

NORTHWEST CHINA COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

#2, July — October, 1981

CHINA FINE-TUNES ITS ECONOMY

Lynn Feintech, a China specialist who heads the political analysis department of the Bank of America, spoke about China's foreign trade policy at a luncheon meeting on May 19th. The luncheon at Tuck Lung Restaurant was sponsored by the World Affairs Council of Oregon and the Northwest China Council as their contribution to World Trade Week.

According to Ms. Feintech, the adoption of the 1978 modernization plan was a watershed in the history of the People's Republic. Admitting that the Cultural Revolution had been devastating, the plan was the first effort to integrate China into the world economy and to align China with the United States and Western Europe.

The initial emphasis of the 1978 plan, Ms. Feintech said, was on development of heavy industry. But it was soon realized that China lacked the physical infrastructure to support swift, extensive development of heavy industry, and the low priority given to technical education for 13 years had caused a shortage of skilled managers and technicians. The allocation of resources to heavy capital construction also resulted, Ms. Feintech said, in budget deficits and an unfavorable balance in international payments. It became necessary to

shift emphasis to agriculture in order to assure that the population is adequately fed. Emphasis was also placed on the development of light industry because it promises to employ more of China's urban masses at lower cost than the initially planned development of heavy industry. The continuing limited development of heavy industry has been directed toward development of the infrastructure.

The modernization plan has placed new stress on effective management and increased productivity. To further these goals, there has been some relaxation of central control over managerial functions. This has been combined with experiments in market-oriented socialism, the use of incentives and encouragement to individual enterprises within guidelines established by the government. While not implemented universally, decentralization and market-oriented socialism resulted in dramatic increases in productivity, Ms. Feintech said.

Since 1978, China has found itself plagued with some of the West's economic illnesses--double-digit inflation, high urban unemployment, and deficit spending. The emergence of these new problems has made the leadership cautious. Unwilling to permit supply and de-

mand principles to control the direction of the economy, the government has attempted to freeze capital construction and prices, and there are indications that central control over management is being reasserted. Nevertheless, the days of pendulum swings in economic policy which characterized recent Chinese history are gone.

Ms. Feintech observed that the inadequacy of the infrastructure, budget deficits and the imbalance of international payments provide a partial explanation for the cancellation of several major construction projects during the past two years. Budget problems and the imbalance of payments also explain China's interest in compensation trade arrangements.

The poverty of China and the need to feed its people help explain why 2/3 of U. S. exports to China consists of bulk agricultural products rather than the advanced technology China was expected to purchase. The preeminence of agricultural products among American exports to China will continue for at least five years, increasingly supplemented by the sale of technical products to aid agricultural production.

The balance of payments resulting from trade between the United States and China has heavily favored the United States. China may not continue trade with the United States at the present level, or permit it to increase, unless American

purchases from China increase. Unfortunately Ms. Feintech did not believe a marked increase in imports likely as there is political resistance to unlimited importation of those products China is particularly capable of exporting to the United States, such as textiles and processed foods.

In spite of the problems in the Chinese economy, continuing imbalance in foreign trade, the risk of a weak military system, and resistance to new economic trends by many leaders who became established during the Cultural Revolution, China is fine-tuning its economy, and economic planning is continuing to emphasize development in a politically stable environment.

Harold C. Pope

SPECIAL EVENTS

"SOLAR ENERGY: THE CHINESE EXPERIENCE

Saturday, September 12, 8:30 a.m.--4:15 p.m., Portland Hilton Hotel, 921 SW Sixth.

\$10.00.

Co-sponsored with the American Section of the International Solar Energy Society (as part of their Sixth National Passive Solar Conference, September 8--12; 221-2811).

The Northwest China Council, along with the Seattle branch, is planning a day-long session on solar energy in China which will feature some of the world's foremost experts in the field. It will be open to participants in the five-day conference as well as the general public.

The day will begin with the author of The Golden Thread, a history of solar power, Ken Butti, who will present China's early use of the sun as energy. Felipe Tsengfei

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*Editor: Jeffrey Barlow
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Wu, Vice-Chairman of the Qinghua University Thermal Engineering Department (Qinghua is widely known as the M.I.T. of China), will follow with a discussion of contemporary Chinese solar applications. After lunch, Christopher Szecsey, Director of International Programs at the Farallones Institute Rural Center, Occidental, California, will speak on appropriate technology in rural South China. The closing panel will feature Bing Chen of the University of Nebraska, Felipe Wu, and Douglas Balcom, well-known solar engineer, Los Alamos Labs.

More information will be sent to those on the China Council mailing list. Plan to combine the conference with lunch at Artquake, happening at the same time, on the Mall.

CHINA COUNCIL NEWS

NATIONAL CHINA COUNCIL NEWS

Robert Oxnam, Program Director of the national China Council, has just been selected as the new President of The Asia Society, the China Council's parent organization.

Furthermore, we are losing a valued friend and advisor in Terry Lautz, who helped us establish the Northwest China Council and since 1978 has actively helped with China education in Oregon. He will be moving to Hong Kong where he will work for the Yale-China Association.

Richard Bush, who has worked with Terry as a Program Associate for the China Council, will be our new contact.

The national China Council is located at 1785 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20036; 202-387-6500.

SLIDE-TAPE PRESENTATION NOW AVAILABLE

A 34-minute slide and taped cassette show on how Americans and

Chinese have viewed each other through history is now available for loan through the Northwest China Council.

Produced by the national China Council, this entertaining presentation makes use of Chinese and American images from newspaper cartoons, magazines, and movies. It was developed by Donald Gillin of Vassar College and is narrated by Irv Drasnin (who made the 1972 CBS production, "Misunderstanding China").

The show can be used in classes (high school or college), seminars and workshops on China, and other public meetings. Its use can be accompanied by an introduction by a China Council board member or associate, and it is also very effectively supplemented by comments from native Chinese.

CHINA RESOURCES

WING LUKE MEMORIAL MUSEUM

414 Eighth Avenue South
Seattle, Washington 98104
206-623-5124

Hours:

Tuesday-Saturday, 11:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Saturday, noon-4:00 p.m.

The following is excerpted from the Wing Luke brochure:

The Wing Luke Memorial Museum was founded and dedicated in 1966 to Seattle's first person of Chinese ancestry to be elected to public office in the Northwest (Seattle City Councilman).

The Wing Luke Museum has as its sole purpose to bridge the cultural gap between Asian and non-Asian people. It is the only predominantly Asian Folk Arts museum on the West Coast and features a collection, exhibits, research center, tours, and various cultural and educational lecture series.

The museum has a collection of Chinese and Asian textiles and artifacts which is expanding rapidly. It has an archival resource center containing personal histories, photographs and documents to record the history of Asians in the Pacific Northwest, especially the Chinese. In addition, the resource center has literary materials available for loan, including narrative slide files, books for elementary schools, textile catalogues and scripts for Korean, Philippine and Chinese folk art.

With a permanent collection which has a heavy emphasis on Chinese artifacts, the needs of the Asian community are being met by personal loan-exhibits, which allow the exhibits to be changed frequently and the museum to work with different segments of the Asian community. (An exhibit which can be seen through July is "Chinese Creation Legends".)

Community services which are offered through the museum include translation, referral to assistance agencies, English lectures, bilingual materials, and an apolitical meeting place.

The CHINESE FLOATING ART AUCTION held in November is the most popular event. At that time 200 of the best Northwest artists and craftsmen contribute artwork to be auctioned off at a gala evening.

Memberships are an important source of funding and members are granted the use of the facility for community meetings, discounts on educational and art series, and invitations to all museum openings.

SUMMER IN HONG KONG AND TAIWAN: MT. HOOD GOES EAST

This summer, sixteen Mt. Hood Community College (MHCC) faculty are making a 46-day "Group Projects Abroad" trip to Taiwan and Hong Kong. They'll be studying Chinese values and the impact of moderniza-

tion, with the goal of incorporating the concepts and information they learn into their college courses and sharing what they find with teachers throughout Oregon. These are not Asian studies teachers, but instructors in such areas as business, journalism, English, etc., who are involved in the Community College's long-term project of "internationalizing curriculum" by including global studies in regular courses.

The group will be led by Mathilda Harris, director of the International Studies program at MHCC, and an associate of the China Council.

To prepare the faculty for this immersion into another culture, the Northwest China Council assisted with an eight-day orientation. Jane Larson, China Council coordinator, contracted with Mt. Hood to organize the program, and many China Council board and associate members made presentations: Linda Walton, "Chinese History Before 1840;" Jeffrey Barlow, "Chinese History, 1840--Present," "Life in Hong Kong," and "Group Dynamics in Another Culture: Focus on Taiwan and Hong Kong;" Mary Bernson, "Global Studies and China: Available Resources and Specific Needs;" Willert Rhynsburger, "Geography in a Human Context: Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China;" Thomas Webb, "The Foreign Trade of Taiwan and Hong Kong" and "Chinese Food Preparation and Consumption;" Gary Scott, "Political Structure and Participation in Hong Kong and Taiwan" and "Contemporary Political Issues in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China;" Stevan Harrell, "The Culture and Society of Taiwan;" Anthony Polsky, "Hong Kong Journalism: Public Opinion and the Media/The Experience of Being a Western Reporter in Hong Kong;" Angela Palandri, "An Introduction to the Chinese Language" and "Traditional Chinese Literature and Its Modern Outgrowth in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China;" Harold Pope, "Hong Kong Education;"

and Ellen Laing, "Introduction to Chinese Art."

The group was also given a seminar on the preparation of curriculum materials and a one-day workshop on culture shock and cross-cultural communication. A variety of films, slide shows, and videotapes were also seen.

Upon their return, they will utilize their research and information for training global studies K-12 teachers in the Portland area.

INTERVIEW

GEORGE LEONG

George Leong is co-president of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (C.C.B.A.), a spokesman group for the Chinese-American community. It was formed in the late 1890's to act as a liaison for the Chinese community as a whole to the wider Portland community and as a focus of community activities for the Chinese-American population. Mr. Leong granted the China Council an interview over a very pleasant lunch in the new Marco Polo Gardens Restaurant.

George Leong is a Portland native whose parents came from China. As the oldest son of a traditional family, he was given a classical Chinese education in Guangzhou (Canton) from the ages of ten to fourteen. Part of that training was received at a Christian school in the East Hills section of Canton. This classical training gave George Leong a deep interest in Chinese culture and a high regard for education.

Returning to high school in America, Mr. Leong was drafted. After completing his service, Mr. Leong worked his way up the corporate ladder. He served as a trouble shooting manager for the National Dollar store chain. He established the chain along the Mexican

border from Los Angeles to El Paso. (Mr. Leong speaks fluent English, Spanish, and several Chinese dialects.) He subsequently moved to New York Life Insurance Company.

Fifteen years ago he returned to Portland and resumed his activity with Portland's Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association. Mr. Leong's brother-in-law helped him get re-acquainted in the Association. People began to remember George Leong. He became the English language secretary to a former president of the Association, worked on several committees, eventually becoming president himself.

It is easy to see why Mr. Leong is the spokesperson for the group sanctioned to speak for the Chinese-American community. He is articulate and proud of his heritage, a mix of East and West. George Leong recognizes that, indeed, the United States is a melting pot, but as he said, teasing, "don't just melt away". He envisions the newly restored Chinese Benevolent Association Building as a symbol of the Chinese community in Portland. It was restored because the Chinese community cared enough to raise the support for the restoration. A grant helped to fund the restoration, but as Mr. Leong says, if the donation is for benevolence, the community will give. He said that the building is a legacy that the elder generation can give to the next generation. Mr. Leong hopes that the building and the language school will help the young Chinese-Americans to preserve an interest in their roots and the five thousand year old civilization of China.

When asked for advice for the next generation, he said, "Work hard, produce good children, give something back to the community, and retain some Chinese language ability." It is evident that Mr. Leong lives by those words, his actions consistent with his beliefs.

Christine Richardson-Barlow

BOOKS IN THE NEWS

Mao's People: Sixteen Portraits of Life in Revolutionary China

by B. Michael Frolic

Harvard University Press

Mao's People is a book on China for both the general reader and the specialist. It is the result of several trips to China and more than two hundred interviews of refugees conducted in Hong Kong by the author. Mr. Frolic states in his introduction that he originally planned a book on the rural-urban gap in China, but as he re-read the interviews he had gathered he became convinced that the stories in the interviews gave a picture of China not shown in other works.

Mr. Frolic has selected sixteen interviews showing a wide range of economic class, experience, and age to present a view of China in totality. His book is without question compelling. Each section is introduced with a brief background on recent political events in China, with these events then reflected in the interviewee's story.

The format lends itself to the many personal tales because it gives broad explanation as well as individual detail. It is one thing to read of the May 7th Cadre Schools instituted in late 1968 to re-educate city cadres and another to hear the story of the \$1,000 pig and the ineptitude of the cadres in trying to "out-peasant" the peasants at their own game. The cadre, although now a refugee in Hong Kong, still felt that the May 7th schools were a "good thing." He said that as he worked at the school, the petty quarrels and political struggles were taken over by the four seasons of the year and the timeless pattern of nature.

Some stories cover an individual's entire life and the sixteen portraits portray a cross-section of Chinese society. The city girl sent

down to the countryside shares a similar concern with being marriageable with the narrator of "Little Brother's Wedding," by virtue of both being women, but their stories and experiences vary widely.

As the author states in the introduction, the narratives show a nation struggling to modernize while facing obstacles to that goal. Tradition is shown to die hard in rural China and elitism remains in spite of the Cultural Revolution which sought to narrow the gap between the leaders and the led.

The sixteen stories do combine to form a picture of China that permits some generalizations. Daily life goes on despite political upheavals. Most people in the stories were more concerned with personal survival politically and economically than with the ongoing campaigns.

More than any other selection, "Kill the Chickens to Scare the Monkeys" shows the capacity of humans to survive immense social upheaval and to maintain, against extreme odds, a sense of humanity and understanding. This is the story of a mid-level office bureaucrat and the power struggles reflected in his office in Beijing as the shifts in policy switched lines for the bureaucrats in power. Some were caught in major contradictions between their personal lives and political stances but most managed to sit low and stay quiet until the line was clear. Frolic sees a veneer of ideology in the lives of his interviewees, a veneer that he says is thin. That is not as evident to the casual reader. More evident is endurance, humor, and a hopeful belief in solutions to problems, even the challenging problems facing China today.

Christine Richardson-Barlow

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July

- 1 - 31 "CHINESE CREATION LEGENDS": Exhibit at Wing Luke Museum, 414 Eighth Ave. South, Seattle, 206-623-5124. Hours: Tuesday - Friday, 11:00 AM - 4:30 PM. Saturday, noon - 4:00 PM.
- 23 - "TEACHING ABOUT EAST ASIA AND RUSSIA AND EAST
August 21 EUROPE": a four-week, 3-credit course, University of Washington, Summer School, first two weeks taught by Michael Robinson, East Asia Resource Center; second two weeks by Edith Clarke, Russia and East European Center. For information, call 206-543-2320.

August

- 16 - 19 AMERICAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, Pacific Coast Branch, will have two programs on China: Panel on Economic Change in Modern Rural China, with Leonard Adolph, Oregon State University, and David Deal, Whitman College (August 18, 2:30 PM); and Panel on Sung Dynasty China, with Portland State University history professor Linda Walton (August 19, 10:00 AM). For information, write Dana Bruns, History Department, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403. In Eugene.

September

- 1 - 2 UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY: Focusing on Third World countries, including China; this is the follow-up meeting to the August Nairobi international conference. In Seattle. For information, call Pat LaDonne, Metro Center YMCA, 206-447-8426.
- 12 * "SOLAR ENERGY: THE CHINESE EXPERIENCE": A one-day conference co-sponsored by the Northwest China Council and the International Solar Energy Society, American Section. 8:30 AM - 4:15 PM, Portland Hilton Hotel, 921 SW Sixth. \$10.00 registration fee. Features such Chinese and American solar energy experts as Felipe Tsengfei Wu, Ken Butti, and Bing Chen. Part of the Sixth National Passive Solar Conference, September 8 - 12 (registration information: 221-6560). See article this issue (SPECIAL EVENTS).

* China Council sponsored.

Please inform the Northwest China Council well in advance of upcoming China events. Next calendar will list items for months of October, November, and December. Write us at 1912 SW Sixth, #252, Portland, OR 97201, or call Jane Larson, 229-3049.

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SOURCES

CHINA

Consulate of the People's Republic of China
1450 Laguna
San Francisco, California 94115

Consul General: Hu Dingyi
Vice Consul: Xie Heng

415-563-4885

HONG KONG

Consulate of Great Britain
3701 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 312
Los Angeles, California 90010

213-385-9381

TAIWAN

Coordination Council for North American Affairs--Taiwan
607 Third Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98104

206-682-4586

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This issue was prepared by Jeffrey Barlow, Jane Larson, Harold Pope, Christine Richardson-Barlow, and Laurie Wasson.

PLEASE FILL OUT IF YOU ARE NOT ON OUR MAILING LIST

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ zip

Please describe your special interest in China (trade, secondary education, lived in or traveled to China, Chinese descent, etc.):

SEND TO: Northwest China Council, WAC, 1912 SW Sixth, #252, Portland, OR 97201

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