

**far
east**

Reporter

China Facts
For American Readers

Correcting Popular Tales

Real Life as Contrasted with "LIFE"

Israel Epstein

Open Letter to NBC

Felix Greene

Those Hongkong Numbers

City Press of London

China Comes Into Winter

Rewi Alley

25 cents

China Facts

For American Readers

Introduction

The American public gets fed with recurring articles hostile to the People's Republic of China published in popular magazines with wide circulation. The distortion of facts, the failure to present the true significance of the facts, and the deliberate falsifications are aimed both at discrediting China and at confusing the American people on a major issue—the status and role of China in today's world and the United States policy toward this nation.

A case in point is the October 17, 1961 issue of *Life* magazine's article, "Red China in Trouble," by Fernand Gigon.

Israel Epstein, long a foreign correspondent in various countries and now resident in China, has sent FAR EAST REPORTER his reactions to this *Life* article.

"LIFE" on China Vs Real Life in China

There used to be, in the United States, a tradition of muck-raking which, as far as it went, was a very good one. Wherever there was dirt it was well raked over, and though the muck-rakers did not suggest solutions, which was their limitation, they certainly exposed problems with the intention, and often the effect, of clearing roads for progress. In late years, however,

there has prevailed a new and bad tradition, that of muck-bringers. Wherever there is advance, they pile on the dirt with the intention of choking off progress and covering up, not laying bare, real problems. To this category Mr. Fernand Gigon, author of "Red China in Trouble" in the October 17, 1961 issue of *Life* magazine, clearly belongs.

Is there advance in China? Certainly there is, as admitted by even her worst enemies who, after intermittent bouts of trumpeting her "defeats," as they once did those of the USSR, invariably return to the theme of her "frightening" material growth.

Are there problems in this forward advance from age-old poverty? Certainly there are. Nature in some years is unkind. Errors, along unchartered paths, naturally can be and often are made. This is the objective outline of the situation, and in his article Mr. Gigon, on whom *Life* unilaterally confers the accolade of "world-wide praise for his objectivity," lacks precisely that quality. Is this charge unjust? Look in his article for a single admission of advance, and it is clear that it is not. And is *Life* objective about China or any country led by Communists? The question answers itself. The producers of *Life* would be horror-struck at any suggestion that they do not loathe and fight Communism and all its works. Having established these points of reference we can go on.

Look at the first page of the article that represents both Mr. Gigon's angle of vision and the efforts of *Life's* nimble editors to point it up with headlines, captions and comments. The very first line proclaims "Red China's Great Leap Forward . . . has landed literally on a garbage heap where the peasants pick over rubbish in search of something not too foul to eat." And the very first picture is entitled, "On a Canton street hungry families poke in a heap of street sweepings for edible refuse or coal or wood." But let us really examine this picture. We see, sure enough, a pile of sweepings and a group of people standing around it with baskets and other receptacles. But every one of these receptacles is empty, and the people are standing about as though they have just brought the rubbish, with not one "picking it over." Where and when Mr. Gigon, or *Life* got this picture, I cannot tell. What is apparent is that it gives no ground for the caption, and is printed to reinforce the high soarings of *Life* oratory in which all China's advances are reduced to "gar-

bage." It may be that these were sweepings from a clean-up campaign (very common in China) brought together for a dump-truck to cart away. It may be that the picture is not one of modern China at all. I rather suspect this because, as every one knows, the blue cap and uniform are rather common (though not at all universal) dress in China, and have been since 1949; yet not a single person in this photograph is so dressed. The one thing that is plain is the "muck-bringer" approach.

The point is clinched by the picture on page 43, captioned, "Sidewalk Lesson: A shortage of paper and blackboard forces school children in Peking to write their lessons on a sidewalk. Blackboards are carried from one school to another." Here one can see that Mr. Gigon does not read the language of the country about which he makes such sweeping generalizations on the basis of his nine-week visit. And *Life*, which so boasts of its Luce tradition of research, has also not bothered to read the sidewalk inscription, though it could have found someone to do it. What is the child writing on the sidewalk? It is a list of symptoms of dysentery and other items of scientific common sense, so that the people, if these symptoms appear, can go for treatment. Again, I don't know the circumstances of the picture, but it certainly suggests a health and popular science campaign.

What better place to write such things than on a sidewalk where all who pass may read? And what has this to do with shortage of paper and blackboards (to say nothing of the flight of imagination represented by the story of the latter being "carried from school to school")? These assertions are, as I know from living in Peking, a lot of nonsense. But even if they had been true, would it not have reflected a really moving devotion to education—to write lessons wherever they could be written and even to make the effort to "carry" blackboards about? More "muck-bringing."

To analyze each of the other pictures would take far too much space. But some comments need to be made. Take the spread on pages 42 and 43 of the *Life* issue. Vegetable growing on all available land in cities does indeed take place, not only in connection with last year's poor crop and for the individual table, but also to leave the farmers with more for their own produce and keep transport facilities free for other things. Is this bad? The cart on the Peking street is not pulled by "coolies." To help

with socialist construction—that is, with things that belong equally to all—many people volunteer to give a hand in this way. (I myself carted earth for two weeks to build a dam, and it is a great pleasure to pass that dam now and know that a few cubic metres of its fill are “mine”). China today has many times the motor and animal transport of the past, but if one wants to move more materials, such carts help too—and in a country of 600 million modernizing itself from scratch, even all the motor transport in the United States, if exported here, would still be insufficient. Similarly with the gas balloon buses and trucks; the use of this fuel saves petroleum, and why not? The “primitive plow,” and there are such, should be seen in the same context: China today has over 100,000 tractors in her fields (in 1949 there were perhaps a few hundred), and literally millions of steel animal-drawn plows where before there were none; but that isn’t enough. Shortages? Of course, relative to the huge job being done. So even the general heading of this *Life* spread, “Little Signs That Lead Up to Big Problems,” has its measure of truth—but muck-bringing doesn’t show what sort of problems. “Little Signs That Help to Solve Big Problems” would be more truthful, and the problems are those of growth.

But what can one expect from a writer and editors, who even when they are compelled to say that “children get the best of what there is” in China, explain it all by the desire to “indoctrinate.” How many millions of children not only failed to “get the best,” but failed to get anything and perished each year under Chiang Kai-shek? Here is really a case of “rather be Red than dead,” but *Life* and Mr. Gigon, I suppose, would prefer to have the kids dead. Not so the Chinese people. And not, I hope, my readers, or any decent person.

So much for the illustrations. Now for the text, which is titled “Admissions of Defeat.” I looked hard through the text but could find no one named, or quoted, as having made such admissions. So it is Mr. Gigon’s *impressions* which have been given this name, in a triumphal fanfare of Luce journalism. Of the textual material described as “eye witness,” I can only say this. I live, and often travel, in China and have not seen many of the things Mr. Gigon claims to have run into. As for the half-facts, peasants do sell on the free market; but far from showing the “collapse” of the communes, what is sold is the produce they

grow around their houses after doing their stint in the commune fields to raise the crops that provide the main foods for both them and the rest of the population. And, is there not a sort of super-incongruity in Mr. Gigon's own "admission" that the peasants are living "comparatively high on the pig." The peasants, be it remembered, form 80 percent of China's population, formerly the oppressed and starving 80 percent, and if they are not doing so badly, even in poor crop years, the entire idea of China's "defeat" is itself defeated.

Adding further to the contradiction is Mr. Gigon's frightened estimate that China's population, increasing at an "awesome rate even in the face of terrible adversity" (strange how terrible adversity" used to kill babies before the Chinese revolution, but now lets them grow up), may increase to a billion by 1980. In this, for the Chinese Communists, he says, "lies their best hope for the future." Now, Mr. Gigon! If you think that people will multiply so much, you must think they will be fed, since science has not yet taught us to live on air. And if you think this will bring not only survival but "hope" to the present Government twenty years hence, you must also think that the billion people will be happy enough under that government to support it; there wouldn't be much "hope" for anyone a billion people would oppose. Isn't this so?

Or, is it all the product of indoctrination by the propagandists who, according to Mr. Gigon, convince people "repetitively, insidiously . . . that 'before the liberation, life in China was plain hell' "? Well, really! Of all things, this is certainly the one the Chinese need least to be convinced of. Who, after all, kicked out Chiang Kai-shek, whom *Life* in its introduction advises the West to listen to as to what the Chinese people think, feel and want!

Now let us sample two little "facts" a la Gigon. Mr. Gigon says Mao Tse-tung nowadays "less and less leaves his home." But as even a scanning of United States news agency reports will show, the Chinese leader's Peking home is the one place where he is "less and less" likely to be found. Almost every time he talks with visiting groups lately, and he does it often, it has been in a different city—since he is constantly on the move, keeping in touch with things.

Gigon further says that "for 12 years now the regime has kept

closed all doors through which foreign nations could bring their thoughts." Is this so? On my desk as I write is the Peking *People's Daily* of December 12th, with the full text of Mr. Stevenson's speech at the United Nations, full of thoughts that are not only foreign but hostile to this country. A few days later there was President Kennedy's interview with Adzhubei of *Izvestia*, which *Izvestia* asked for but the Chinese did not, but which was given in full all the same. And when Mr. Kennedy read his State of the Union message in January it got even more space here, in direct quotation, than in many U.S. dailies, for that is the custom here. Not that people agree with Stevenson or Kennedy, but it helps to know what you disagree with, and they *do* know.

One could go on and on but this is not necessary. The fact is that the new China is still going forward, that the communes are still there, that China's industry and agriculture have grown at an unprecedented rate despite the fact that this rate is not always even from year to year. And it is a fact also that, with big investments in construction without benefit of foreign loans (and with the "benefit" of U.S. embargo since 1951) everyone now has access to education, to medical care, to improved standards in every way, where in the past this could be said only for a privileged five percent or so. For a country of hundreds of millions in twelve years that is not bad, though admittedly much more has to be done. In fact, if one is not blinded by prejudice, as *Life* is, or by the checks *Life* pays for its articles, it is very good indeed and, before socialism, quite unimaginable.

Life printed Mr. Gigon's article in October 1961. On February 25, 1962 the National Broadcasting Company produced a so-called "*White Paper*" on Communist China, an hour-long TV presentation of film and script featuring Mr. Fernand Gigon and his visit to China.

Mr. Felix Greene, author of "Awakened China" and a world-wide lecturer on China and the Far East, was initially consulted about this forthcoming "*White Paper*" by NBC; NBC also contracted with Mr. Greene for the purchase of some of his film for use in this presentation.

FAR EAST REPORTER shares with its readers Mr. Greene's reaction to this NBC feature on China and Mr. Gigon, presenting herewith Mr. Greene's

Open Letter to the National Broadcasting Company

The President
The National Broadcasting Company
Radio City, New York

Dear Sir:

When your officials first telephoned me in California and asked my help in the production of a "White Paper" on Communist China they assured me that they intended the program to be an objective and factual presentation of developments in that country.

Having now seen the program presented on your NBC-TV network on Sunday, February 25th, I must tell you that I cannot remember seeing another major feature program that contained so many factual errors or one whose overall impression was more misleading.

You relied in this program greatly on Mr. Fernand Gigon. To enhance the supposed "exclusive" nature of his report and films statements were made and repeated which are false and were known to NBC to be false. For example, your viewers were informed that Mr. Gigon was the "only non-Communist Western journalist allowed inside China with a film camera during the past twenty months." The producers of this program were fully aware that the statement was not true; they knew that Mr. Edgar Snow and I had both been in China during this period and that both of us had movie cameras with us. It was claimed that this program required "nine months of careful research"; your producers therefore had ample time to learn that there were many others who had been inside China during this period. Within my own knowledge (which is by no means exhaustive) I can list the following: Mr. Clare McDermott, who is the resident correspondent for Reuters in China; Mr. Bernard Ullman, the resident correspondent for the French Press Agency; his successor, who had now taken Mr. Ullman's place; Mr. Etienne of Geneva who was in China at the same time as Mr. Gigon and has written articles on his journey for *Le Monde*; Mr. Cole, General Manager of Reuters, London; Mr. S. Gelder, a writer and correspondent from London; Mr. Kenneth Woodsworth, a Canadian lawyer; Professor Howard Hinton of Bristol

University who traveled very extensively in China for several months. In addition to this list I met in China a British doctor, a reporter from New Zealand, an economist from Argentina, a film producer from Paris and business men from several Western countries. Several of these people to my knowledge took motion pictures while in China; most of them traveled far beyond the narrow area which Mr. Gigon told your viewers was all of China that foreigners are allowed to see. None of these I have listed, as far as I know, is a Communist.

At NBC's request I sent your producer 2,000 feet of film that I took in China in 1960; only three short extracts, I think, of this film was used. It was described as having been filmed in 1956. (Presumably this was necessary to uphold Mr. Gigon's claim of twenty months of "exclusivity"). Apart from this chronological falsity a wrong description was given of each sequence although an accurate scene list had been provided. No use was made of those sequences in my film which showed advances made in China; no scenes of modern cities, of wide boulevards, of busy traffic; none of the new hospitals, and schools; none of the dams and factories, or of children's playgrounds, or of commune nurseries, or of bathers enjoying themselves on holiday. All these would have conveyed a more rounded, a more friendly, picture of China—and these scenes were carefully omitted.

If it is claimed that my film was technically not useable I might mention that my film and slides were used in a feature program recently broadcast on a British television network. British producers do not resist showing China as a rapidly advancing country or fear to show Chinese happy and proud of the new opportunities which have opened up to them.

For those of us who have taken movie cameras into China Mr. Gigon's claim that he had to "hide in doorways" or crouch in automobiles to take his pictures is ludicrous. I myself spent days on end, sometimes quite unaccompanied, sometimes with Clare McDermott, Edgar Snow or other Westerners—and never once did we have to hide our cameras, except to avoid the crowds of laughing, curious children who would occasionally surround us and make photography difficult. As for "smuggling" the film out (Mr. Gigon's phrase) this is equally absurd. I know of no one who has ever had his films examined at the border or who has ever been asked to have his films developed before leaving

the country. (There is no censorship of Western correspondents in China; they file their news stories direct without submitting them to a censor).

Finally, I am driven in a kind of sad despair to ask WHY? NBC is to be commended for its initial decision to devote a full hour to an examination of what is happening to one quarter of the human race. But having made that decision why does NBC then choose merely to give a rehash of stale clichés? Why merely select pictures, commentator and script which in no way bring new knowledge and understanding but can only serve to imprint an image of China which is erroneous.

Neither the American people nor democracy need to be protected from reality. People of other countries get more balanced reports on China. If responsible organs of communication like NBC continue to mislead the public the American people must not be surprised if they find our country out of step with the world. As Mr. Walter Lippmann once pointed out—misleading reporting is worse than none at all.

Hongkong “Refugees”

Another case in point is the sensational “news” periodically served up about mainland Chinese “escaping” as “refugees” to Hongkong. (For background on this subject see FAR EAST REPORTER issue “Why Do Chinese ‘Refugees’ ‘Escape’ to Hongkong?”, 15c). From an article in the monthly *Atlas* we find that City Press of London (the official newspaper for most of the guilds and for the affairs of the Mayor and the Corporation of the City of London, a journal founded over a hundred years ago) reports as follows:

On The Question of Numbers in Hongkong

It is worth taking a closer, unsensational look at the refugee problem. It offers one of the strongest temptations to the West to present a picture of thousands perpetually fleeing from persecution in China. Though many entered the Colony after the collapse of the Nationalists—those on the wrong side—the great rush is now over.

As far as possible the Colony tries to send back to China one person for every one wishing to enter, and many apply for re-

admission into Communist territory. Permits are issued on both sides of the border.

But on a small scale illegal immigration continues. . . . (May 12, 1961).

The Food Situation in China

Still another case in point is the almost gloating reports of agricultural problems in China—an unseemly, to speak moderately, rejoicing in the attempt to present China as a vast area of starving, desperate people. China has not tried to hide the very serious hindrance that the devastating, but not catastrophic, three years of flood and drought have wrought to her great Five Year Plans and her Great Leap Forward.

Two previous issues of FAR EAST REPORTER (“The Food Question in China” and “How The Chinese Are Conquering the Food Problem”—25c each) have gone into detail about this aspect of the agricultural problem. Rewi Alley, thirty-five years a resident and worker in China, wrote, in the Fall of 1961, of the agricultural situation as he saw it in various parts of China he was then visiting.

China Comes Into Winter

In North, Northeast and Northwest China the toughest time for the ordinary man is always the long winter months. One would have expected that after three extremely lean years there would be some apprehension about the oncoming winter of 1961. It is not, however, easy to discover anything of the kind. Autumn crops have been almost universally good, except in some areas of South Kwantung where unseasonably late typhoons have caused trouble.

Around Peking following the autumn harvest, the final crop of vegetables—turnips, sweet potatoes and winter cabbage was very satisfactory—though as one old friend, a Peking housewife, said, “Too dull an autumn—the cabbage is a bit stringy,” but the turnips are excellent. There is quite a glut of sweet potatoes and these are sold, two big hot ones for ten cents, by street peddlers.

They are of course a good deal cheaper if one goes out into the country. Today it is the country people who live better than

the city ones—reversing the age-old state of affairs, when the country would starve and the city have plenty.

Countries where winter wheat sowing is not common would be surprised to see the farm land of the wheat belt of China all looking as green as spring just before the winter cold. In these late autumn days such fields have been pleasant to see around Peking. Winter wheat sowing gives the farmers a chance to do replanting on places where the seed has not sprouted. Good rains have come this year at the right time, and moistened the soil before sowing.

In Hopei—the northern province in which Peking is situated—the farmers said the dry spell this 1961 was easily the worst in seventy years. The man-made lakes on the hills had given them a chance to build reservoirs that in the drought time did valiant service to many communes. With this conservation work they were also able to halt the worst effects of the unusually heavy downpours of this autumn.

Up in the Northeast, of course, it is colder. Folks down from the huge reclamation project in East Heilungkiang on the area called "Pei Ta Huang," tell of early snow and how cold the winter is. Also, how there has been a wonderful crop of kaoliang from the rich black virile soil there. The Pei Ta Huang is a place where one could travel in the past all day and see no one; in these years it has been taken in hand and with mechanization has been made into one more new grain bowl. In the old days the trouble was that with the old hand methods there were too few people available for the rush work of the short spring planting season, and for the short autumn harvesting time. With mechanization this problem has been solved. Girls who go up there from farther south gain good crops of silk from wild silk worms they put out on to oak leaves, protecting them in the meantime from birds. Another task many a Peking girl gone Northeast has taken part in is in keeping the great flocks of migrant wild geese who go north in spring, from halting on the grain fields and picking up the seedlings. This is easy enough to do on small plots, but not so easy in the vast open spaces of Heilungkiang.

At the mouth of the Yellow River is another reclamation project that has caught popular imagination because of the struggle that has gone into it; here there is a huge island that

has been forming out of the silt that has come down from one of the most silt-ridden rivers in the world. This area has now been divided into three state farms, and together these produced, last season, over ten thousand tons of grain, as well as a good deal of meat and eggs. Work on reclamation there—dyke building, draining and all the rest—was first started in 1950; the first houses the settlers used was from trees growing there from seeds brought down by floods. Work went slowly in just making a base during the first years, but when the drought hit Shantung Province again last year some three thousand youth who had volunteered from many counties piled in and brought production up considerably. Over 20,000 cattle and sheep are being raised. The total tillable area of the island is around 140,000 acres. Tree belts and orchards grow well. About thirty thousand people have now settled there and one middle school and twenty primary schools take care of their children. Quite an epic of a once deserted, barren tract that now comes into full use. As the Yellow River becomes better controlled with the forty-odd great dams planned for it, the waters will flow clear and the terrible toll of human life—formerly somewhere around a million good farming people every eight years—will be ended.

In the great Wei basin, the traditional wheat producing area that once supported the historic capital of Changan (Sian) in Shensi Province and its armies, a good deal of care has been taken to give the winter wheat every chance and there is good prospect of a rich harvest in May 1962.

Along the Yangtze River some success has been made in the growing of deep water rice in the lakes that abound in the *Hunan-Hupeh* area west of Hankow. Usually something over a ton of rice an acre can be gained from such a crop. It is a hardy crop, able to stand up against the winds and rain and with long stalks often up to ten feet in height. One could see this harvest being taken in this autumn (1961)—in long strings of boats often pulled by a water buffalo on the banks. Now that the lakes are owned by all, more and more every available source of grain is being exploited. Additionally, small areas of waste land are made productive by the commune farmers who cultivate for themselves and on their own time the small ponds and scattered marsh edges.

Hupeh in Central China, a traditionally wet province, had a

drought last season so bad that many ponds dried up. The communes went to work damming streams and pumping water so that in the end they were able to look with considerable pride at a normal harvest.

Down south of the Yangtze things are easier. The winter is not severe, and the growing season is longer. Red clover is sown, some to plow in for fertilizer, some for animal fodder in the early spring when the draught animals must work and cannot forage for themselves. Then there are the crops of rape seed which is pressed for cooking oil, and peas and beans to be sown in addition to the wheat. Going farther south, sweet potato is planted in the autumn for an early spring harvest before the land is tilled again for the main crops.

In the southeastern provinces of Chekiang and Fukien there is the struggle against evil weather conditions where typhoon after typhoon batters this rich coastal area. At the best only some of the crop in the course of a typhoon can be saved; but the spirit of the people remains high; they plant again, struggle again, and then again. In the language of sport, they know how to take it and come up for more.

On the wide Silingol grasslands of Inner Mongolia there are over two hundred communes, supplanting the scattered feudal lords of the old Mongol Banners. One of them, for instance, has 48,000 head of stock. In the last three years it has sold to the state or consumed for meat 120,000 head of cattle. Commune members own another 3,000 head of horses, cattle or sheep privately. Its members—350 families (over a thousand, young and old in all) operate a 700 acre farm to grow winter fodder and to help with their own grain requirements; they have a whole string of workshops for various kinds of small industry to meet local wants—these can be operated in the off-season or by members not needed in herding tasks. There are of course first successes—but difficulties still to be surmounted; the wool is still mainly coarse carpet wool; winter feeding needs to be more highly organized, experiments must be made with new stud sheep suitable to the country; and adverse weather conditions have to be met with.

In portions of China's West and Northwest Tibetan minority folk live. These people place great importance on tea. In the days when feudal lords were all powerful they controlled the

sale and made huge profits; for strong black tea, butter and barley meal are staple articles of diet. The new government naturally was anxious to grow local tea and save the cost of expensive transport and handling. Experiments were encouraged and this year the farmers of Dza-yi in southeastern Tibet have cropped their first two thousand five hundred bushes. Tea crops too are coming along in both Lingtze and Yatung areas, with more trying out being done in many other places.

Speaking of Tibetan folk, I am reminded of a story told me by a lad from the multinational Northeastern province of Ching-hai. East of the source of the Yellow River is a large piece of what was waste—and, which the Tibetans called “Lost Horse” because the seven families who once tried to settle there lost their only horse, which must have been a near tragedy for them. It is now the site of a new town, called Towu, the capital of a local Tibetan Autonomous area called Kolo. Trucks rolled in, tents were put up, brick and tile burnt, houses built, gardens planted, and in three years the whole outlook has changed. Herds of cattle graze there now through the summer months, and fodder is gathered for the winter. Tawu is one of the romantic episodes in present day frontier life—something attained through a great deal of struggle.

A farmer going over China from North to South and seeing all their differences would find much of fascinating interest. He would see throughout the country a good deal of satisfaction amongst the farmers that they had in some measure been able to deal with adverse weather conditions.

In the whole three and a half decades I have lived amongst the Chinese folk I have seen how they have somehow always struggled through; today they feel they have everyone supporting them; there is more confidence to battle against things like high speed winds that cut the boughs from the oranges in Huangyen in Chekiang or lay the rice fields low in Foochow, or the drought that makes Shantung's hills mock the tiller. Steadily the power lines spread, better tools come to the land, more fertilizer is made. This winter will not be easy for everyone, but as with the last two tough ones, the people will come through it all right. Nowadays in China the great stress is not so much on industry, as on agriculture, and a good crop is the first consideration of all government workers of all levels.

A letter from an American friend, now resident in Shanghai, written on February 11th, in the midst of the lunar new year celebration, gives lie to the distortions that appear in the American press about China's food problems.

Celebrating New Year 1962

This is proving to be a particularly rich and happy festival season. All reports of the western press to the contrary, the Chinese people are not starving, nor are there famine conditions anywhere. Just before the holiday I read the *New York Times* magazine story by a Swiss journalist who had visited China and took many photographs. Well, almost every word of his story was a distortion or a lie—the captions of the pictures were entirely misleading, mostly sheer misrepresentations.

For this Spring Festival very generous extra rations have been given of fifteen traditional delicacies in addition to extra portions of the regular grain ration. Every family in Shanghai can have a chicken or duck, eggs, fruit (fresh or dried), seafood, wine (red and white), beer, new year cake, etc., etc. Families of over four members get double portions. And of course with full employment people have money to buy. What careful long-range planning all this has taken and how appreciative the people are!

Furthermore, the cultural fare is extremely rich and varied—drama, opera, music, films (Chinese and foreign), acrobatics, etc. The entertainers certainly were getting no holiday. Within recent months we have had many visiting troupes in Shanghai, not only from Peking, Chekiang, Fukien, but also from more distant Kweiyang, Kansu and Tibet. These last have featured national minority performers of their own songs and dances. The Kansu troupe had no less than nine nationalities in it. But it was the Tibet drama students who walked off with the laurels. Just over two years ago they were still illiterate serfs or the sons and daughters of serfs. Now, after two years of training in the Shanghai Drama School, they put on a superb performance of the story of the Chinese princess Wu Cheng and her marriage to the Tibetan king. It was their graduation performance. They spoke Tibetan, of course, but the development of the story was shown on a screen in Chinese at the side of the stage. Now they will be going back home to pioneer in introducing the modern drama form into Tibet, acting and training others.

Conclusion

It is well for the general public in the United States to take with grains of salt reports that picture China as a problem-ridden country, a country weakened by failures, a country full of seeds of imminent collapse.

Certain scientific and technical and governmental circles in our country do get objective presentations of the situation, including material they import directly from China, and in discussions and reports in their own particular publications.

Genuine news from China is available for those who seek it: subscriptions for magazines coming directly from China are obtainable (Imported Publications & Products, 1 Union Square, New York, is a licensed subscription agency); magazines which include articles by non-American observers are available ("ATLAS," now in its second year of publication, is one of these—31 West 57th Street, New York); at times our leading newspapers publish the articles of non-American foreign correspondents, scientists and observers who do visit China; a daily file of news about China appearing in our better press constantly supplies factual items which taken over a period of time allow the reader to read between the lines and get a truer picture.

Let me give one example of this useful collecting of daily items: figures on the Tibetan refugees in India have varied from 18,000 to over 30,000; then the Indian Government in October 1961 reported: "At the beginning of 1961 there were 12,321 Tibetans living in India, mostly refugees." A previous item had told of India having the same problem with these Tibetans that China had had: they were mostly lamas who had left China because they did not want to work; and became an Indian problem when there too they refused to work. Other scattered news items told of Tibetans in India preparing warm clothes for their return to Tibet, of groups of Tibetans already on the way back, of Tibetans receiving letters from their folks in Tibet telling of satisfactory home life. These items do not appear on any one day—they were scattered over months.

It is possible for Americans to come by a more balanced picture of China—its projects, its new conditions, its problems, its setbacks and its steady progress; and the first and easy step is to apply grains of salt to the over-dose of hostility toward China fed us by some of our publications.

"Awakened China"

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Don't Know**

By **FELIX GREENE**

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