

NORTHWEST CHINA COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

#7, October — December, 1982



CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY: A NEW INDEPENDENCE

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Starting in 1981, there was evidence that some Chinese leaders began to have doubts about the wisdom of aligning too closely with the Americans on broad international issues, and as U.S. - China tensions over the Taiwan arms sales grew, the Chinese began to be more overtly critical of a broad range of U.S. domestic and foreign policies. "In Washington there are not only politically blind men, but also a considerable number of Yankee fools who are not blind but foolish all the same" (Hsin Wan Pao).

An article in the People's Daily article argued that the Reagan administration's policies in general had been unimpressive during the previous year. "Reagan's revitalization plan was not well-founded and was mostly guesswork." The article made a sweeping criticism of the narrow view and shortsightedness of the Reagan administration's overall foreign policy.

Previously, for years Peking had focused its harshest criticisms almost entirely on the Soviet Union, labeling it as the superpower posing the principal immediate threat to the world, against whom all others should unite. Now some Chinese articles (especially those that dealt with the Taiwan problem) again stressed the similarities of the two superpowers.

Chinese criticism of Soviet domestic policies clearly declined. The Chinese no longer carried bitter denunciations of Soviet "revisionism" (one explanation being of course that China's own domestic policies had swung in directions that the Maoists had previously denounced as "revisionist").

The Chinese were also remarkably silent about the crisis in Poland. Privately, Chinese diplomats admitted that Peking was far from enthusiastic about the emergence of an independent trade union in any socialist country, but they also stressed that, although the Soviet Union had clearly exerted threatening kinds of pressures on Poland, it had not directly intervened, as it had in Czechoslovakia.

More important, there were hints

that Peking was at least considering a resumption of Sino-Soviet border talks that had been suspended following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979.

Of all the changes in emphasis in China's posture on broad international problems that became apparent in 1981, perhaps the clearest were Peking's strong re-assertion of the Chinese concept of "three worlds" (classifying all nations into three groups--the superpowers, the other industrial nations, and the developing countries), its renewed emphasis on China's support for the developing nations (as a self-proclaimed member of the third world) and its increased criticism of U.S. policies toward the third world.

The most striking example was Peking's decision in 1981 to fight hard--despite strong U.S. support for a new term for Kurt Waldheim as U.N. secretary-general--to insist that someone from a third world country be chosen for that post. For the first time, the Chinese used their veto power in the U.N. repeatedly until their view prevailed, and, ultimately, they were able to ensure that a third world representative was approved.

Yet, despite the mounting criticism of general U.S. policy, the tone of most Chinese statements did not suggest that Peking had abandoned its desire for friendly U.S. - China ties or had reverted to a policy of hostility toward Washington. On issues other than Taiwan, the tone

of the Chinese statements usually seemed to reflect feelings of sorrow or regret more than of anger. Moreover, even as the strains in U.S. - China relations escalated to the point of real "danger," U.S. - China economic relations and educational and scientific interchanges continued throughout 1981 and early 1982 to develop in a very positive way.

If Peking does decide that global trends argue in favor of greater flexibility and maneuverability in Chinese policy--whether or not there is a major setback in Sino-American relations--what changes in overall Chinese policy would be likely? Under existing circumstances it is improbable that Peking would suddenly decide on a dramatic shift of policy comparable to that which took place when the Sino-Soviet split and the initial steps toward U.S. - China detente occurred. What seems more likely is that the Chinese might decide to move cautiously toward a more independent position between Washington and Moscow to try to increase Peking's flexibility in dealing with both.

SPECIAL EVENTS

CHINA FORUM ON U.S. — CHINA RELATIONS

Thursday, October 21
Portland State University
Smith Center, S.W. Broadway and
Montgomery

- 5:00 PM: No-host wine and cheese reception. Browsing lounge (Room 238).
- 6:00 PM: "Shanghai I and Shanghai II: U.S. - China Relations, 1972 - 1982." Richard Bush, Deputy Director, China Council of The Asia Society, Washington, DC. Room 338. \$3.00 admission.

Northwest China Council Newsletter
*Published by the Northwest Regional
China Council, sponsored by the World
Affairs Council of Oregon and The
Asia Society China Council.*

1912 S.W. Sixth, #252
Portland, Oregon 97201
(503) 229-3049

Editor: Jeffrey Barlow
Published quarterly.

With the signing of the new "Shanghai Communique" on Taiwan arms sales by the United States and the People's Republic of China on August 17, U.S. - China relations take yet another step in the direction set by President Nixon in February 1972, when he re-established American ties with China.

Richard Bush, who with James Townsend, compiled the People's Republic of China handbook reviewed in our last issue, has been with the national China Council for four years and will assess our diplomatic, economic, and cultural relationship to date, as well as give a perspective on the future.

The talk is preceded by a reception so that persons interested in China can meet Bush and Northwest China Council board and associate members.

On the afternoon of October 21, the China Forum will begin with an invitational seminar for business leaders, educators, and legislators on the importance of linguistic and cultural knowledge for those doing business or professional work with East Asia. There will be discussion of the formation of an East Asian language institute in the Portland area, to serve business and public needs.

East Asian Studies + Careers

The China Forum will be a regular Northwest China Council event, each year with a new theme. We hope to sponsor one session in Portland and another in a different Oregon town.

CHINA: ALIVE IN THE BITTER SEA

Fox Butterfield, New York Times correspondent in China, 1979-81

Saturday, December 11, 8:00 PM
\$4.00 admission

Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association Community Hall
315 NW Davis

Fox Butterfield, the first Peking Bureau chief for the New York Times, has published a controversial book about his own experience as a foreign journalist in China and his view of the lives and futures of the Chinese themselves (see review this issue).

John Fairbank says of Butterfield, in a review of the book, "Butterfield's self-assurance and attractiveness during twenty months in Peking helped him to accumulate data and personal testimony in meticulous detail. [His book] is the most comprehensive report available."

Unlike most American reporters in China, Butterfield is trained in Chinese and was on his way to a Ph.D. in Chinese studies in Taiwan when he became a stringer for the Times in 1969.

Butterfield's talk will be anecdotal and present his general perspective on China today. He is now with the Times Boston Bureau.

TEACHING ENGLISH IN CHINA

There are now 500 foreign teachers in China, with another 300 who come to give short-term courses each year, according to the Beijing Review. While many of these teachers have been hired as a result of personal contacts with individuals in specific institutions, there is a specific procedure that one can follow in pursuing a position.

The following information is from China Exchange News (9/81) published by the Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China. Another source of use to potential teachers in China is China Bound: A Handbook for American Students, Researchers and Teachers, available from the U.S.-China Education Clearinghouse, 1860 19th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20009.

China's Bureau of Foreign Experts report that English teachers are wanted for:

1. teaching senior or post-graduate students or training teachers. QUALIFICATIONS: University or college level of instructor or higher with three or more years of experience teaching English composition, creative writing, rhetoric, American or British literature (modern or contemporary, in particular).
2. teaching middle school teachers of English or English teachers from science or engineering institutes. QUALIFICATIONS: senior high school level instructor with five years' experience teaching American students.

Interested persons should send an application, resume, health certificate, recommendations, and samples of published work to Chang Xifong, Deputy Head, Employment Division, Bureau of Foreign Experts, Beijing, PRC.

In addition, foreign teachers in technical fields are being recruited. These fields are: Applied physics, civil engineering, mechanics, applied computer science, management, engineering, drainage and irrigation machinery, applied mathematics, and technological physics. Applicants should be at the assistant professor level or higher and be competent in teaching and conducting laboratory experiments.

INTERVIEW

Jeff and Chris Barlow recently returned from escorting 27 Lewis & Clark college students on an exchange program to Guangxi Teachers' College, Guilin, China. Chris taught thirteen hours of American literature a week, and Jeff took

overall charge of the group as well as continuing his studies of Chinese history. Paul Overby and China Council coordinator Jane Larson visited the Barlows to record some of their impressions from the trip.

Newsletter: Do the Chinese feel any loss with the decline of romantic Maoism?

Jeff Barlow: Some do, but they have to be very careful in expressing it, because there is the danger of future purges. We met people who, from their style, we knew supported the Cultural Revolution, but they would all deny it.

Chris Richardson-Barlow: A taxi driver was open enough with us to say that foreigners had driven prices so high that normal people couldn't even afford pomelo, a common local citrus fruit. He was quite bitter, but not typical.

Q: You mentioned a Red Guard style. Could you describe that?

CRB: One unabashed former Red Guard--an exception--was the only woman in my class who disagreed--openly--with males. The others would disagree, but only outside class.

Q: Do you think the new economic policy will create a consumer materialism similar to our own?

JB: They had a number of reasons why this would not happen. They would not permit private ownership of the means of production, nor would they allow private enterprises to hire more than five people.

Q: We had heard the figure seven.

JB: Perhaps. I asked them how they would avoid pressure groups forming to change that law, and that was something they had not thought very much about.

Q: What is the nature of the change in China?

JB: In Canton this time--motorcycles everywhere. The six months we were in Guilin, I don't know how many private enterprises opened up.

Chinese materialism is there, tied in with almost a refugee mentality that now's the time to buy because hard times may come. We were constantly being asked how much things cost. We took a Jafco catalogue, and it was very well received.

But expectations are much lower. Watches are very common, and bicycles. Students saw tape recorders as their next purchase. It is not uncommon to see people with big cassette radios, and it's raised the issue of "decadent music."

Q: Did you hear "decadent music" in Guilin?

CRB: Yes, especially in the free market. Boney M was big.

Q: Who?

CRB: It's a disco group with a reggae beat who are popular in Hong Kong.

JB: Tapes come in from Hong Kong and are copied. It's hit and miss. Most people have not heard the Beatles, and may be into some obscure group.

CRB: The wives of the Chinese professors who are studying at Lewis & Clark were very upset because we did not bring music to teach them how to "disco"--do 50's type dances. They had heard their husbands had gone to dances here.

Q: Any new thoughts on what Americans should know about China?

JB: The Chinese at present are in a sense without a past. It's hard to overestimate the damage inflicted by the Cultural Revolution. They doubt China's ability to progress. They are very conscious of their lack of development--and both sensitive and pessimistic about it.

EATING CHINESE STYLE

SHRIMP WITH CASHEW NUTS

From K. C. Chen, part-owner, Hunan Restaurant, Morgans Alley, Portland.

Ingredients:

½ lb. raw shelled shrimp

I. ¼ t. salt
½ t. rice wine
½ egg white
2 t. cornstarch

3 oz. raw cashews
½ t. salt
3 c. frying oil

6 1-inch green onion sections
6 slices ginger root
¼ c. pre-cooked diced bamboo shoots

II. Sauce--mix together:

½ t. rice wine
¼ t. salt
¼ t. black pepper
¼ t. sesame oil
1 t. water
¼ t. cornstarch

1. Rinse and de-vein shrimp. Mix the ingredients in I and add shrimp. Let sit 20 minutes.

2. Boil 3 cups of water. Add cashews and ½ t. salt. Cook 8 minutes over medium heat and remove. Drain cashews. Heat frying oil until medium hot. Deep fry cashews about 8 minutes over low heat. Remove and drain on absorbent paper.

3. Reheat frying oil until medium hot. Deep fry shrimp 30 seconds. Drain. Remove all but 1 t. oil from pan. Reheat and stir fry onion and ginger until fragrant. Add shrimp, bamboo shoots, and mixed sauce. Toss ingredients lightly to mix together and add cashews. Mix and remove to serving plate.

BOOKS IN THE NEWS

China: Alive in the Bitter Sea
Fox Butterfield
New York, Times Books, 1982.
468 pp., \$19.95

In Fox Butterfield's China: Alive in the Bitter Sea, China stands condemned of failing to fulfill its ideals, and yet--by Butterfield's own assessment and that of his disenchanted informants--socialism and the present leadership offer China its best chance for stability and a measure of prosperity. Butterfield gives numerous and grim examples to back up his condemnation, but only grudging praise to demonstrate Chinese acceptance of their government. The very nature of his informants--the discontented--colors his insights in much the same way that refugee accounts carry an inherent bias.

The most useful portions of Butterfield's book are: his discussion of information channels (the higher placed the person, the greater his access to information); the poignance of several highly personal statements of disillusionment; the emphasis upon the importance of connections (as long as we remind ourselves that connections were also central in China's past, and that they remain important in the West); and the graphic descriptions of harsh treatment of political prisoners. These sections all offer important insights.

Throughout this book, however, Butterfield also reveals much about himself and the biases accompanying him to China. Comparisons with the West abound. China lacks many labor-saving machines. So did America, not so many decades ago. China has no disposable diapers. But in the West, they are relatively recent, and wasteful of paper, already in short supply in China. Schools regulate hair and dress styles. Not very many years ago,

school boards in America did just that--and for the same reason: to enforce conformity. After describing well-behaved Chinese children, Butterfield wonders why China has no books "on how to make Chinese better parents." He watches Chinese journalists register surprise that Midwestern farmers in America rely on rainfall; yet, had they visited the West coast, they would have seen irrigation canals, essential to good harvests. Butterfield draws attention to idleness on the job, to the assignment of wives and husbands to work in different cities, and to virtually guaranteed lifetime employment and "a system of inherited jobs." Yet, unemployment--although it exists--is not the problem that it is elsewhere.

On some points, to the best of my knowledge, Butterfield is in error. The legal marriage ages in cities, he asserts, are 27 for men and 25 for women. Later marriages than the legal 22 and 20 are encouraged, in both the cities and the countryside, but not required by law. Butterfield claims that Chinese need permission for inter-city travel. In fact, they may travel freely in China. He says that rape is the second most common reason for imprisonment in Shanghai. Yet, Shanghai prison officials told me in late 1979 that the most common crimes were embezzlement, bribery, and theft. Rape was rare. Butterfield was unable to visit the museum site of the Chinese Communist Party's founding congress. I had no difficulty seeing it during its regular hours. The guide told me it has been open daily since 1966. These points are relatively minor, but they cannot but undermine Butterfield's credibility on more central issues.

Both exasperating and revealing, this book is worth reading--but with a somewhat skeptical eye.

Karen Gernant
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- October**
- 1 CHINA NATIONAL DAY BANQUET, U.S. - China People's Friendship Association: 7:00 PM, Szechuan Restaurant, 8343 SW Barbur Blvd., \$10 (members); \$12 (non-members); reservations by 9/28: 282-1778 or 644-7757. Dinner followed by talk by Jeff Barlow and Christine Richardson-Barlow.
- 11 CHINESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL GOURMET DINNER: Sponsored by Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association. 6:00 PM, Chinese Village Restaurant, SE 82nd and Stark, \$25; call George or Mary Leong, 284-2592; Bob Louie, 223-1222.
- 21 * CHINA FORUM: Portland State University, Smith Center, SW Broadway and Montgomery. 2:00 PM, Invitational seminar on East Asian studies and careers; 5:00 PM, no-host wine and cheese reception, room 238; 6:00 PM, "Shanghai I and Shanghai II: U.S. - China Relations, 1972-1982" with Richard Bush, room 338, \$3.00. Northwest China Council, 229-3049.

- November**
- 6 NORTHWEST REGIONAL SEMINAR ON EAST ASIA: Lectures and panels on topics of general and scholarly interest. Portland State University, Linda Walton, History Department, 229-3004/3917.
- 13 WING LUKE MUSEUM ANNUAL ART AUCTION: In Seattle, 414 8th Ave. S; 200 artists' works (exhibited Oct. 1--Nov. 13); 206-623-5124.

- December**
- 10 FOX BUTTERFIELD LECTURE: Seattle, University of Washington, Kane Hall, evening. For more information, call Mary Bernson, East Asia Resource Center, 206-543-1921.
- 11 * "CHINA: ALIVE IN THE BITTER SEA": Fox Butterfield lecture. Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, 315 NW Davis, 8:00 PM, \$4.00. Northwest China Council, 229-3049.
- * SPONSORED BY THE NORTHWEST CHINA COUNCIL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This issue was prepared by Karen Gernant, Jane Larson, Paul Overby, and Deborah Sipe.

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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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