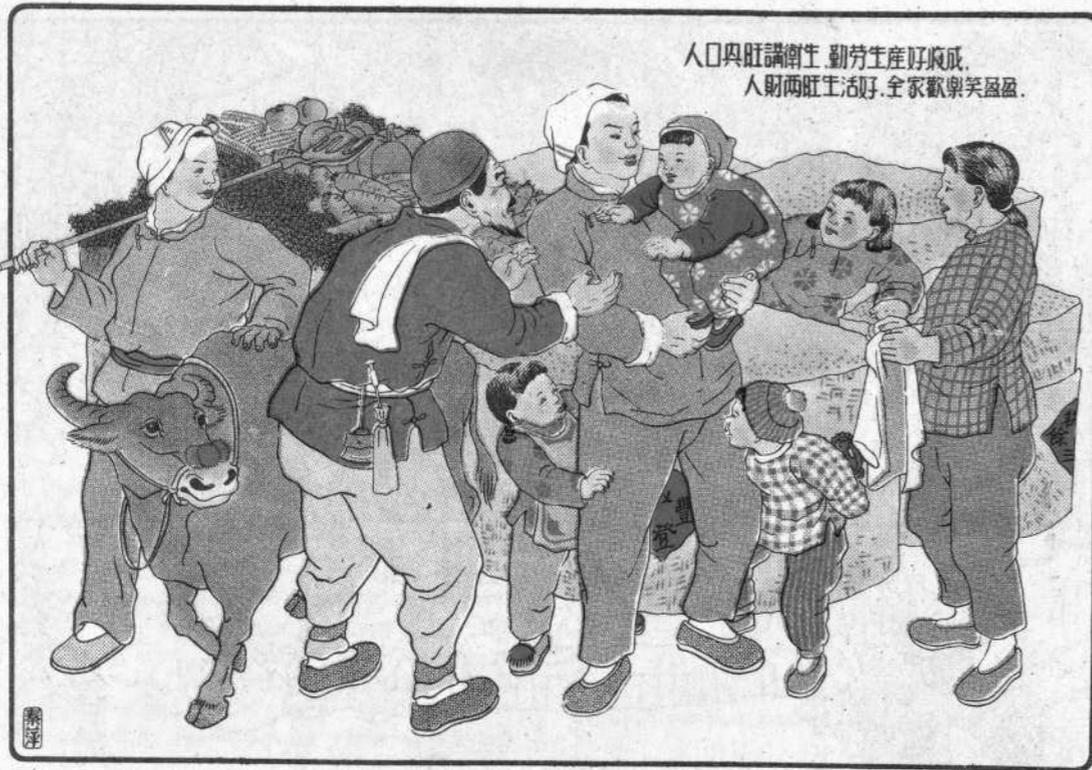
Villagers Welcome Soviet Friends

By Cheng Shu



The First Tractor Arrives

By Li Chi



人口與旺講衛生，勤勞生產好收成。
人財兩旺生活好，全家歡笑笑盈盈。

Production Brings Prosperity

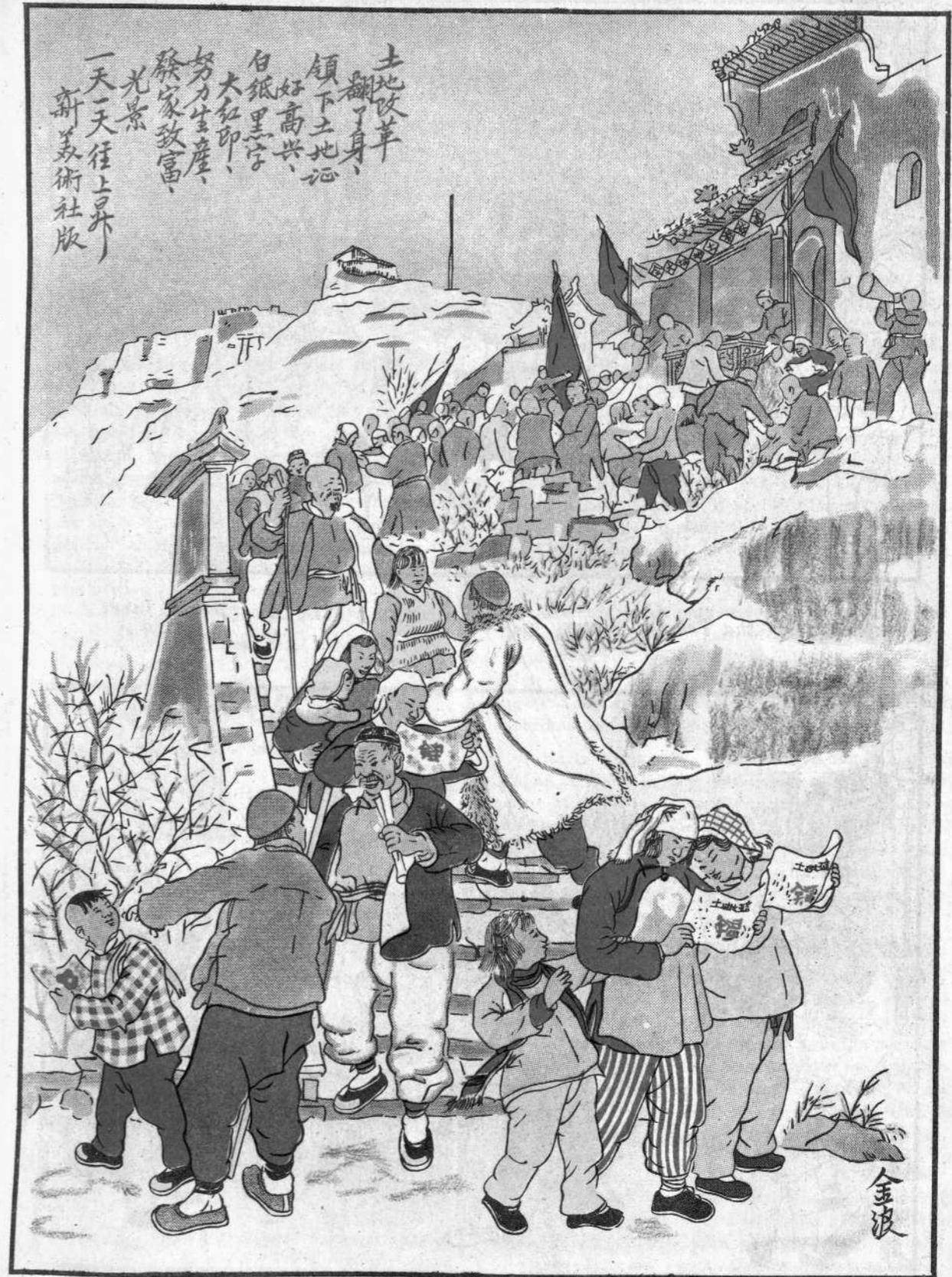
By Ching Ping



作真馮

Knock Down Chiang Kai-shek

By Feng Cheng



土地改革
翻了身
領下土地証
好高興
白紙黑字
大紅印
努力生產
發家致富
光景
一天一天往上昇
新美術社版

New Title-deeds

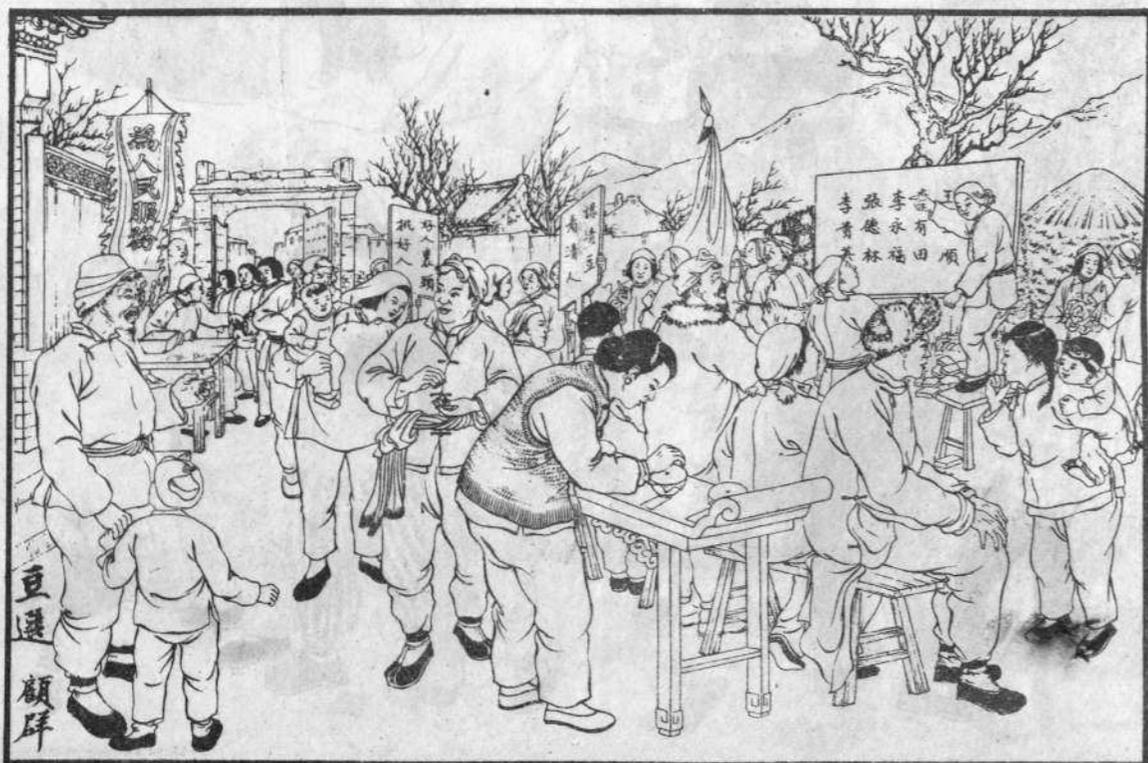
By King Lana

金波



Greet 1950, the Year of Victory and Plenty

By Kwanpuzab, Inner Mongolian artist



Ballot by Beans

By Ku Chun

and nights praying for deliverance from the direst poverty, it was only natural that they enthroned the Fortune-God in their homes. Yet even in their poverty, the peasants were fastidious about their morals and so they set up a Kitchen-God to watch over the family's behaviour.

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

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

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

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

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

* * *

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

Up until the May Fourth Movement,* New Year's pictures had consisted entirely of coloured woodcuts. For more than 200 years, Yangliuching, situated half-way between Peking and Tientsin, had

* The May Fourth Movement began in 1919 as a student movement in Peking which later developed into a nation-wide revolt against imperialism and feudalism.

been one of the most important centres for producing these prints. This centre turned out 100,000,000 prints a year, selling them throughout North and Northeast China.

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

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

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

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

In 1942, Chairman Mao Tse-tung laid down a clear guiding principle for all revolutionary artists when he provided the slogan: Art for the sake of serving the people! From then on, artists went into the countryside and learned to live with the peasants and to share their lives. This provided an adequate foundation for genuinely reforming the New Year's pictures, and before long this task became one of the major features in the movement to popularize art.

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

tions. Not only were the new pictures loved by the people, but they have also proved themselves an effective weapon in awakening and educating the masses.

The old school of New Year's pictures had only reflected the illusions of the Chinese people and their dreams for a better life. But the new school showed the peasants how to achieve their dreams of a better life through their own organized struggles: the struggle for land reform, the struggle to raise production, and so on.

And what about the old gods, the allegories and the obsolete moral teachings? In freeing themselves from the landlords, the peasants also took a large step forward in freeing themselves from their old superstitions. Once the people had carved out happier lives for themselves through their own labours, they tended to say to their Fortune-Gods and Kitchen-Gods: "We used to live on husks and

tree-leaves. What did you do to help us then? Now we are well fed, but not thanks to you. You are of no use to us at all, so you may go back to your celestial domains now." And with such words, they burned their gods.

New contents in place of the old; man in place of gods—this is the prevalent trend throughout China's countryside today. This year when the peasants paste up their New Year's pictures on the front gate, instead of the old Door-Gods they will put up drawings of PLA soldiers and liberated workers with red stars in their caps. The futile Fortune-God will be replaced by a picture entitled "Production Brings Prosperity." The themes of all such pictures will be based upon the real lives of real men. Thus, the New Year's pictures are no longer symbolic; they have become the actual portrayal of the life of Chinese peasants.

New Year in February

According to the lunar calendar, February 16th, the publishing date for this issue of *People's China*, is the last day of the year of the ox. Midnight will usher in the year of the tiger.

Some people may be surprised to learn that although China has officially adopted the solar calendar, which in fact is widely used, yet the Central People's Government has declared a three-day holiday for the festival. But Chinese peasants find this ruling only practical. The lunar New Year has been a peasant festival from time immemorial. Therefore, while adhering to the universally accepted solar calendar, the People's Government does not overlook an occasion which still means so much to the bulk of the population. Hence, the official holiday at the Spring Festival time.

There is much in this traditional event that is both beneficent and delightful. The festival, coming just before the new planting season, provides the peasants with their longest rest of the year. It is a time when sons return home from the town and married daughters call with their husbands to greet the New Year. The week before New Year is a busy one. Houses are given their spring-cleaning. New clothes are made for the whole family. Food is prepared for the first few days of the New Year, so that the women can have a rest too during the holiday. Children receive special

pocket money and grown-ups devote their time, instead of the daily drudgery, to the playing of drums and cymbals. Bright posters are put up around the house and pasted on the heavy wooden doors of the gate.

The New Year season closes on the 15th of the first lunar month with a lantern festival. House gates and village lanes are decorated with all sorts and shapes of homemade lanterns, some made of coloured paper and others of ice frozen into the shapes of fish, pagoda, etc.

But there is also the undesirable side of the festival. As explained in Tsai Jo-hung's article on page 12, in the past, this was the season when the peasants used to indulge in superstitious practices, praying to all sorts of deities for wealth, for longevity and for offspring.

Late last December, a joint directive from the Ministries of Cultural Affairs and Education had already made it clear that in so far as it does not affect work and production, dramatic and musical performances should be organized in the villages, factories and army units. Every large city is now organizing a dramatic contest, drawing all the leading artistes into this competition. In other words, the People's Government is anxious to give the people a real holiday, but not without utilizing it for some educational purpose.

Dramatic Movement in Contemporary China

Chang Keng

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

The new drama served as an instrument to expose the feudalistic rule of the Ching (Manchu) Dynasty and to propagate revolutionary ideas among the people. Dr. Sun Yat-sen, leader of the Revolution of 1911, placed great importance on the role of the new drama. The best-known dramatic organization of the time was sponsored by a group of the overseas Chinese students in Japan, who formed the Spring Willow Dramatic Association (Ch'un Liu She). This organization presented plays, such as *La Tosca* by Vietarien Sardau, that were tinged with a romantic flavour and were full of pathos. However, progressive actors and playwrights were bitterly persecuted during this period, and a number of them became martyrs. But after the failure of the Revolution of 1911, the new dramatic movement degenerated to a low level and became the mere pastime of the urban bourgeoisie.

The May Fourth Cultural Movement in 1919 also brought with it a dramatic reformation. Modern Western plays, such as the works of Henrik Ibsen and G. B. Shaw, were introduced into China. The social problems reflected in such dramas, especially in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, exerted a great influence on the Chinese intellectuals. The new dramatic movement of this period helped pave the way for the revolution of 1925-1927.

The failure of this revolution was a tremendous blow to the petty bourgeois intellectuals. This was reflected in the dramatic movement of the South China Association (Nan Kuo), which was largely romantic in nature. It advocated the principle of art for art's sake, but at the same time it also reflected a strong feeling of dissatisfaction with the conditions of China prevailing then. The most popular playwright of the time was T'ien Han. His famous works include *A Night At the Cafe*, *The Tragedy On the Lake* and *The Death of a Famous Actor*. This period lasted for two years.

The Left-Wing Dramatists' League

In 1930 the literary front led by the Communist Party was formed. T'ien Han and his South China

CHANG KENG, playwright and producer, is Deputy-Director of the Central Dramatic Academy and Vice-Chairman of the All-China Dramatists' Association.

Association immediately lined up with the left-wing literary group. The playwrights, actors and stage workers were united under the banner of a new literary front—The Left-Wing Dramatists' League. Not very long after this, the dramatic movement was subject to the oppression of the Kuomintang reactionary government. Many of the participants were arrested. The Kuomintang government closed down the theatrical organizations, among them the South China Association. The Left-Wing Dramatists' League was compelled to go underground. Since the Kuomintang regime did not have any official authority over the Foreign Settlements in Shanghai, the League, taking advantage of the stupidity in cultural affairs on the part of these swaggering members of the Shanghai Municipal Council, could still present some plays there. But plays reflecting the realities of China could not be presented even in Shanghai and therefore dramatic workers were compelled to limit their activities to introducing some of the more progressive foreign plays, especially those of Tsarist Russia. The plays presented under these conditions included *The Storm* by A. N. Ostrovski, *Inspector* by N. V. Gogol and *The Power of Darkness* by Leo Tolstoy. Of the three mentioned above, *The Storm* was the most successful.

Then the Japanese imperialists seized Manchuria in 1931 and later launched an attack upon Shanghai. Under the slogans of resisting Japan and saving the country, the playwrights wrote many short plays which called for resistance against Japanese aggression. Most of them, however, were suppressed by the reactionary forces.

Enemy and Censors

After the beginning of the War of Resistance against Japan, the theatrical workers in Shanghai, Nanking and Wuhan organized many touring dramatic troupes and gave performances in the army, in villages and in factories. The presentations were designed to rouse the masses and teach them how to oppose aggression. Some of the troupes also went to the Communist-led guerrilla bases behind the enemy lines. Thus, the dramatic workers were divided into two groups: one remained in the area controlled by Chiang Kai-shek and the other went to the democratic anti-Japanese bases.

These two dramatic groups both worked under extremely difficult conditions—but conditions which were entirely different in character.

During the early stage of the War of Resistance before the fall of Wuhan, the militant spirit of all the people, including theatrical workers, ran very

high. An estimated 60 per cent of all plays produced during that period took the Anti-Japanese War as the central theme. Tsao Yu's *Metamorphosis* was also written during this period.

After the fall of Wuhan in 1938, the Kuomintang reactionary government began making guarded preparations for surrendering to the Japanese. As part of these preparations, it took steps to suppress all cultural activities, including the performance of progressive plays. Because of the strict censorship, plays about the War of Resistance could no longer be presented on the stage in Chungking, the wartime capital of China. This led to the production of many historical plays, the most famous of which was *Ch'u Yuan* (an ancient Chinese poet of the latter part of the fourth century) written by Kuo Mo-jo. These historical plays not only described historical events but subtly criticized the Kuomintang's corruption and crimes by portraying similar situations in an ancient background. Besides these, there were many comedies that made ingenious satirical attacks on the nefarious rule of the Kuomintang.

During the last two years of the war, such presentations were suppressed by the Kuomintang reactionaries. Chungking's stages were silent.

As for the dramatists who stayed in the Japanese-occupied areas and persisted in their progressive dramatic activities, such as Yu Ling, Ah Ying and others, they still managed to produce some good plays. Such plays as *The Tragedy At the End of Ming Dynasty* strengthened the morale of the young students and aroused the patriotic feelings of the people.

These were the conditions surrounding theatrical workers both in the Kuomintang areas and the Japanese-occupied areas, who were constantly persecuted. They were not allowed to describe realities, nor to make penetrating researches into the problems of their times. Sometimes they were not even allowed to engage in artistic activities at all.

Unite With the Masses

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

During the literary conference held at Yen-an in 1942, Comrade Mao Tse-tung proposed that writers penetrate deeply into the life of the masses, that they live with the people and use the familiar

and well-loved folk forms to describe the peasants' life and activities. With this clear guidance to follow, dramatic workers started the *yangko* movement based on songs originally sung while working in the fields. Not very long after this, they produced a series of operas and plays such as Ho Chin-tze's *The White-haired Woman*, Ma Chien-lin's *Bloody Tears of Vengeance*, Fu To's *Wang Hsiu-luan*, Tu Feng's *Li Kuo-tuan*, Ting Li's *The People's Army and the Common People*, etc. All of these portrayed various aspects of the life of workers, peasants and soldiers.

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

Liberated Area Drama

After the conclusion of the Anti-Japanese War, the progressive drama continued to be severely restricted in the Kuomintang areas. However, excellent works with a strong sense of reality, like T'ien Han's *The Ode on Three Women*, still appeared now and again. During the three years of the War of Liberation, Kuomintang persecution of drama groups became more and more ruthless. Consequently, progressive theatrical workers went one after another to the Liberated Areas where the dramatic movement was in a state of rapid development. Among plays produced in the Liberated Areas were: Yuan Chang-ling's *Scarlet Leaf River* and Li Tse-hua's *Counter-Restoration*, which took the agrarian reform as their subject-matter; *Democratic Youth on the March*, written collectively by Chia Ke and others, which described the student movement in the Kuomintang areas; *The Song of the Red Flag*, the collective work of Lu Mei and others, and *How An Artillery Shell Is Made* by Ch'en Chi-tung, both of which described the process of industrial reconstruction after the People's Liberation Army entered the cities.

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

(Continued on page 27)

"None Shall Starve"

Nation-wide Campaign Against Natural Calamities

Cheng Lien-tuan

less serious nature also affected the crops.

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

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

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

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

Today's China is different. The calamities are indeed grave, but the people's government knows how to cope with them. On December 19th, Premier Chou En-lai issued a directive making all local governments responsible for seeing that "none shall starve." Government and Party workers in the distressed areas immediately set out to help the peasants organize all possible forms of production in order to surmount the crisis.

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

1. Prevent Disaster Where Possible

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

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

At Tsinan, Shantung Province, the Yellow River last year rose 0.02 metre higher than any previous recorded level. But a well-organized force of 100,000 peasants and 30,000 cadres successfully prevented any serious breach.

Heroic fights like these have greatly curbed the floods. Without such preventive measures, an even larger area would have been inundated.

2. Adopt All Possible Remedial Measures

When floods occur, the peasants are moved to safety in an organized manner. They are persuaded not to flee in all directions as formerly the case, but to remain in adjacent areas. Then when the flood subsided, the villagers could be organized to drain the land by digging canals and building dams. In Hopei Province last year, 34,000,000 *mow* of flooded land were drained and planted to wheat. In the adjoining Pingyuan* Province, 71 per cent of the 3,280,000 *mow* of land inundated last year is already back under cultivation.

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

3. Organized Handicraft Production

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

The peasants in newly liberated areas are not yet accustomed to co-operating in their production activities. It is not easy to organize them into collective undertakings of any kind, especially at a time when they are beset with calamities. But by fully mobilizing the Party members and more active members of the villages, and

by patiently persuading the peasants one by one, the relief workers eventually convince the people that they can best overcome their difficulties through organized production.

Kaochang village in Shouchang county, Pingyuan Province, is a typical example. There are 189 households and 873 people in this village. Last summer the Yellow River flooded two thirds of the village's 2,857 *mow* of land. No family had enough food to last beyond the lunar New Year in mid-February. Eleven families left to seek a living elsewhere. The rest remained idle, awaiting relief or whatever the future held in store for them.

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

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

Thus, all the villagers were soon busily engaged in their collective efforts to help themselves out.

4. Organize Work Relief and Resettlement Programs

The government has initiated many work relief projects to help the people over difficult times. In East China, which suffered most severely from floods, the Central

People's Government has allocated 231,940,000 catties of grain for work relief. The various local governments plan to spend an equivalent sum for water conservancy projects. In North Kiangsu, more than a million peasants have been employed to harness the Yi River. In North Anhwei, 200,000 peasants are working on Huai River projects. In Central Shantung, 100,000 persons have been given work along the Shu River. The completion of these projects will provide flood protection for 40,000,000 *mow* of cultivated land in East China alone.

By the end of 1949, Hopei Province had moved over 14,500 distressed peasants to Northeast China. The government extended assistance to these migrants throughout their long journey. Upon arrival, they received ten *mow* of land per family. The government also gave them draught animals, farming tools and working capital. However, such resettlement projects are too expensive to be used on a really vast scale at this time. Therefore, this measure is only adopted as a final resort.

5. Bring in Outside Assistance

While the peasants in the distressed areas are exerting every effort to help themselves, they have also received assistance from other regions. Villages not affected by the disasters have generously provided shelter and food to those forced to flee from their homes. A "save-a-bowl-of-rice" movement was started last year among army units, government organizations, schools, factories and other public institutions. Donations in North China alone have already amounted to 8,000,000 catties of grain.

Under government leadership, "relief-by-production" has developed into an organized mass movement aimed not only at surmounting the present difficulties, but also at laying a foundation for the rehabilitation of China's war-torn agriculture.

A New Type of Peasants' Hostel

K'e Chia-lung

Early one morning, an old peasant named Pan Lao-chung and three of his neighbours arrived in Shihchiachuang, a railway market centre in Hopei Province. They had come on business, bringing 1,000 catties of sweet potatoes to sell.

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

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

The old man and his group did not have much luck that day, as frequently the case in the past. They offered their whole consignment of sweet potatoes to a number of grocery stores, but the prices quoted were far too low. At last they went to the open market and began to sell their produce retail.

They spend the whole day at the market, bargaining with each prospective customer. By late afternoon, when the market began to close up, over 400 catties remained unsold. Although they lowered their price in order to get rid of their goods, few buyers were interested. The peasants were anxious to return home early the next morning, and they hardly knew what to do. Then they remembered the hostel.

As soon as Pan Lao-chung told his story to some of the hostel staff, the latter immediately telephoned to a consumers' co-operative store. The remaining stock of sweet potatoes was promptly sold to the satisfaction of both parties.

The Peasants' Hostel was established in Shihchiachuang in February, 1949, by the Council of the Co-operative Association with the aid of the local people's government. It is a new type of hostel geared to the new relations being shaped between urban and rural areas. The hostel is designed to serve a dual purpose: it frees the peasants from the exploitation of middlemen when they come to the city to sell their agricultural produce and buy industrial goods; and it provides a comfortable place for the peasants to stay during their short trips to town.

Lodging is free and meals are provided at cost, usually 35 per cent less than street vendors' prices. If a particularly thrifty peasant wants to cook food that he has brought from home, the hostel allows him to use the kitchen free of charge.

Nevertheless, the hostel manages to operate on a self-supporting basis. The building and furnishings were provided by the local government, and so the hostel has practically no overhead expenses. It derives its income from selling daily necessities to its peasant clients. These goods are obtained from state enterprises at virtually cost price, and therefore the hostel can make a small profit even though its goods are sold far below the prevailing market quotations.

Let us come back to Pan Lao-chung. He was, of course, very grateful for the assistance he received in selling the sweet potatoes—so grateful, in fact, that he hesitated to bother the hostel personnel with more of his problems. But he still wanted to buy a new cart wheel, so he went out to look for one. At first he had difficulty locating any dealers, and then he found prices quite exorbitant. As usual, when the city merchants saw they were dealing with a coun-

try bumpkin who was not familiar with market conditions, their prices shot up. In the end, Pan returned to the hostel empty-handed.

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

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

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

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

* * *

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

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

* Pingyuan is a newly created province made up from parts of South Hopei, East Shantung and North Honan.

CURRENT CHINA

Jan. 25—Feb. 10, 1950



Three Conferences

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

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

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

After 3½ Years of War

On Jan. 25, the Kuomintang's last two regular units on the mainland, the 8th and 26th Armies, were

completely routed in South Yunnan. After three and a half years of war, the remnant Kuomintang reactionaries now control only Tibet, Taiwan, part of Hainan Island and Kinmen, Tinghai and other small islands off the south-eastern coast. These territories, according to a communique issued by PLA General Headquarters on Feb. 5, constitute a total area of 1,112,500 square kilometres with a population of 11,233,000. The communique also disclosed that the Kuomintang lost 1,754,220 men, or 259 entire divisions, during the first half of the fourth year of the Chinese people's Liberation War (from July 1 to Dec. 31, 1949). This brings the total losses of Kuomintang troops during the past three and a half years to 7,445,620 men. (See article on page 6 by Tsai Ying-p'ing—Ed.)

In the face of irrevocable defeat, Chiang Kai-shek's gang became all the more unscrupulous in their hostile actions against the people and their collaboration with foreign imperialism.

On Feb. 6, 17 American-made Kuomintang planes dropped a load of 70-odd bombs on Shanghai, injuring and killing more than 1,000 civilians. The city's indignant populace staged a huge demonstration on the following day to protest the Kuomintang's series of criminal air attacks against the civilian population of Shanghai.

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

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

A Group of Liars

On Jan. 30, the New China News Agency strongly denounced the background material put out by the U. S. State Department which was filled with shameless fabrications about Soviet Union's "penetration" into Northeast China, Inner Mongolia and Sinkiang. The NCNA also emphatically refuted a United Press report about the so-called "Harbin Agreement" and "Moscow Agreement" allegedly concluded between China and the U.S.S.R. The report included such allegations as that the Soviet Union will station troops in Manchuria and Sinkiang and that Liaoning and Antung provinces will be incorporated into Korea at some future date. The NCNA pointed out that such imperialist-manufactured lies "can only prove how astonishingly ignorant American imperialism is and how enraged it is over the failure of its aggressive policy in China."

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

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

Foreign Affairs

Other developments on the diplomatic front included:

On Feb. 1, the U.S.S.R. sent China a note proposing the creation of an international military court to try five Japanese war criminals, headed by Hirohito, for bacteriological warfare. On Feb. 3, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs Li Ke-nung replied to the Soviet Union, expressing complete agreement with the Soviet proposal. This proposal has drawn enthusiastic support from all parts of this country.

Chi Chao-ting was appointed China's representative to the UN Economic and Social Council on Feb. 2. A non-party democrat, Chi now heads the Central Bureau for Administering Enterprises with Foreign Capital.

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

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

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

Economic Reconstruction

The Government Administration Council approved the 1950 railway plan on Feb. 1. The program calls for restoration of over 1,000 kilometres of damaged tracks, the re-

pairing of 500 locomotives, 577 passenger carriages and 4,400 freight carriages, and the construction of 1,500 new carriages.

A national telephone and telegraph meeting opened in Peking on Jan. 25 to map out a plan for the restoration and construction of the national tele-communications network. Up to now, 1,200 tele-

phone and telegraph bureaux and 80 per cent of the country's telephone and telegraph lines have been restored to working order.

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

China's Workers Organized

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

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

Railway workers' unions have raised their membership to 320,000, comprising 87 per cent of all railway workers; 349,405 textile workers are organized, or 75 per cent of all textile workers; 205,000 miners have joined unions, or 60 per cent of all miners in the country.

One year after liberation, Peking, the capital of new China, has 83 trade unions and 125 union preparatory committees. Of Peking's 390,605 workers, 186,150 workers, that is, 47.7 per cent, have been organized.

More than 179,000 workers in Tientsin, comprising 59 per cent of the city's total labour force (87 per cent of the city's industrial workers) have joined trade unions.

More than 930,000 workers, 87 per cent of all the workers of Shanghai, are now organized into 402 trade unions. Union preparatory committees have been set up in 848 establishments.

Over 80 per cent of the workers of Tangshan, an industrial centre near Tientsin, are organized.

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

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

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

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

Electrical workers and metal workers have already fixed the dates for holding their all-China congresses.

Culture For All

Winter is the season when the peasants may study as it is the only season that they have some leisure.

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

Up to the end of last year, more than 1,800,000 students had enrolled in the winter schools, according to incomplete statistics recently released by the Ministry of Education of the Northeast People's Government.

In twenty counties of Liaohsi Province alone, for example, there are 6,828 regular winter schools and 6,008 study groups with an enrollment of 452,000 students, mostly adults. These educational centres are staffed by 24,800 teachers.



Street Exhibition by Su Hui

In Sungkiang Province, there are 5,899 winter schools with 7,350 teachers and 294,500 students, according to figures so far available.

Liaotung Province has organized classes for 700,000 students; Kirin, for 600,000 students; and Heilungkiang, for 480,000 students.

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

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

Children's Reading Room

The People's Cultural Hall in the city of Chingchow, in Northeast China, opened a Children's Reading Room in December. This library contains a collection of 2,800 books suitable for young readers. They are classified into seven sections: political readers, literature, introductions to the USSR, applied science, natural science, story books and operas, as well as periodicals and newspapers. The place has already attracted great attention among the city's children. It is so crowded that sometimes the young readers have to form a long queue.

During the first twenty days after the Reading Room opened, it attracted 4,300 children. On one Sunday, attendance rose to a peak of 350 for the day. The lowest attendance during week-days has been 120, while the average is 210 a day. A third grade pupil became so enthusiastic about the Reading Room that he mobilized all

his classmates to come and clean the window panes.

Other cities in China are watching the success of the Chingchow Children's Reading Room with great interest, and many are already laying plans to set up similar institutions.

Mohammedan Hall

The Mohammedan residents of Sian, capital of Shensi Province, inaugurated their own Cultural and Educational Hall on New Year's Eve. The Hall consists of a social education section, an art and propaganda section, an entertainment section, a reading room and a library. The Hall plans to open a night school for Mohammedan labouring people, which will provide cultural and political courses. According to New Democratic principles, the national minorities must receive all possible facilities for their political, economic and cultural development. The establishment of the Mohammedan Hall in Sian is one of the first steps in this direction.

Rural Libraries

To heighten the political consciousness and raise the cultural level among the peasants, Hulan County, in Sungkiang Province, has begun to establish rural libraries on a widespread scale. The first experimental library was set up in Shenchia Village. On the basis of experiences gained there, 179 more rural libraries have been created. The peasants themselves donate money to purchase the books. The libraries are housed in village centres where the peasants frequently gather. A total of 257,300 volumes of popular books suited to the peasants' average cultural level are now in circulation in these rural libraries.



THE ROAD TO FINAL VICTORY

(Continued from page 7)

In autumn, 1948, the PLA for the first time in history gained numerical superiority over its enemy. By July, 1949, the PLA had 4,000,000 troops compared to the Kuomintang army's 1,490,000 — a ratio of 1 to 0.37. This change was of vital importance since it greatly shortened the course of the war and provided the conditions necessary for attacking the Kuomintang's most strongly defended bases.

The PLA's new strategy was illustrated during the Battle of Tsinan, in September, 1948. Tsinan, the provincial capital of Shantung, was one of the Kuomintang's key strategic bases in the East China War Zone. It was strongly fortified and garrisoned by more than 100,000 troops. Surrounded by rivers and mountains, the city was easy to defend but hard to attack. Nevertheless, the battle lasted only eight days. Results: 61,800 Kuomintang officers and men were captured, together with area commander, General Wang Yao-wu; the three brigades of the 84th Reorganized Division under General Wu Hua-wen came over to the PLA.

The PLA's skill in mastering modern positional warfare was further demonstrated during the Battles of "West Liaoning-Mukden" (Sept. 12 to Nov. 2, 1948), "Huai Hai" (Nov. 7, 1948 to Jan. 10, 1949) and "Peking-Tientsin-Kalgan" (Dec. 5, 1948 to Jan. 15, 1949). During these campaigns, Chiang lost 148 divisions, or 1,548,000 men, including the 26 divisions under General Fu Tso-yi who agreed to surrender and handed over Peking without bloodshed. Chiang's four remaining crack units, the New 1st, New 5th and New 6th Armies and the 11th Reorganized Division, were wiped out in the course of these campaigns.

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

On April 20th, one million PLA troops began to pour across the Yangtze River. Three days after the crossing, the PLA entered Nanking, the Kuomintang capital. On May 27th, Shanghai was liberated. And so was Canton in South China on October 14th.

Mopping Up

The war then entered a mopping-up stage.

In the first half of the fourth year of war, all of China's mainland was liberated with the sole exception of Tibet. The PLA took over 953 cities and county towns, including 13 provincial capitals. Chiang lost 1,754,220 men in this period, or 259 entire divisions. Of these, 786,920 were taken prisoner, 92,220 were casualties, 215,070 surrendered, 637,980 revolted and came over, and 22,030 accepted

reorganization terms. This brought Chiang's total losses during the three-and-a-half years of war to 7,445,620 men.

Throughout the war the Kuomintang had served as the PLA's main source of supplies. Here is a partial list of the equipment which the Kuomintang army has transported to the front for the PLA since July, 1946:

Artillery pieces	52,051
Machine guns	297,740
Rifles and body arms	2,612,126
Aircrafts	183
Warships	168
Tanks	598
Armoured cars	378
Automobiles and trucks	20,513
Rounds of ammunitions	492,799,700
Shells	5,183,390

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

DRAMATIC MOVEMENT

(Continued from page 20)

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

This brief survey illustrates how the dramatic movement has conscientiously fulfilled its tasks during the different stages of the Chinese revolution. In the beginning it provided the first few sparks of enlightenment. It later assisted in the reforms of the May Fourth Movement. Then it aroused the intellectuals as well as the workers to help pile fuel on the raging fire of the Great Revolution. During the long fighting years of the Anti-Japanese War and the War of Liberation, the dramatic movement joined in the struggle in order to mobilize the peasants; it spread throughout rural China where the potential power of our great nation lies. In the end, the drama helped overcome the abyss that separates intellectuals from the masses of labouring people. From now on, it is bound to gain even more popularity among the workers, peasants and soldiers, and with their support it will undoubtedly flourish as never before. We can foresee that Chinese drama will move on to a new height and will surely fulfil its mission in the new era of peaceful construction.

RESTORATION OF CHINA'S RAILWAYS

(Continued from page 11)

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

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

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

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

Leadership and Assistance

The tremendous success achieved on China's railways is primarily due to the leadership of the people's government and the Communist Party. In Kuomintang days, the national railways were considered the private property of the Big Four Families, who used them as a means to squeeze profits and wage war against the people. Corrupt and backward administration hampered rail develop-

ment. But now the railways have been returned to the people and are operated in their interests only.

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

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

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



Railway Restoration

Ku Yuan

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