

NORTHWEST CHINA COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

#6, July — September, 1982



NIKE IN CHINA

David Chang spoke June 16 to a Northwest China Council business breakfast seminar of almost 100 people about NIKE's still young (22 month-old) but fast-growing relationship with China.

NIKE, a Beaverton firm, produces most of its athletic shoes in Taiwan and South Korea. In April 1980, it first approached China with a detailed proposal for large-scale and long-term production of shoes in China, and by September had signed supply agreements with Shanghai and Tianjin. It now has supply contracts with ten shoe factories along China's coast.

Chang, who was an architect for most of his work life, did architectural consultation in China in the early 1970's, then turned to trade consulting which led to helping NIKE enter China in 1980. He is now a NIKE Vice-President.

NIKE's plan to buy shoes from China but not sell them in China appeals to the Chinese who need to generate foreign currency and are presently stressing the development of their light industry.

Candor was the key to successful negotiations with the Chinese, according to Chang, who says that NIKE disclosed how much they were paying Tai-

wan and other supplying countries for their shoes. Because the Chinese have little recent experience on the world market, they have no clue about how much it costs to produce and market merchandise. The concept of the "high tech" athletic shoe, developed through elaborate research and experimentation, was beyond them. Thus, frankness and straightforward presentations were necessary not only to convince the Chinese of NIKE's sincerity but also to educate them about world business and manufacturing practices.

China has six resident managers in China which may be the largest single high-level representation of any foreign corporation there. They do not supervise production but are in charge of quality control, perhaps NIKE's biggest problem working in China. Chinese factories insist that they only produce A-grade shoes, yet one factory has made 8,000 pairs of C-grade shoes, which are normally shredded but which the Chinese do not want to destroy and NIKE does not want to buy. Initially, the factories are producing an un-branded simple running or court shoe, now being stockpiled prior to selling in Southeast Asia. As the Chinese factories gain experience, they will produce nylon and canvas NIKE-brand shoes with the swoosh trademark, for

sale in the United States.

Equipment for NIKE shoe production in China often must be imported, as do materials such as nylon and canvas. Imported equipment is covered by a compensation trade agreement and payment will come out of the prices NIKE pays China for completed shoes.

Although, at first, the equipment and other materials imported from Taiwan into China could bear the label, "Made in Taiwan, R.O.C.", one piece of equipment was confiscated recently, during the U.S. military parts sale to Taiwan. Thus, Taiwan and South Korea imports (and communication) must go through Hong Kong or Japan where offending labels are removed.

Chang emphasized the importance of having someone on a company's China team who is fluent in Chinese. His China Liason Manager is Wen Chen, whose responsibilities have ranged from interpreting NIKE negotiations with the vice-minister of Light Industry to translating instructions for basketball exercises used in a clinic given in China by American basketball coaches.

Chang ended the session by disclosing how he survives the ten or fifteen toasts of the flaming Mao Tai that are made at a Chinese banquet. He orders mineral water (which in color resembles the liquor), sits near a potted plant into which he pours the Mao Tai and refills his glass with water. When caught, however, he has to down two glasses!

Northwest China Council Newsletter

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SPECIAL EVENTS

IMAGES OF CHINA: LECTURES ON ART AND CULTURE

This series, which began in Portland in December 1981 at Reed College, returns to Portland for three lectures in July, after making a circuit of ten cities this spring.

The lectures will all be at 7:30 PM at the Swann Auditorium, Portland Art Museum, 1219 SW Park. There is no admission charge.

All are funded with a grant from the Oregon Committee for the Humanities.

July 16

"LIFE IN CHINA: A SLIDE LECTURE"

Joseph Esherick, Associate Professor of History at the University of Oregon, lived for one year in China with his family while he did research on the origins of the Boxer Uprising. He lived in Jinan and worked at Shandong University and on weekends bicycled to parts of Shandong province where no foreigner had been since 1949. His lecture is an excellent introduction to modern China from the point of view of China scholar who has given new life to his studies by experiencing his topic firsthand.

July 19

"MAN, NATURE, AND IMMORTALITY IN ANCIENT CHINA: A SLIDE LECTURE"

William Crowell, Outreach Coordinator of the East Asia Resource Center of the School of International Studies, University of Washington, will talk about the Chinese attitude toward nature and life after death as reflected in art.

July 23

"MARCO POLO'S CHINA: A SLIDE LECTURE"

Karen Gernant, Assistant Professor of History, Southern Oregon State College, will tell us about the China of the Yuan Dynasty (1280-1368) that Marco Polo recorded for European eyes and the China that the Chinese themselves were experiencing as subjects of a Mongol emperor. As the recent miniseries about Marco Polo had many historical inaccuracies, this lecture should give us a clearer view of this exciting and difficult era.

**LETTER FROM CHINA:
MONDAY AFTER MAY DAY**

The following article is from Christine Richardson-Barlow, who with her husband, Jeffrey Barlow, and 27 Lewis & Clark College students, are spending six months at Guangxi Teachers' College in Guilin, China.

"Professor Barlow and Mrs. Barlow, we are very pleased with your leadership and believe that you are doing a good job," began Cadre Li on Monday after May Day. The great majority of your students are friends of China. But some of your students have been engaged in unfriendly political activities by taking photographs."

"At the May Day carnival held here on campus, there was a picture of Mao on its side in the corner of the large eating hall. Two of your students were seen taking pictures and posing in front of it. A Chinese student approached them and asked why they were taking pictures of it. They said that it was interesting to them."

Li said that it was a political situation because Mao had been worshipped by the Gang of Four and

when they were in power, Mao's picture was hung in many public places, even though Mao himself had warned against the "cult of personality". The picture had been taken down and temporarily placed on its side until it could be removed to storage. Li went on to say that the Chinese people still value Mao and recognize that although he made mistakes, his triumphs far outweighed his errors. He stressed that no disrespect was meant by placing the picture where it was. Li continued that certain foreign countries were making propaganda that the Chinese were putting Mao aside. He thought the picture would misrepresent the situation in China.

Jeff quickly interjected that he could see that indeed it was a situation of a political nature and asked if it would be enough to criticize the students or would Li want the film also. Li responded that he wanted the film.

The situation was resolved by the students meeting with Li to explain their perceptions of the incident and then handing over the pictures in question. We all felt friendlier to the Chinese after this incident rather than resentful, and I venture to suggest that it is because of Li's expertise in meetings of this sort. He is a hold-over from the Cultural Revolution and is laughed at by the Chinese students as awfully old-fashioned in his thinking. However, he is the cadre in charge of foreign students on this campus.

This is the most "political" incident we have experienced since arriving in Guilin last February.

For the most part we have been seriously and unflaggingly engaged in academic study of the Chinese language and culture. The college has even gone so far as to arrange a series of special seminars with local authorities on a variety of topics ranging from traditional Chinese medicine to cooking jiaozi.

Our only disappointments have been the reluctance of the Chinese to grant Jeffrey access to the local archives of the 1911 Revolution and to give library cards to our students. The students must submit their library requests three days in advance and although they receive all requested materials, they miss free access to these resources. We believe our troubles stem from the vertical structure of the bureaucracy here rather than any attempt to control our research.

The changes we have seen in this area over the three years we have been coming to Guilin, in addition to the removal of Mao's picture, are the commercial activity in the downtown section, the extensive construction projects in every area of the cities and suburbs, and the appearance on the streets of Guilin of what our students disparagingly term "Hong Kong influence". With its finely developed sense of community and ideology, perhaps China will successfully handle the contradiction of modernization and loss of traditional values. We can only wait and hope.

BOOKS IN THE NEWS

The People's Republic of China: A Basic Handbook

compiled by Richard C. Bush and James R. Townsend. New York, China Council of The Asia Society and Council on International and Public Affairs. Third edition, 1982. \$4.50. Available at the World Affairs Council office or by mail (\$5.50 postpaid).

If you are going to China, buy this book. Use it as you would any travel guide: browse in it, check facts, and scribble in the margin. Keep it with your Nagel's guide or your Fodor's.

Its chief advantage lies in its low price and its second in its comprehensive and well-organized collec-

tion of facts about modern China, from biographies of political leaders to living standards in Tianjin in 1980. In between you get introduced to China's Population Distribution, the People's Liberation Army, China's national budget, the structure of the Communist Party, the history of the Revolution, Per Capita Food Consumption in 1978, Urban Neighborhood Organization, and Religion in China. Furthermore, there is an entire section of annotated references for delving deeper, such as travel guides, scholarly bibliographies, and the best magazines for learning more about current events.

This book gives you the down-to-earth details and statistics to flesh out the picture of the lives, histories, and futures of all those Chinese who will surround you on the street. You can find out about the ancient buildings and art museums from the guidebooks. This one will empower you to guess about the future of those people. It will tell you how much they earn and what they can hope for.

Recently, several sophisticated observers have written what we might call revisionist descriptions of life in China. Fox Butterfield in China: Alive in the Bitter Sea (Times Books, 1982), for example, claims that China under its friendly surface is fairly curdling with competition and unhappiness. This is in contrast to authors in the last round of books who had claimed that behind its depressing facade, China was abuzz with a sort of ad-hoc, down-home democracy and besides, it had a wonderful public health plan.

Neither side has been telling the whole truth. China is a large, complex country. Some people are happy, some are not. Some are bitter rivals and some are close and loyal friends. The pressures put on people by government, work unit, and family are enormous. Political tides rush fiercely in and out, often without warning, and rip tides double the danger. Only recently

has color and good design in consumer goods, or even possessing a bicycle, begun to emerge for the masses.

The joy of this handbook springs from its neutral stance. Neither a revisionist expose nor a Party-line exposition, it will give you the information to judge for yourself what you are seeing.

The book will fail you in one regard: the effects of the Cultural Revolution and the Gang of Four. On this subject, Bush and Townsend have chosen to play it safe--perhaps not knowing when the tide will change again--and avoid the issue. They fail to convey any of the hardship--the dying and the starvation and the doing without when industry began to atrophy. To rectify this omission, you will have to cultivate the Chinese you meet in China and ask them (privately) for yourself.

There is a second aspect I cannot judge about the handbook, and that is its effect on the reader who is new to China or who is taking a casual two-week tour. It packs information like a pecan pie packs sugar; it is a rich pie indeed. How this rich pie strikes you if you are unfamiliar with the meat and potatoes--if, for example, you do not already know about the 1927 uprising or the Long March--I cannot predict.

At the price, however, you can't go wrong to try the experiment on yourself.

James R. Newcomer, China
Consultants Northwest

CHINA RESOURCES

THE ASIA SOCIETY

As the Northwest Regional China Council's national co-sponsor, The Asia Society has a new presence in Oregon but it has more to offer those of us who want to know more about China and Asia in general. From lectures

on Asian art, politics, and society to performances of dance, music, and drama, to exhibitions of paintings and photographs, to publications, it has no equal in quality or diversity.

The Asia Society, headquartered at Asia House in New York City, was founded in 1956 by John D. Rockefeller 3rd as a non-profit, educational membership organization. The Society has 15 Country Councils, from Afghanistan to Thailand, the most active of which is the China Council. The China Council, which is located in the Society's Washington [D.C.] Center, not only develops books, slide-tapes, and media packets and organizes lectures and conferences of its own, but co-sponsors 12 regional councils, including our own.

In New York, Washington, D.C., and Houston, Asia Society members may attend a variety of lectures, symposia, and performances. For example, this March New Yorkers could attend an illustrated talk on "Early Buddhist Art in Central Asia" or a lecture on "U.S. - China Relations: Sweet and Sour" by Winston Lord, Kissinger's China hand. Or, they might visit a special exhibition of Oriental rugs at Asia House Gallery or view a traditional Japanese tea ceremony and then hear a concert of bamboo flute music. Fortunately, The Asia Society also organizes performing arts tours, and in May, the Korean Aak Court Music and Dance Troupe came to Portland.

The Society publishes Asia magazine, known for its excellent color photography, which has feature articles on traditional and contemporary Asia by experts who are also good writers. The April issue had an all too realistic article by T. D. Allman, "Cambodia: Nightmare Journey to a Doubtful Dawn" and another on the story of sushi, a Japanese raw fish and rice snack.

The Asia Society Education Department works with teachers and also publishes an excellent magazine,

Focus on Asia Studies (3 issues a year for \$5.00) which has thematic articles (most recently on Asian geography), a large section of book and film reviews, and a column on what's new in teaching resources. Although its articles include many curriculum suggestions, it will be of interest to persons other than teachers who want to keep up with the latest materials.

Membership in The Asia Society is \$25, and members receive discounts on Asia Society books and a free subscription to Asia.

Asia Society President Robert Oxnam will be the featured speaker at the China Forum, a new Northwest China Council event, which will be held at Portland State University this October (details in next newsletter).

The Asia Society is at 725 Park Ave., New York, NY 10021.

EAST ASIA RESOURCE CENTER

Schools and community groups in the Pacific Northwest can borrow materials on China, Japan, and Korea from the East Asia Resource Center of the University of Washington, Seattle.

The resource center, located in 302C Thompson Hall, is a project of the U.S. Office of Education Title VI Language and Area Studies Center designed to promote understanding and discussion of East Asia.

A variety of materials are mailed out on a free, short-term basis. Audiovisual materials which may be borrowed include slides, videocassettes, and 16mm films. A catalog of the center's audiovisual resources is available free of charge.

The center also provides free information sheets, including a guide to Chinese pronunciation and bibliographies on Chinese education, law, urban planning, and other topics.

Teachers are welcome to contact the center in order to borrow maps,

children's books, curriculum units, and other materials on China. The center also periodically arranges workshops on East Asian resources for teachers.

In the Seattle area, the center's speakers bureau provides schools and groups with speakers who have lived in China. The center's small library is open for browsing and borrowing, and includes books, catalogs, teacher's guides, and bibliographies.

The quarterly newsletter of the resource center provides information on current activities and recent acquisitions, and is mailed free of charge to those on the mailing list.

Requests should be addressed to the East Asia Resource Center DR-05, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195. Or, call 206-543-1921.

CHINA TOURS

"Education in China" (September 27 to October 16) will offer a special opportunity to view Chinese educational process as it is practiced on all academic levels. In addition, four hours of academic credit may be earned through Portland State University's Division of Continuing Education. The course, ED 410/410G, Education in China, will be conducted in part by Mary Bernson, Asian Studies teacher and China Council board member.

The itinerary includes four days in Beijing, three days in Nanjing, four days in Shanghai, three in Guilin, two in Guangzhou, with a final stop in Hong Kong before returning home via San Francisco. In Beijing, the group will be accommodated at the State Guest House, which is reserved for the most important delegations.

The price of \$3,052 includes air fare, meals, and accommodations. Contact Shirley Reeves, Azumano Travel, 223-6245.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- July** 7/1 - 11/7 "SOFT GOLD: THE FUR TRADE AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE ON THE NORTHWEST COAST OF AMERICA": An exhibition of 140 artifacts as well as paintings, drawings, and maps that tells of the many ties in the triangle of China, the Northwest Coast, and Boston. Includes Chinese artifacts. Oregon Historical Society, 1230 SW Park Ave., Portland; free admission; open seven days a week (daily 10:00 AM - 4:45 PM; Friday until 9:00 PM; Sunday noon - 4:45 PM). 221-1741.
- 3 - 4 PORTLAND CHINESE COMMUNITY vs SEATTLE CHINESE COMMUNITY TENNIS TOURNAMENT: Sponsored by Chinese-American Citizens Alliance. At Benson High School, Portland, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM; \$3.00 admission; information, Kent Lee (659-1055); Harold Lee (252-7760).
- 16 * "LIFE IN CHINA: A SLIDE LECTURE": By Joseph Esherick, at the Portland Art Museum Berg-Swann Auditorium, 1219 SW Park, 7:30 PM; No admission charge. Information: 229-3049.
- 19 * NORTHWEST CHINA COUNCIL BOARD MEETING: Dinner and meeting for board and associates, Chang's Yangtze, Galleria, 5:00--7:00 PM. Call 229-3049 if you will attend.
- * "MAN, NATURE, AND IMMORTALITY IN ANCIENT CHINA: A SLIDE LECTURE": By William Crowell, at Portland Art Museum auditorium, 7:30 PM. No admission charge. Information: 229-3049.
- 23 * MARCO POLO'S CHINA: A SLIDE LECTURE": By Karen Gernant, at the Portland Art Museum auditorium, 7:30 PM. No admission charge.
- August** 2 "ENVIRONMENTS EAST WEST": A radio program on KBOO, FM 90.7, 9:00 PM, produced by the Chinese community. Topic is the elderly Chinese of Portland. Information: 659-1055.

* SPONSORED BY THE NORTHWEST CHINA COUNCIL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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NORTHWEST CHINA COUNCIL MAILING LIST We welcome you to receive this quarterly newsletter and other special mailings, at no charge.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ zipcode _____

Please describe your special interest in China (trade, scholarly, lived in or traveled to China, Chinese descent, etc.). Let us know what programs we should organize for the future.

WANT OFF THE MAILING LIST? Just call the World Affairs Council office, 229-3049, give us your name and zip code, and we will gladly remove your name from the list.

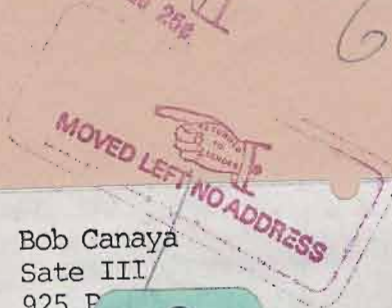
The Northwest Regional China Council is formed to deepen public understanding of China's history, culture, and contemporary affairs (in the People's Republic, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and among Chinese-Americans). Our events are held all over Oregon and in Vancouver and Seattle, Washington and include exhibitions, lectures, conferences, teacher workshops, and business seminars. The Northwest China Council is a program of the World Affairs Council of Oregon and one of twelve regional China councils in the U.S. affiliated with The Asia Society.

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