

Ample Food, Better Housing; Schools, Churches Under Red Thumb

By JOHN STROHM
NEW YORK (NEA) — Questions often asked me since my 50-hour flight home after a tour of Red China are:

"How do the Chinese people live, eat and work under communism? What's happened to religion, the schools? Are they flourishing or will they ever revolt?"

A consolidated reply would be something like this: The food is adequate, the housing vastly improved. Schools, churches and all means of public expression are in the complete service of the state. There was no visible evidence of any disposition to resist complete regimentation.

Light office work earns a rice or flour ration of a pound a day. Workers in steel plants and coal mines get up to two pounds a day. Every individual can buy 40 cents worth of meat (half a pound) every week, with sometimes an extra ration for Sundays. Each family gets a pound of beef monthly and 10 ounces of edible oil monthly per person.

The cotton cloth ration is up to six yards a year per person. Chinese wages are edging up. In the two dozen plants I visited average about \$25 a month. The lowest paid workers get about \$12; the highest paid, \$40. Factory managers and top officials get \$60 to \$75 a month. The idea of high wages for managers, artists and intellectuals such as are paid in the Soviet Union would be sinful in China.

The new regime is putting a surprisingly high priority on apartment buildings for industrial workers. Near Hankow a hundred apartment buildings were put up before they started building the new steel mills.

"Go ahead, knock on any door you like," the secretary told me when I asked to visit homes of workers. The door I knocked on opened into a large, clean one-room apartment for a family of seven. A bed—big but a bit crowded for seven—stood in one corner. Their clothes hung in wardrobes. They had an alarm clock and a thermos bottle for hot water, two important symbols of an improved standard of living.

Three families shared a hole-in-the-floor toilet and a stone tub laundry. They share the same kitchen and cook over a mud mortar stove, or over a small jar filled with charcoal. Their rent bill is \$1.25 a month.

In another worker's apartment in Shenyang, the family of eight

has a big room with two beds and a tiny separate kitchen equipped with gas and a stone sink and running water. For monthly rent of \$4 they also get a private latrine.

A diploma on the wall testified that mother has learned to read and is now teaching others. Her husband operates a lathe, gets a very high salary of \$48 a month. Beside the diploma was a red paper entitled Family Program and Budget, listing outgo as \$14 a month for grain; \$10 for vegetables; \$4 for water, gas, electricity and rent; \$2.60 for transportation. There were some miscellaneous expenses and a little left over for savings. Also, the housewife agrees to keep rooms clean, observe sanitation rules and teach them to the family, educate her children and be a good mother.

The old homes in the cities and in the country are not nearly so nice, have no running water, or inside plumbing. The residents carry water from open wells or from ponds where they do the family washing. The New China does insist that all water be boiled before drinking and the typhoid rate is sharply down.

Textile workers in Peiping invited me to visit their bachelor girls' apartment. Six giggling girls in pigtails, trousers, and wearing no makeup, shared the room with double-decker beds. Rent, 15 cents a month each. The girls had joined the militia and were learning to fire rifles. One of them showed me a poem she's written about Chinese indignation over American "imperialism" called "Angry Fire."

The Chinese food was wonderful. And I became quite adept at reaching out with my chopsticks

to snare a bit of bamboo shoot, goose gizzard or sweet-sour pork as we all ate out of the same dishes. Such delicacies as bird's nest soup and sharks fins are available for a dollar a plate, but must be ordered in advance. And they apologized that snakes, a Chinese delicacy, are not available until winter "when their fat helps keep you warm."

I shopped the stores in every town and was amazed at the quantity and variety of goods available and the fact people were buying them. Here are some price tags — judge these against the wage earner's average monthly salary of \$25 a month:

Socks, 20 cents; towels, 40 cents; wool sweater, \$9.20; ham, 80 cents a pound; chicken, 44 cents a pound; rubber boots, \$6.80; Chinese cloth shoes, \$7.40; rice, 5 cents a pound; umbrella, 50 cents; ladies' cotton jacket, \$5.45; leather jacket, \$40; blue cotton cloth, 16 cents a foot; cotton goods, 50 cents a yard; basketball, \$3.60.

The Chinese assert they are stamping out illiteracy, and many counties claim they already have. Most communes and factories hold adult classes in reading and writing. Education is compulsory for seven years; middle school is optional; college entrance is by examination only.

The schools of China today from kindergarten to college are glorified workshops. This follows the general Communist line, greatly intensified in recent months, that "education must be combined with productive labor."

So schools adopt mountains and 10- to 12-year-olds take a month's trip to plant trees.

The College of Engineering near Hankow in five years of existence has an enrollment of 7,500. "We don't give degrees," the secretary told me, indicating degrees were out of step with socialism. In classroom factories the students manufacture electric motors and punch presses.

"In this way students develop

into cultured laborers with socialist consciousness." I was told by a professor of the new line. "Besides," he added, "the work-while-you-study program creates wealth for socialism."

Every Chinese going to school today must study agriculture on

There are about five million Catholics in China, but foreign priests have been deported and many Chinese priests have joined the "Patriotic Priests" movement, which seems headed toward a state church.

Protestant faiths have been consolidated, with the logic "If you have the same God, why not the same church?"

A member of the Nanking Union Theological Seminary told me: "Compared with the spirit of competition and even hostility that existed between some of the church bodies in the past, we see this consolidation as nothing short of an act of God himself."

the theory that "all must work on the farm some time."

Educators have tackled the monumental task of putting Chinese picture writing into the Roman alphabet. It takes a gigantic typewriter to type Chinese, and then only in a limited 3,000-word vocabulary. So all papers and records are hand written.

Another problem is the score of spoken dialects. My interpreter had to have an interpreter in Canton!

Every factory has a "Worker's Palace of Culture" where they show movies, have rooms for discussion groups on new factory methods or Marxism, for playing pingpong or chess.

Two-stringed violin and ear-splitting cymbals.

One Sunday morning in Nanking I attended the Church of Christ, a Buddhist temple and a Catholic Church with a "Friends of World Peace" sign over the door. So those who are religiously inclined have churches to go to. ("Most of us have discarded the old superstitions," a Communist official told me.)



IF THE SHOE FITS, this Red Chinese youngster is going to have to wear it, even if he seems unenthusiastic as mamma tightens the laces. Price tag is \$7.40 on cloth models.



APARTMENTS FOR WORKERS have a high priority under Red China's new regime. In this one in Shenyang, a family of eight pays \$4 a month for one big room, tiny private kitchen.



IN SHENYANG APARTMENT, worker's wife cooks over charcoal stove of tiny kitchen while daughter washes. In other apartments, three families share the same kitchen.

Morse Sees Peace Hopes In Arbitration

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Peace can best be kept if all nations agree to submit threatening issues to international justice and law. Sen. Wayne Morse (D-Ore) said Friday at a news conference here.

Morse, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, is a member of the U.S. official mission here to attend the inauguration of Adolfo Lopez Mateos Monday as Mexico's president.

The United Nations charter, said, gives the U.N. the right to ask the World Court for advisory opinions on disputed issues, but this authority has never been used.

Morse reiterated his stand on the Berlin issue as squarely behind President Eisenhower. "The Berlin issue," he said, "raises a question of international law on which we have a right to stand."

Morse, the chairman of a Senate foreign relations subcommittee studying Latin American policy, said he did not wish to comment yet on U.S. policy toward Latin America yet because the study was not far enough advanced.

Morse said he would not object to oil loans to government-owned oil companies such as those in Mexico and Brazil "if it could be proved at the time of the request that it would benefit the people and the economy of the nation."

Official U.S. agencies thus far have refused such loans to the government-owned companies.

"If we believe in the self-determination of peoples," he said, "we cannot question their institutions."

WAC Recruiter Schedules Visit

Girls interested in the career opportunities afforded by the Women's Army Corps will be able to talk to Sgt. Anne Hawkins when she visits the local Army Recruiting Office on Tuesday.

The WAC offers the choice of special school training in such fields as finance, stenography, drafting, photography and medical and dental work, among others. A recruit applying for a special school receives a written guarantee that she will attend the school of her choice after completing basic training.

Sergeant Hawkins will be glad to talk to any girl that is interested in gaining training and experience in a worthwhile job through the Women's Army Corps. Those wishing to see her should phone TU 4-8401, or call in person at the recruiting station, in the Army Reserve Center, Fourth Street and Klamath Avenue.

A FAMILY AFFAIR ATLANTA (UPI)—It will be a family affair Sunday when W. W. Schotanus is ordained as deacon in the Presbyterian Church. The Rev. W. M. Schotanus, his son, will be in charge of ceremonies.

Missing Youth Killed By Car

GRANTS PASS (AP) — Eugene Wayne Lowden, 19, was pronounced dead on arrival at a hospital here Friday evening from injuries suffered while working on an old automobile.

His family got worried when he was not on hand for dinner at their home near Wilderville, Ore., and members went to look for him.

They found him pinned beneath the fender of the vehicle, which had slipped from a jack and crushed his chest and neck.

THIEF AT SECRET BASE

LONDON (UPI)—A burglar broke into the super-secret U.S. Air Force base at Bentwaters Friday, and stole two .45 caliber Sten-type machine guns, the Air Force reported Saturday. Officials said the thief had risked being shot by sentries posted throughout the base.

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CATHOLIC CHURCH IN PEIPING has scattered handful of worshippers. Many Chinese priests have joined "Patriotic Priests" movement, apparently aimed at a state church.



BACHELOR GIRLS' QUARTERS in Peiping is shared by six girl textile workers, four of whom giggle for the camera as they sit on one of the double-decker beds.

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