

# Commune System Restored in China as Spring Nears

(Editor's note: A harbinger of this particular spring in Communist China is a careful re-introduction of the Commune system, which was abandoned in all but name when the "great leap forward" nose-dived. The report that follows is by a UPI correspondent who consulted veteran Communist affairs ana-

lysts in Hong Kong and the neighboring Portuguese territory of Macao.)  
By ARTHUR J. DOMMEN  
United Press International  
Hong Kong—UPI—Food is still short in Communist China. But the situation is less grim than a year ago, and greatly improved over two years ago.

In part this reflects concessions that the Peking regime has made to the peasants, and in part the dropping of a rapid industrialization program, sacrificed for the build-up in agriculture. Peking has been able to weather the hunger crisis completely without foreign aid (although it received hun-

dreds of millions of dollars' worth of foreign grain, which it is paying for). This seems to have strengthened its control over the Chinese people.  
**Few Protest**  
This conclusion appears to be borne out by the apparent failure of Formosa-based guerrillas to strike a sympathetic response in the countryside

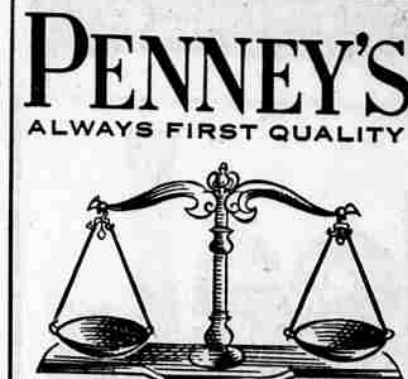
and induce any significant number of people to protest against the existing state of affairs.  
Instead, the people are sitting tight. The regime itself now feels confident enough to slowly rehabilitate the communes, which were virtually dropped two years ago. This time, it appears, the

regime has learned a lesson. It is embarking on re-introduction of mess halls before getting mass production units started again. This schedule will enable it to keep constant surveillance over consumption and reserve food stocks.  
The first trial runs for the new-version communes have already been launched in

Kwangtung province, which is always the earliest of the big grain regions to start spring planting.  
The reports of refugee peasants in the listening-post city of Macao are being interpreted by the analysts as signifying a test run by a regime newly confident after three disastrous years on the farm front.  
The communes have been

re-introduced as a device to mobilize China's vast reserves of peasant labor for large-scale undertakings either concentrated in one place, like dams, or scattered, like the backyard furnaces.  
The previous agricultural cooperatives had not been big enough to fill this role.  
When the dislocations caused by these basic changes resulted in reduced farm output, the regime dismantled many of the commune institutions, such as the mess halls and dormitories, and gave up plans to extend the commune system to the cities as well.

Today, observers believe, with farm production pulled out of its nose dive, the regime feels once again secure enough to begin restoring the communes. But the new ones may bear little resemblance to the 1958 model.  
Despite the absence of fanfare, observers believe the regime's intent is clear.  
The principal function of the mess halls, from the official point of view, is to control consumption.  
In 1958 the slogan was "eat as much as you like" because in the first whirlwind of communization the peasants realized their crops and livestock were due for public expropriation in any case, and so there was a spurge of slaughtering and eating.  
Today the regime appears determined to avoid the mistake it made last time, and by setting up the mess halls before communizing production methods instead of after, to limit consumption from the outset and lay up stocks against the natural calamities which have plagued China for centuries.



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ahead of time. Hang Tang commune is in a region suitable for growing vegetables and sugar cane.  
Another farmer from Sakal commune, Lee Kong, 29, summed up the feelings of many: "With the mess halls back, those who do not work collectively will not be able to eat."  
The communes originally were introduced as a device to mobilize China's vast reserves of peasant labor for large-scale undertakings either concentrated in one place, like dams, or scattered, like the backyard furnaces.  
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REACH FOR FOOD—Refugees being returned to Red China are shown here reaching for food. In the bottom photo, Szechuan Province farmers employ bullocks and crude wooden equipment to harrow paddy fields. (UPI)

### Homeowners Told About Rackets in Number of Fields

Warnings have been issued again by the Better Business Bureau to help homeowners avoid losses through various rackets that seem to increase each year with the spring season.  
Itinerant repairmen, pseudo gardeners and high pressure salesmen, who do not represent reputable firms, are reported in various localities, the bureau noted. All persons, approached by unknown sales-

men, are advised to check the Chamber of Commerce list.  
The public is asked by the bureau to watch for "humus peddlers in trucks," itinerant roofers, linoleum specials, tree surgeons and garden tool repairmen.  
Peddlers, offering "genuine maple syrup" at bargain prices, and vendors of "control grass seed", are also added to the warning list.

#### PERSISTENT BILL

Great Bend, Kan.—Bill Daniels, 32, got into a scuffle at a cafe Monday. When officers arrived to break it up, he hit one in the face. Tuesday, Judge Roy Butler sentenced him to four months in city jail and fined him \$75. Daniels responded by hitting the judge in the face. The jurist calmly added another six months to the sentence.

#### Horsemen Activities Scheduled Sunday

A team-topping and play day will be held for all interested horsemen starting at 10 a.m. Sunday at the Charles Poy-thress ranch, 323 East Villas rd.

A small entrance fee will be charged to finance operational costs and prizes.

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