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A CHINESE WEEKLY OF
NEWS AND VIEWS

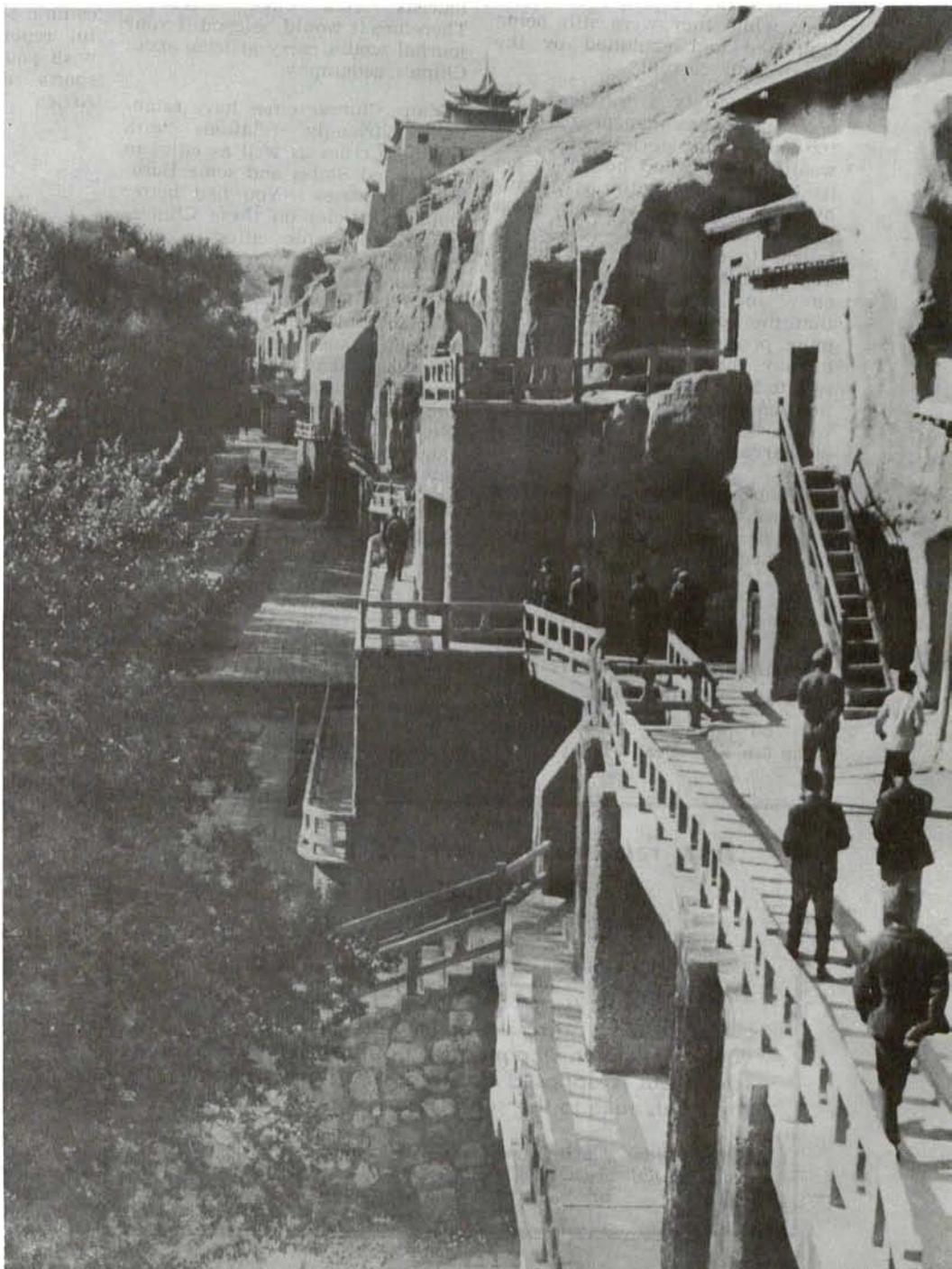
Main Points of
Premier Zhao's
Report to NPC



Zhu Jianhua Sets
A New World
High-Jump Record



Gansu: A Remote
Landlocked Province



LETTERS

Superiority of Socialist System

It is distressing for those of us who care for China to read of those who envy people in the capitalist world because they have more by way of material goods. At least, some of them do. Do they stop to think that there are still millions dying of starvation in the world, as people in China were while they were still being oppressed and exploited by the greedy and corrupt?

In our society a "success" is a person who has managed to grab the most in material goods and wealth, never mind how they get it. Usually the wealthy have come by their riches by any cut-throat method available and people are taught to envy them. Advertising is designed to cause such envy and make people believe that they must have cars, swimming pools and plenty of money to buy them, although there is said to be a figure of up to 35 million unemployed in the Western world, as well as millions dying of starvation and malnutrition.

I hope the Chinese people see the vast superiority of the system in their country, as I am sure most of them do.

M. Rosser
Wembley, Australia

Document Supplements and Suggestions

You published the document "The 6th Five-Year Plan (1981-85)

of the People's Republic of China for Economic and Social Development" as supplements in centre-fold pages of two issues (Nos. 21 and 22). It is a great plan. The document, with many figures, is a rare treat for me. The documents on the Party Congress and the National People's Congress will be welcomed if you present them in this form.

To push ahead with modernization, your country attaches importance to exchanges with other countries and wants to host tourists from other countries. Therefore it would be good if your journal would carry articles about China's geography.

Many Chinese cities have established friendly relations with Japanese cities as well as cities in the United States and some European countries. You had better publish articles on these Chinese cities and scenic cities in your country.

Besides Beijing and Shanghai, your journal could carry articles in each issue introducing cities and places that foreigners are interested in, such as Harbin, Dalian, Guangzhou, Xian, Hangzhou, Qingdao, Nanjing, Suzhou, Yangzhou and even Wuxi, the sister city of Akashi, Japan, where I live.

Masatoshi Sawada
Hyogo, Japan

More Articles on World Affairs

I like very much the "Articles & Documents" column. Some of

its articles deal with the maintenance of world peace, the safeguarding of world security and the guarantee of national independence and the right to subsistence. Peace is pursued by all people in the world. World peace and the independence of various countries must be guaranteed by world security. Without security, the people's right to subsistence is out of the question. This also is the obligation of the United Nations.

I suggest you enlarge this column so as to include more useful reports on world affairs. I wish you would carry articles on sports and events in Central Africa.

Kabeya-Lukengu
K. OCC., Zaire

Sino-French Ties

I have no intention, of course, to belittle the great importance of good relations between China and France, but for the sake of historical truth I feel obliged to point out that the statement in "Notes From the Editors" in *Beijing Review*, No. 19, 1983, to the effect that France was the first West European country to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China on an ambassadorial level is wrong.

Recently retired Minister of National Defence, Geng Biao, was appointed ambassador to Sweden in 1950. He was concurrently Minister to Denmark. In the mid-50s Denmark and China raised the level and exchanged ambassadors.

If I do not remember wrongly, Finland and Switzerland also exchanged ambassadors with China in the very early 50s.

Gottfred Appel
Svendborg, Denmark

Just released by CHINESE LITERATURE The Black Eel

by Ai Qing
pp. 103, paperback

This long narrative poem tells the story of a young fisherman who marries a girl he meets on an island but is opposed by the despot there. Finally the lovers take to the sea in search of a way out.

Order directly from China Publications Centre
(GUOJI SHUDIAN), P.O. Box 359, Beijing, China,
or inquire at bookshops abroad

It is true that Sweden (May 9, 1950), Denmark (May 11, 1950), Switzerland (September 14, 1950), Finland (October 28, 1950) and Norway (October 5, 1954) established diplomatic relations with the PRC at the ambassadorial level earlier than France (January 27, 1964). Britain and PRC exchanged charges d'affaires in 1954 and raised their diplomatic relations to the ambassadorial level in 1972. — Ed.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WEEK

6th NPC Deliberates on Government Work Report

The First Session of the Sixth NPC heard several reports including Premier Zhao Ziyang's Report on the Work of the Government which summarizes the last five years of achievements in national economic development, in political stability and unity and in building a modern national defence. It deals with questions concerning Taiwan and Xianggang and China's relations with foreign countries. It sets forth economic construction tasks for the next five years (p. 14).

Liao Chengzhi Passes Away

Liao Chengzhi, Member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, died of sudden heart attack in Beijing on June 10 while the Sixth NPC was in session (p. 5).

An Introduction to Gansu Province

Beginning in this issue, *Beijing Review* will periodically present articles about China's administrative regions. This one is about Gansu, a remote landlocked province. It is typical of China in the sense that it has both ancient cultural relics and modern industry, that it is one of the nation's poorest areas and yet a major high-yielding grain-producing centre (p. 20).

New World High-Jump Record

China's high jumper Zhu Jianhua set a new world record on June 11 by clearing 2.37 metres, one centimetre higher than the listed world record set by G. Wessig of the GDR in 1980 (p. 8).

New Historical Plays

No longer accused of "using the past to disparage the present," new plays based on real-life historical personalities and events are entertaining Beijing audiences with innovations in both subject matter and artistic form (p. 29).



Mogao Grottoes in Dunhuang.
Photo by Tian Ping

NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

Anniversary of Kampuchean coalition

On June 22, 1982, leaders of the three patriotic parties of Democratic Kampuchea signed a joint declaration on the formation of a coalition government. Since then the Kampuchean patriotic forces have shattered the Vietnamese invaders' bid to split their coalition, foiled the fifth dry-season offensive of the aggressive Vietnamese troops and scored remarkable achievements in the military, political and diplomatic fields.

The Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea has fortified and widened the unity of the various patriotic forces in their struggle against Viet Nam, with a far-reaching influence on both the battlefield and the diplomatic arena.

The 37th United Nations Assembly last year affirmed the legitimate seat of Democratic Kampuchea in the world organization with more favourable votes than in any previous year and adopted a resolution calling once again for the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea. The wide popularity the Coalition Government enjoys in the world community is in itself a thorn in the side of the Vietnamese invaders.

Since last July, the Vietnamese authorities have dished up one proposal after another in order to extricate themselves from isolation. Their "year-by-year partial withdrawal," "regional conference" and "dialogue between groups" are all aimed at justifying their invasion of Kampuchea and trick-

ing the ASEAN countries into recognizing the Phnom Penh puppet regime as a legal entity. Small wonder they all have been rejected by the ASEAN countries.

Hanoi has also spared no effort in its attempts to divide the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea. Earlier this year, it raided the troops led by Norodom Sihanouk and Son Sann, bragging that it would "wipe them out" during the dry-season offensive. But at the same time it said that Sihanouk was welcome to "return to Phnom Penh for the election."

After all the cajoling and coercion failed, Viet Nam launched in March-April large-scale attacks against the Kampuchean patriotic armed forces and refugee camps along the Thai-Kampuchean border regions, and deliberately encroached upon the territories of Thailand and presented a series of military threats.

It resorted to military means in its efforts to drive a wedge between the three patriotic parties, and weaken and scuttle the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea.

Nonetheless, the Coalition Government has closed its ranks and fought valiantly against a numerically stronger enemy armed with Soviet-made heavy weapons. The ASEAN member states and other countries give their resolute support to the Coalition Government and back Thailand's determination to fight against aggression.

In the last 12 months, the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea has held many meetings at which the three parties demonstrated their unity in the common fight against Viet Nam. By rallying more and more patriots under its banner, the Coalition Government is striking deep root among the populace.

Since they took office, leaders of the three patriotic parties have worked hard and won increasing support and sympathy for their just cause from the world community. During his April-May stay in areas controlled by Democratic Kampuchea, President Norodom Sihanouk received the credentials presented by ambassadors from six countries; this very fact eloquently testifies to the enhanced international status of the government.

The Coalition Government has mapped out a plan to deal heavier blows to the Vietnamese aggressors in the coming rainy season. By that time, the Vietnamese invaders will have to entrench themselves in cities and transportation hubs. They will find their position becoming tougher and tougher.

Facts in the last year show that so long as the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea is united and fights resolutely it can foil the enemy's political schemes and frenzied military attacks. With the concerted efforts of the various patriotic forces, it can certainly attain its final goal of driving all the invaders out and rebuilding Kampuchea into an independent, peaceful, neutral and non-aligned country.

— *International Editor*
Mu Youlin

Liao Chengzhi passes away



Liao Chengzhi, Member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, died of sudden heart-attack in Beijing on June 10, 1983, at the age of 75.

The CPC Central Committee, the NPC Standing Committee and the State Council made the announcement in deep grief.

The announcement said Liao Chengzhi was an outstanding member of the Chinese Communist Party, a proletarian revolutionary, a noted social activist, and an outstanding leader of the Party and the state.

It said: "Liao Chengzhi had made indelible contributions in the protracted revolutionary struggle and to the cause of socialist construction, to the consolidation and development of the patriotic united front for the realization of the great unity and reunification of the motherland, and to strengthening friendly relations with people of all countries of the world and

safeguarding world peace. He enjoyed high prestige inside and outside the Party and at home and abroad."

It continued: "The parents of Liao Chengzhi were Mr. Liao Zhongkai, one of the founding members of the Kuomintang, and Madame He Xiangning. For this, Liao Chengzhi had contacts with important figures of the Kuomintang now in Taiwan and other places, including Mr. Chiang Ching-kuo. Liao Chengzhi also had wide contacts with compatriots in Xianggang (Hongkong) and Aomen (Macao)

and with overseas Chinese.

"He passed away at a time when the First Session of the Sixth National People's Congress is in progress. This has caused great sorrow among the deputies," it concluded.

Deputies to the NPC and Members of the National Committee of the CPPCC deeply mourned the death of Liao Chengzhi on June 11.

The funeral committee for Liao Chengzhi is composed of 85 people including Hu Yaobang, Ye Jianying, Deng Xiaoping, Zhao Ziyang, Li Xiannian, Chen Yun, Peng Zhen, Deng Yingchao and others.

6th NPC discusses Premier's report

The First Session of the Sixth National People's Congress heard Premier Zhao Ziyang's report on the work of the government on June 6.

On June 7, Yao Yilin, Vice-Premier of the State Council and Minister in Charge of the State Planning Commission, delivered a report on the 1983 plan for social and economic development and Wang Bingqian, Minister of Finance, gave a report on the final state accounts for 1982.

The second plenary meeting also approved procedures and measures for the elections of state leaders, voting and endorsement of bills at the current session and the composition of six special committees: Nationalities Committee; Law Committee; Financial and Economic

Committee; Education, Science, Culture and Public Health Committee; Foreign Affairs Committee; and Overseas Chinese Committee.

Yang Shangkun, Jiang Hua and Huang Huoqing delivered written reports to the NPC session on the work of the Standing Committee of the Fifth NPC, the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate.

Beginning June 8, the session entered panel discussions on Premier Zhao Ziyang's report on the work of the government as well as on the reports by Yao Yilin and Wang Bingqian.

The deputies agreed that the reports were factual summaries of achievements and accurate identifications of existing problems. The State Council has



Deputies from Beijing engage in a group discussion.

achieved a great deal in the past five years and has helped create growing social and economic prosperity. They also agreed that China can be expected to continue to develop in the future.

While discussing the section in the government work report on economic work, the deputies found that the report correctly summed up the experience of the past five years in economic construction, clearly expounded the policies and principles for future economic work as well as the major tasks for economic construction in the next five years.

In the discussion of tasks for the next five years, most deputies expressed full confidence that the country could push forward the development of various undertakings.

Yao Yilin's Report

Yao Yilin's report was divided into three parts:

Implementation of the 1982 Plan. The actual implementation of the 1982 plan for national economic and social development was more satisfactory than anticipated.

— The country had very good

harvests in agricultural production. The total agricultural output value was 11 per cent more than that of 1981, exceeding the planned growth rate of 4 per cent by a large margin.



— Industrial production increased in an all-round way. The gross industrial output value rose 7.7 per cent as compared with that of 1981, exceeding the planned growth rate of 4 per cent.

— A large number of big and medium-sized construction projects as well as projects involving equipment renewal and technical transformation were completed and put into operation.

— Supplies of commodities were plentiful. The total volume of retail sales reached 257,000 million yuan, 9.4 per cent more than in the previous year, or an actual increase of 7.3 per

cent after the factor of price rises was excluded.

— Foreign trade was further expanded.

— New developments were accomplished in science, education, culture, public health and physical culture.

— The living standards of people in both the cities and the countryside continued to improve.

Some major questions which merit attention and call for urgent solution are:

First, investments in fixed assets have increased too rapidly, far exceeding the state plan. The total investment for capital construction exceeded the planned figure by 11,000 million yuan, or were 11,200 million yuan more than in the previous year.

Second, since the investment in fixed assets as well as the heavy industrial production increased too rapidly, they strained the somewhat improved supply of energy, raw materials and transport.

Third, many targets for economic results were not met.

Tasks and Main Targets for 1983. Continuous efforts will be made to implement the principle of readjustment, restructuring, consolidation and improvement and give priority to raising economic results.

The major targets for 1983 are:

— To increase agricultural production by 4 per cent over 1982.

— To increase industrial production by 4 per cent, too, while striving for a 5 per cent increase.

— To maintain investments in fixed assets at 74,700 million yuan, or 9,800 million yuan less than in 1982.

— To raise the total volume of

retail sales to 276,000 million yuan, 7.8 per cent more than in 1982.

— To raise enrolment in regular institutions of higher learning to 360,000, or 45,000 more than in 1982.

Situation in the First Five Months of 1983. The national economy has been performing well. The total cumulative output value of industry between January and April was 7.6 per cent greater than in the corresponding period of 1982. Energy production rose steadily. The total volume of retail sales went up by 10.8 per cent over that in the corresponding period of 1982.

To fulfil the plan for 1983, a good job must be done mainly in the following three areas:

First, it is necessary to strictly control the volume of investment in fixed assets and ensure the completion of key construction projects and the technical transformation of existing enterprises according to plan.

Second, it is necessary to reform the economic system and comprehensively raise economic results through the continuous consolidation and readjustment of the existing enterprises.

Third, it is necessary to appropriately control the growth of heavy industry and accelerate the development of light industrial production.

Wang Bingqian's Report

In his report, Wang Bingqian said that China's financial situation had continued to improve in 1982, characterized by the rise in state revenues and the increase of expenditures as against the preceding year, and by a

basic balance between the two.

On Final State Accounts for 1982. The total state revenue in 1982 came to 112,397 million yuan, or 101.8 per cent of the budgeted figure; total state ex-



penditure reached 115,331 million yuan, or 101.7 per cent of the budgeted figure. On balance, state deficit was 2,934 million yuan, a figure slightly lower than specified in the budget.

On 1983 State Budget. The 1983 state budget sets total revenue at 123,200 million yuan and total expenditure at 126,200 million yuan, the difference being 3,000 million yuan. By the end of April, state revenue had reached 32,678 million yuan, an increase

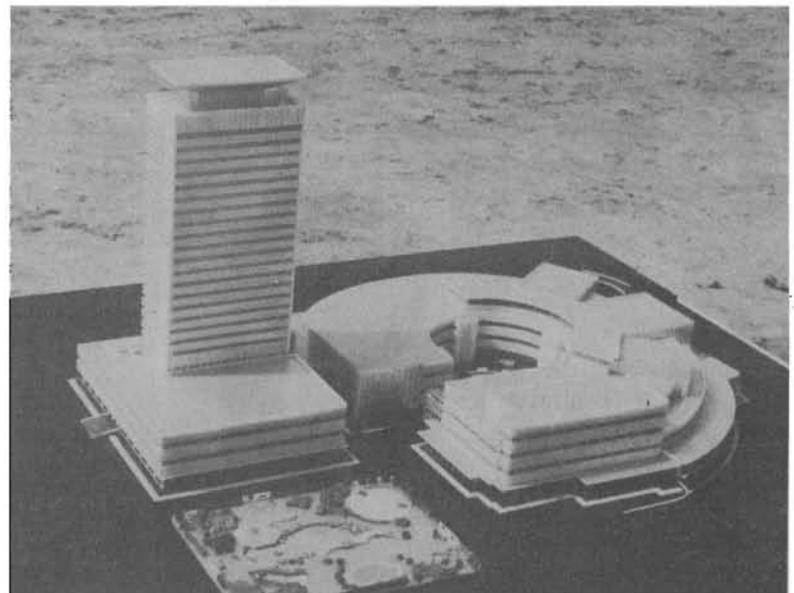
of 3.2 per cent over the same period of 1982. State expenditure had come to 30,981 million yuan, an increase of 9.7 per cent over the same period of last year. On balance, revenues were 1,697 million yuan over expenditures.

Colour TV centre under construction

The construction of China's first modern colour television centre started recently on the western outskirts of Beijing.

Listed as one of the 70 key state construction projects in the Sixth Five-Year Plan, the centre is composed of a 111-metre-high 24-storey building for programme broadcasting and a horseshoe-shaped three-storey building for production.

The centre occupies a total area of 104,000 square metres, of which 40,000 square metres



Model of the colour TV centre.

Zhu Jianhua breaks world high-jump record

Chinese highjumper Zhu Jianhua set a new world high-jump record on June 11 by clearing 2.37 metres, one centimetre higher than the listed world record set by Gerd Wessig of the German Democratic Republic in 1980.

Zhu set the world record at the preliminary athletic competition of the Fifth National Games held at the Beijing Workers Stadium. Starting with 2.08 metres, Zhu cleared successively 2.20 and 2.26 metres. He failed in an attempt to clear 2.34 metres when his heel touched the bar. He gave up the height

and tried directly at 2.37 metres. He succeeded.

The head referee then checked the competition ground, equipment, the height of the bar and Zhu's spiked shoes, and found that they all met the stipulations of the International Track and Field Federation.

Zhu, 20, is a Shanghai athlete. He cleared 2.33 metres to top the Asian record at the Ninth Asian Games last year.

After the competition, Zhu said that he would move on to new challenges and his next target is 2.40 metres.



will be for broadcasting and 44,000 square metres for production. The rest will be used for auxiliary and living facilities. The main building is

scheduled to be completed in 1986.

The production building will house 12 studios for the simul-

taneous production of 12 television plays or other programmes.

The top floor of the 24-storey broadcasting building will be one for developing microwave technology. All programmes will be transmitted to all parts of China through the general control room on this floor.

The completed centre will broadcast on four channels, double the current number, and will use computers to control broadcasts. The multi-channel station will broadcast 33 hours each day, 21 hours more than at the present. The centre will increase the number of hours spent to produce programmes from the present 20 to 170 a week.

At present, a total of 17 million television sets are owned by organizations, schools and individual households throughout the country.

Zhao Ziyang greets OAU summit

Premier Zhao Ziyang, on behalf of the Chinese Government and people, on June 8 warmly greeted the convocation of the 19th conference of heads of state and government of the Organization of African Unity.

Zhao said in the message. "Since its founding, the OAU has actively promoted the development of the movements for national independence in Africa, persisted in opposing foreign interference in African affairs, firmly worked for the maintenance of independence and sovereignty of the African countries, greatly enhanced economic co-operation among

African countries and made major contributions to African solidarity and development. The OAU has played a very important part in international affairs and thus won acclaim from the people of Africa and the world as a whole.

"The African countries and people are striving for the development of their national economies and improvement of people's living standards, as well as for their national construction and the complete liberation of the African continent. We believe that by further strengthening their solidarity and co-operation, they will succeed in fulfilling these glorious but arduous tasks.

"I sincerely hope that the current summit conference will make a new contribution and score fresh progress towards achieving the lofty purposes of the liberation, solidarity and development of the African continent as defined in the Charter of the Organization of African Unity. The Chinese Government and people will, as always, firmly stand by the African countries and people and support their just cause."

China participates in ILO activities

China is participating in the activities of the International Labour Organization (ILO) after sending a delegation to the 69th ILO session in Geneva.

At the June 6 ILO meeting, Zhao Shouyi, Minister of Labour and Personnel, explained China's

current labour policy. He said that China has changed the practice of assigning jobs in cities and towns by the state. Instead, it has adopted "a policy of combining labour departments assigning jobs with job-seekers organizing themselves into collective units and finding their own jobs. All these are under the guidance of overall national planning," he said.

Referring to the numerous ILO conventions adopted over the years, he said that China will examine and decide on them.

Zhao expressed the hope that the ILO would play a more active role in promoting North-South dialogue and South-South co-operation.

Although China was co-founder of the ILO in 1919 and its legitimate seat in the organization was restored in 1971, it did not participate in ILO activities till the current session.

Pretoria's new crimes condemned

The Chinese people expressed great indignation and strongly condemned the South African racist regime for its crime in cold-bloodedly killing three freedom fighters of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa on June 9 in open defiance of the strong protest by the international community and world opinion. The victims were Thelle Mogoerane, Jerry Mosololi and Marcus Motaung.

A statement by the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China on June 10 said: "The South African authorities have obstinately pursued a barbarous racist policy, depriving the large number of black and other coloured people in South Africa of their fundamental rights and subjecting them to brutal oppression and persecution.

"It is perfectly just for the South African people to wage struggle in various forms to achieve basic human rights and racial equality. Their struggle has won sympathy and support from all justice-upholding countries and peoples the world over. In trying to stamp out by bloody repression the struggle of the South African people against racism and for freedom and equality, the South African authorities can only arouse even stronger resistance."

The statement reiterated: "The Chinese Government and people will, as always, firmly support the South African people in their just struggle till they win final victory."

Messages expressing indignation and condemnation of the South African regime were sent by the Association for International Understanding of China to the African National Congress, by the All-China Federation of Trade Unions to the South African Congress of Trade Union (SACTU), and by other Chinese organizations to their ANC counterparts.

*OAU Summit***A conference of unity**

THE 19th Summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) came to a successful close on June 12 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, after adopting a number of resolutions.

The summit was the largest gathering of African leaders since the birth of the OAU in May 1963. Of the 50 OAU member states, 49 were represented at the session, which included 29 heads of state, one vice-president and two prime ministers. The conference is widely hailed as a victory for Africa.

The road leading up to the 19th OAU Summit was rough and bumpy. The meeting, originally scheduled for August last year in Tripoli, was postponed because of a sharp dispute over the membership of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR). The second date of November 1982 collapsed because of disputes over Chad's representation. Since then, the African countries have worked hard to convene the 19th OAU Summit. After repeated consultations among the African heads of state and government, leaders from all OAU member states except Libya attended the summit.

Some recent ill-intentioned forecasts had suggested that June 8 would be OAU's "doomsday." Other observers had feared that internal disputes would lead to the end of unity among the African countries. Contrary to the pessimism of such conjectures, the success of the twice-

delayed summit testifies first, that these independent African countries with similar historical sufferings and current common tasks seek unity, not division. Gone are the days when they were disunited and down on their knees under colonialist rule. Second, the summit demonstrated that the African countries can iron out their disputes, strengthen their unity and co-operation themselves through mutual consideration, patient consultation, and by seeking common ground in spite of their minor differences.

The OAU, a symbol of African solidarity and co-operation, has since its inception made remarkable achievements in mobilizing, organizing and backing its member states against South African racism, in supporting the Southern African peoples' struggle for national liberation, in fighting against colonialism and neocolonialism, in enhancing African solidarity and co-operation, preserving national independence and sovereignty and in promoting the collective development of Africa's economy.

But the task facing the African countries and the OAU is still tough. The continent has not been completely liberated and the Namibian and South African peoples are still under the rule of the racist South African regime. And, on the other hand, the capitalist countries have tried to shift their economic crisis on to the African countries, thus creating

many difficulties for their national economies.

The African countries have every reason to make genuine efforts to strengthen their unity and co-operation, to solve their differences and deal with their common enemies — imperialism, colonialism, hegemonism and racism.

The successful convening of the 19th OAU Summit Conference has shown that the OAU is one of the most dynamic regional organizations of international repute, and that it will make new contributions in strengthening African unity.

— *Zhong Tai*

*Pakistan-India***A successful meeting**

THE first four-day meeting of the Indo-Pak Joint Commission ended in Islamabad on June 4 with positive results.

Pakistan Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan and Indian External Affairs Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao signed a report on behalf of their respective governments, listing detailed recommendations put forward by four subcommissions for co-operation in the economy, science and technology, culture, sports, travel and other fields. The two sides agreed to reduce postal rates, improve telecommunications and liberalize travel facilities.

Referring to Pakistan's proposal for a no-war pact and India's proposal for a treaty of

peace and friendship, the report said that the two ministers had reiterated the commitments of their governments to hold further discussions on these subjects.

This is an improvement and a development of their bilateral relations following the meeting of the leaders of the two countries in New Delhi last November.

India and Pakistan are both influential states in South Asia. Improved relations between them not only conform with the

common interests of the two peoples but also are conducive to stability in the region.

The two countries have some differences, but these can be resolved through common efforts if the two sides sincerely desire to improve relations.

Better relations between India and Pakistan will contribute to the interests of the two peoples and to the maintenance of peace in Asia and the world as a whole.

— Ren Yan

US\$1.6 billion had been spent to keep more than 30,000 Israeli occupation troops in Lebanon.

These costs have not prevented the Begin regime from pushing ahead with its aggression against Lebanon. Disregarding the increasing numbers of Israeli orphans and widows, the Begin regime is drafting more soldiers and calling up members of the reserve forces for three months of service in Lebanon every year.

Economically, in order to bolster its huge military expenditures, the Begin administration has increased taxes. It is levying a special tax on foreign tourism, negotiable securities and commerce, and has imposed a tax on withdrawals from private bank accounts.

Israel

Anti-war sentiment on the rise

ON June 4, two large demonstrations marked Israel's invasion of Lebanon exactly one year earlier. Thousands of Palestinians on the Israeli-occupied West Bank of the Jordan River held anti-Israel demonstrations. Simultaneously, 100,000 Israelis staged a demonstration in Tel Aviv to demand the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon and an end to the colonial rule over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

These demonstrations showed the determination of both Palestinian and Israeli peoples for peace and against aggression and the unpopularity of the Begin authorities.

In addition to the tremendous devastation and casualties among the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples, the Israeli aggression against Lebanon last June brought great suffering to the Israeli people.

According to the Begin administration's diluted figures, in the past year 489 Israeli soldiers were killed and 2,755

wounded on the Lebanese battlefield. By the end of 1982,



Israelis demonstrating in Tel Aviv.

These measures have brought about soaring prices and mounting inflation, thus adding to the burden of the Israeli people, who are condemning the aggressive war and are justly blaming the government for the resulting disasters.

By recklessly trampling on Lebanon's independence and sovereignty and brutally slaughtering the Palestinian and other Arab peoples, the Israeli regime will bring destruction on themselves and more calamities to the Israeli people.

Britain

Thatcher sweeps the polls

THE ruling Conservative Party, headed by Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, won a landslide victory in the June 9 British general election. It won 397 of the 650 seats in the House of Commons by polling 42 per cent of the votes.

The Conservatives' huge overall majority of 144 seats is the biggest margin a ruling party has had over its opposition since 1931.

No Surprise

The Conservative victory came as no surprise. Opinion polls in the weeks preceding the election had consistently put the Conservatives in the lead. Prime Minister Mrs. Thatcher, before fixing June 9 as the date of the election, had obviously weighed the advantages of holding an early election. Chief among these was the state of the British economy.

After four years of Conservative rule the British economy

Aware of this problem, a great number of Jewish civilians have left Israel. In the decade from 1969 to 1979, some 510,000 Israelis emigrated, an average annual loss of 12,000 people compared to the number immigrating to Israel. In 1982 alone, 16,000 more emigrated than immigrated. An increasing number of Israelis have come to realize that if they stay in Israel, they and their descendants will not be able to escape the evil consequences of Israeli expansionism.

— Zhao Zhong

early this year took a turn for the better in certain areas. Britain's inflation rate has dropped to its lowest point in 15 years; government borrowing has been brought under control; Britain has enjoyed successive years of a favourable balance in international payments; industrial profits are beginning to grow, and British goods are showing greater competitiveness. Furthermore, the position of the pound sterling has improved on the international money markets.

After more than three years of economic crisis, these signs of a turnaround in the economy are welcomed by both British businessmen and ordinary voters, all of whom want Britain's current economic policies to continue so as to avoid new economic turmoil.

The Labour Party, badly divided by internal policy disputes on many major issues, was in

such disarray that it failed to present a serious challenge to the Conservatives. Labour's lack of cohesion on economic and defence policies certainly did not help it gain votes. The rise of the Liberal-SDP alliance was another headache to the Labour Party, for it helped erode Labour's base of support and split what would have been an anti-Conservative majority in many constituencies.

Economic Problems Ahead

Although the Tory victory assures the continuity of Britain's economic policies, it does not mean that Britain will be able to achieve a smooth economic recovery without inflation. The Conservative Party's economic austerity policy has met a measure of success in lowering inflation but it has resulted in slow and weak economic growth and a sharp increase in the number of unemployed.

With the consolidation of the Conservative hardliners' position, Mrs. Thatcher is expected to continue her tight money policy, reducing social welfare spending and keeping inflation under control. But unemployment will stay high not only because the government will not address the problem directly but because the existence of a large labour surplus will cripple the power of trade unions, depress wages and curb workers' strikes.

The foreign policy of Thatcher's new government is the focus of attention both at home and abroad. The United States, West Germany and Japan openly welcome Thatcher's victory which they hope will strengthen the position of the Western al-

liance and NATO vis-a-vis the Soviet Union.

Following the March general election in West Germany, the British Conservative victory is clearly beneficial to the growth of the European Community and the Western alliance because the Conservatives' foreign policy stresses close co-operation with

the other West European nations and the United States. Furthermore, the planned deployment of new US missile systems in Europe and the inevitable sharpening of US-Soviet contention on the continent, make the results of the British election highly significant for East-West relations.

— *Duan Ping*

Contadora Group

Positive role in regional disputes

DUE to the efforts of the Contadora Group (Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama), nine Latin American foreign ministers held a second meeting in Panama City at the end of May to discuss the problems in Central America. One result of this meeting was a decision to set up a technical committee that will collect specific recommendations for improving relations within the region. The nine ministers also agreed to meet again in the future.

History of Contadora

Since the latter half of 1982 Nicaragua's relations with Honduras and Costa Rica have become tense, and border conflicts and frictions have constantly taken place, thus adding to the worries of Latin American countries. And outside interference has aroused dissatisfaction from these countries.

In September 1982, the presidents of Venezuela and Mexico jointly wrote to the leaders of Nicaragua and Honduras, asking them to make common efforts to defuse the tension in Latin America. Colombia and Panama also quickly responded

to this initiative. Through many consultations these countries unanimously stressed that Latin American countries should unite, get rid of outside intervention and make efforts to seek peaceful solutions to the problems in Central America.

In January this year, the foreign ministers of Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and Panama held a meeting at Contadora Island, Panama, issuing a communique. In February the four foreign ministers again held a meeting in Colombia. Afterwards these four countries, which have since become known as the Contadora Group, began to conduct collective diplomatic and mediative activities.

Between February and March the situation in Central America became once again tense. Colombian President Belisario Betancur paid an urgent visit to Venezuela, Mexico and Panama in April. Following this, the foreign ministers of the Contadora Group together visited capitals of five Central American countries, hearing the opinions of the conflicting parties. As a result of these efforts, the foreign ministers of five Central American governments went to Panama and joined the first

meeting with the Contadora Group on April 20-21.

In May, Costa Rica issued a request that the Contadora Group send a peace-keeping force to the Costa Rican and Nicaraguan border area, but the request was opposed by the Nicaraguan Government.

After full consultations, the Contadora Group decided to send an observers' commission, consisting of representatives of the four countries, thus continuing to seek a political settlement of the crisis. Meanwhile the deputy foreign ministers of these four countries visited the five Central American countries and made preparations for the nine foreign ministers' meeting to open as scheduled.

The diplomatic mediations of the Contadora Group have been supported and praised by the international community. The UN Security Council on May 19 adopted a resolution confirming the Contadora Group's efforts.

"Spirit of Contadora"

The diplomatic mediations of the Contadora Group have attracted much attention, because the group upholds the correct stand of Central Americans solving their own problems and opposes superpower intervention in the region. The "spirit of Contadora" represents the right of the people of all countries to exercise self-determination and their right to choose their own way of living. In practical activities the Contadora Group has refused to push aside and isolate any side and has not forced its views on others, but has seriously heard opinions from the conflicting parties. Public opinion in Latin America has praised the "spirit of Contadora." This is an event of major importance in Latin American diplomatic history.

— *Zhu Manting*

Main Points of Premier Zhao's Government Work Report



The 25,000-word government work report delivered by Premier Zhao Ziyang to the Sixth National People's Congress consists of two parts: review of the government's work in the past five years (1978-82) and the main tasks set for the next five years (1983-87). The following are the main contents of the report. The full text of the report will be published after it is approved by the congress. — Ed.

Political Stability and Unity

ANALYSING the situation, Premier Zhao Ziyang pointed out that China has achieved and enhanced political stability and unity throughout the country, strengthened socialist democracy and improved the legal system.

During the past five years, China's political life has steadily returned to normal; the relations among all nationalities, based on equality, solidarity, mutual assistance and fraternity, have been reinforced; the patriotic united front has been broadened and society as a whole has enjoyed increasing stability with each passing year.

Although some destabilizing factors still exist in our society that require continued efforts to eliminate, people have every reason to believe that the present situation of stability and unity is irreversible and that our great motherland

will enjoy a long period of order and stability. "No force on earth can hold back or undermine this historical trend," he stressed.

Economic Achievements

China's economy has freed itself from the instability caused by serious disproportions in its major branches and has gradually moved on to a path of sound growth, Premier Zhao Ziyang said.

Implementation of the principle of readjusting, restructuring, consolidating and improving the national economy over the past few years has led to a radical change in the long-standing state of a high rate of accumulation and serious backwardness of agriculture and light industry.

In the period of readjustment, both an overall stability and a fairly high rate of economic growth have been maintained. The total value of industrial and agricultural output in 1982 was 32.6 per cent higher than in 1978, or an average annual increase of 7.3 per cent.

China's agriculture has extricated itself from protracted stagnation and achieved a sustained overall upsurge. What is of particular importance is that Chinese peasants have created a multiform system of contracted responsibilities based on the household with remuneration linked to output, a system which has provided a powerful stimulus to production. Although extensive areas of China's farmland were hit by natural calamities in the past few years, the total value of agricultural output rose by an annual average of 7.5 per cent.

Light industry has expanded more quickly than heavy industry, as a result of attaching importance to the production of consumer goods. Between 1978 and 1982, the output value of light industry registered an average annual increase of 11.8 per cent, as against 3.4 per cent for heavy industry. At the same time, the downward trend in heavy industrial production has been reversed

in the course of readjustment while industrial production as a whole has increased steadily.

Urban and rural markets are thriving as seldom seen before in the history of the People's Republic. Total volume of retail sales in 1982 was 64.8 per cent higher than in 1978. The chronic shortage in the supply of nonstaple foodstuffs has been eased considerably and most of the once rationed commodities are now available without restriction.

There has been a big expansion of economic and technical exchanges with foreign countries. The total volume of China's import and export trade reached 77.2 billion yuan in 1982, a 120 per cent increase in four years. Since 1979, China has imported 440 items of technology and equipment under unified state plans, and this has helped stimulate production.

In the past few years, the state has initiated a series of reforms to diversify the economy in towns and cities, expand the decision-making power of industrial and commercial enterprises, improve the circulation of goods between town and country and extend the role of key cities. With the predominance of the state economy ensured, the number of workers and staff employed in collective units in towns and cities increased by 6.03 million in the past four years while the number of self-employed workers in towns and cities jumped to 1.47 million. A management responsibility system of various forms has now been introduced in most state industrial and commercial enterprises.

Improving Living Standards

Premier Zhao Ziyang pointed out that the living standards of the Chinese people in town and country have improved significantly in recent years on the basis of expanded production.

The net income of Chinese peasants averaged 270 yuan per capita in 1982, double that in 1978. In the past five years, tens of millions of peasant households have moved into the 2.2 billion square metres of new housing built in the rural areas.

In towns and cities, more than 38 million people were given jobs in the past five years. The annual per-capita income of urban workers and staff that can be used as living expenses averaged 500 yuan in 1982, 38.3 per cent over 1978, after allowing for price rises. In the five years, the state invested 48 billion yuan in

building 350 million square metres of new housing for urban workers and staff, close to all housing built in the 19 years before 1977.

Remarkable progress has also been made in social security and welfare services. Bank savings in town and country amounted to 67.5 billion yuan at the end of 1982, 3.2 times the 1978 figure.

Economic Construction in Next Five Years

On economic construction in the next five years, Premier Zhao Ziyang pointed out that the next five years are of key importance in laying the foundation for attaining the strategic goal of quadrupling the gross annual output value of industry and agriculture by the end of the century.

During this period, it is imperative to do a good job of readjusting the national economy, speed up reforms, concentrate on key construction projects and technical transformation, ensure the stable growth of the economy and create conditions for subsequent advances.

To this end, the following three tasks must be accomplished:

First, a balanced development of agriculture, and light and heavy industries must be ensured. He estimated that the growth rate set in the Sixth Five-Year Plan can be surpassed and the rate for the Seventh Five-Year Plan period can be somewhat higher. The growth rate must of course be predicated on steady improvement of economic results.

Second, greater efforts should be made to build key energy and transport projects and promote the technical transformation of existing enterprises. The success or failure of the key construction projects has a vital bearing on the future of China's modernization.

Eight hundred and ninety large and medium-sized projects are to be continued or started during the Sixth Five-Year Plan. Of these, 93 major ones, each calling for an investment of 500 million yuan or more, are already under construction. They cover chiefly the energy, transport, metallurgical, chemical, building materials, electronics and machine-building industries. More major projects will be undertaken in the Seventh Five-Year Plan period.

Third, continued efforts will be made to improve the people's living standards in both town and country and strictly control population growth.

To fulfil the above three tasks, Zhao Ziyang emphasized the need to strive for better economic results, open up new sources of revenue, and ensure funds for the key construction projects.

Emphasis on Education, Science and Technology

Premier Zhao Ziyang stressed the development of intellectual resources and culture with emphasis on the promotion of education, science and technology. This, he said, is a prerequisite for invigorating China's economy.

The enhancement of the people's scientific and cultural level as well as their political awareness and moral standards will lend a tremendous impetus to economic and social development.

The main tasks for the development of education in the next five years include: Giving prominence to higher education; striving to fulfil the planned targets for a 75 per cent rise in enrolment of regular colleges and universities and a 3.8-fold increase in adult higher education; restructuring secondary education and making the secondary vocational school students account for over 40 per cent of all senior middle school enrolment; developing education to satisfy the demand of workers and peasants; and making primary education universal.

For More and Better Literary Works

Premier Zhao said art and literature have shown liveliness of thought and rich creativity. More than 2,400 works of literature and art won prizes in national award programmes or at national festivals in recent years. Over 23.9 billion copies of books were published in the past five years.

Zhao Ziyang said that the departments of culture, the arts, the press, publishing, broadcasting and television should constantly educate the people in patriotism and collectivism and in socialist and communist ideology, and step up the

building of cultural civilization. Focusing on raising the quality of their works or products, these departments should reflect the activities of the people in the great modernization drive in a profound and graphic way and do their best to create more and better intellectual products loved by the masses.

Zhao Ziyang pointed out: While continuing to overcome "Left" errors, it is imperative to watch out for the tendency towards crass commercialism regardless of social consequences in some works. This has already appeared and had a pernicious influence. It is necessary to adopt effective measures to rectify this tendency.

Zhao Ziyang said: The tendency towards bourgeois liberalism in ideological and cultural work and disregard for social consequences are incompatible with the policy of serving the people and socialism and it is imperative to continue to criticize such trends. All ideological, cultural and art workers should cultivate a deep sense of responsibility to the people and live up to their expectations.

Strengthening National Defence

Premier Zhao Ziyang said that China must continue to modernize its national defence and raise its defence capabilities to cope with international developments. The military and political quality of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has improved markedly in the last five years as a result of comprehensively implementing the principle of revolutionizing, modernizing and regularizing the army.

He hoped the PLA will step up its military and political training, and enhance its capability for combined operations and for rapid response under conditions of modern war.

He said that progress has been made in scientific research and production related to national defence in the last five years. Fresh results have been achieved in developing new tactical and strategic weapons, he added.

It is imperative to step up weaponry research, tests and manufacturing and the updating of the army's technical equipment, he added.

It is necessary, he noted, to improve the military service system and build a strong militia. He called for carrying forward the fine tradition of supporting the government and cherishing the people, supporting the army and giving preferential treatment to families of rev-

olutionary army personnel and martyrs, and for strengthening the unity between the army and the government and between the army and the people.

To Establish State Security Ministry

Premier Zhao Ziyang announced that China plans to establish a ministry of state security.

He said that, to ensure the security of the state and strengthen China's counter-espionage work, the State Council has submitted to the present congress for approval a request to establish a ministry of state security which will provide more effective leadership over such work.

In the next five years, great efforts should be made to strengthen the ranks of public security, procuratorial and judicial personnel, and enhance the political quality and professional competence of the armed policemen, the Chinese Premier added.

He said that it is necessary to increase the ability of these armed policemen to combat crime, raise their social status, improve their technical equipment and turn them into a well-trained force cherished by the people as the pillar of public order.

On Taiwan and Xianggang Issues

Premier Zhao Ziyang said we must continue our efforts to end as soon as possible the man-made barrier that separates the people on both sides of the Taiwan Straits.

We shall, at an opportune moment, recover Chinese sovereignty over Xianggang (Hong-kong) and take appropriate measures to maintain its prosperity, he added.

Zhao Ziyang noted that the unification of the country and unity of the people of all the nationalities provide the fundamental guarantee for the growing strength and prosperity of the country. All Chinese at home and abroad, who wish to see their motherland reunified, strong and prosperous, have been working by various means to promote the peaceful reunification of the motherland. He expressed appre-

ciation to all those who have contributed to this goal.

Relations With Foreign Countries

Premier Zhao Ziyang said that the Chinese Government's basic policy with foreign countries is to oppose hegemonism and defend world peace. China will exert its efforts to develop its relations with other countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence and help advance the cause of human progress.

China and the Third World. Premier Zhao said that to strengthen solidarity and co-operation with other third world countries is China's basic stand in foreign affairs.

He said the third world constitutes a powerful force against imperialism, colonialism and hegemonism. It is China's sacred duty to support the other third world countries and people in their struggle to win and uphold their national rights.

He said many third world countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America have entered a new historical stage of consolidating their political independence through expanding their national economies. However, they are still faced with grave economic difficulties owing to prolonged rule and plunder by foreign powers in the past and to the shackles of the present unfair and unequal international economic relationships. The third world countries strongly demand that this irrational state of affairs be changed and that a new international economic order be established. The Chinese Government firmly supports this just stand, he said.

He said that co-operation among third world countries is most important for propelling South-North negotiations and changing the old international economic order.

China will further its relations with other third world countries, in which China and these countries will support each other, supply each other's needs and develop economic and technical co-operation.

Sino-Japanese Relations. Premier Zhao Ziyang said that Sino-Japanese relations have developed greatly since the Treaty of Peace and Friendship Between China and Japan was signed in 1978.

The Chinese and Japanese people alike share the desire to perpetuate this friendly relations from generation to generation, he said.

He expressed confidence that as long as the governments and people of both countries join their efforts to overcome interference, there is bound to be steady growth in the friendship and co-operation between the two countries.

Sino-US Relations. Premier Zhao Ziyang said the Chinese Government and people set store by Sino-US relations, but they will never tolerate any infringement on China's sovereignty or any interference in its internal affairs.

Zhao Ziyang said since the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and the United States in 1979, there has been some development in the relations between the two countries, but this falls far short of what could have been achieved.

The United States worked out the so-called Taiwan Relations Act and continues to sell arms to Taiwan in flagrant violation of the public commitments it has undertaken in all the Sino-US communiqués and the principles governing the establishment of Sino-US diplomatic relations that both parties agreed to, he pointed out.

Premier Zhao Ziyang said that the US Government should strictly observe the Sino-US communiqués and stop doing anything that harms Sino-US relations and hurts the Chinese people's feelings. This is the only way to ensure a sound development of Sino-US relations, he added.

Sino-Soviet Relations. Premier Zhao Ziyang said that to improve Sino-Soviet relations, the

first step to be taken is for the Soviet side to remove the real threat to China's security. This is a major issue that cannot be evaded.

He said the relations between China and the Soviet Union have been strained over a long period of time, and this is not to the advantage of either party. The Chinese and Soviet peoples are both interested in the normalization of relations between the two countries.

He said that the Chinese side put forward positive proposals for normalization during the Sino-Soviet consultations which started last October. "We are awaiting the Soviet side to prove its good faith by deeds," he said.

Sino-Vietnamese Relations. China is ready to continue its efforts to improve its relations with Viet Nam, said Premier Zhao Ziyang.

He said that the once friendly Sino-Vietnamese relations have deteriorated to the point of serious confrontation in recent years as a result of the invasion and occupation of Kampuchea by the Vietnamese authorities who have pursued regional hegemony in Indochina and Southeast Asia, discriminated against the Chinese residents and opposed China.

Last March, he noted, the Chinese Foreign Ministry issued a statement expounding China's position and proposals for settling the Kampuchean question and improving Sino-Vietnamese relations, which has won international public support.

The Chinese Premier expressed the hope that the Vietnamese Government will set store by the fundamental interests of the Vietnamese and Chinese peoples and give serious consideration to the Chinese proposals. □

Citizens of Foreign Descent Become National Committee Members of CPPCC

ELEVEN naturalized Chinese citizens of foreign descent are among the new members of the Sixth National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. Each of them has worked for a long time for the Chinese revolution and construction.

Israel Epstein, 68, was a German born in Poland. He is now Editor-in-Chief of *China Reconstructs*.

Epstein said in an interview after he was named to the CPPCC National Committee that he had been a journalist for most of his life, and he had been a participant of China's social struggle mainly as an observer.

"However," he said, "as a CPPCC member, I won't be just an observer. I can make suggestions more directly and at a higher level. Since I know something of both Chinese and



New CPPCC National Committee members of foreign descent (from left to right): **Elizabeth Li**, **Betty Chandler**, **Israel Epstein**, **Eva Siao** and **Ruth Weiss**.

Western cultures, I can perhaps help promote mutual understanding."

From 1938 to 1941, Epstein worked in the China Defence League that was formed and led by Soong Ching Ling. In 1944, he went to Yanan to cover China's War of Resistance Against Japan. In 1951, at the invitation of Soong Ching Ling, he began to work on *China Reconstructs*. He became a Chinese citizen in 1957.

Sidney Shapiro, a 68-year-old advisor to *China Pictorial*, was born in the United States.

Some 40 years ago, Shapiro was a student of the famous sinologist Carrington Goodrich, who was head of the Chinese department at Columbia University in New York. He later got a law degree. He came to China in 1947 because he thought there would be a use for an American lawyer with a knowledge of Chinese.

In 1948, he married Feng Zi, a Chinese dramatic critic. In the 30-odd years following the founding of the People's Republic, he witnessed a series of political and historical events in China.

"By the 1950s, I was beginning to understand what was going on. I thought China was doing a great deal for the world and for me personally. And so I wanted very much to become part of this great society," he said. He became a Chinese citizen in 1963.

Shapiro contributed to the cultural exchanges between China and the West. He translated Ba Jin's *The Family*, Mao Dun's *Spring Silkworms*, Zhao Shuli's *Rhymes of Li Youcai* as well as the classical novel *Outlaws of the Marsh*. He is now writing a book on the Jews in ancient China.

"I consider it an honour to be in the CPPCC," he said. "I hope to take an active part."

Ruth Weiss, an Austrian, is an advisor to *China Pictorial*. She took part in progressive activities in Shanghai, Chengdu and Chongqing in 1934 and worked in the China Welfare Fund led by Soong Ching Ling in 1945. She became a Chinese citizen in 1955.

Elizabeth Li, a Russian and the widow of Li Lisan, a leader of China's labour movement, is a professor at the Beijing Institute of Foreign Languages.

She met Li Lisan in 1933 when he was working for the Comintern, and married him three

years later. She settled down in China in 1946 and began to teach Russian. Today, in addition to teaching, Mrs. Li is compiling Russian language textbooks. She also is working with Chinese colleagues on a handbook of new Russian words.

Ma Haide (George Hatem), a Lebanese, is now an advisor to the Ministry of Public Health. He came to China in 1932 and went to Yanan later. He has made great contributions to China's medical work. He became a Chinese citizen in 1960.

The other six naturalized Chinese of foreign descent on the CPPCC National Committee are: **Hans Muller**, a German and vice-president of the Beijing Medical College; **Betty Chandler**, an American and an advisor to the Foreign Languages Press; **Eva Siao**, a German and a photographer for the Xinhua News Agency; **Richard Frey**, an Austrian and an advisor to the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences; **Guo Yuefang**, a Japanese and a teacher at the Zhengzhou Engineering Institute; and **Guo Anna**, a Japanese. □

China's Administrative Regions

Gansu: A remote landlocked province

by "Gansu Ribao" Correspondent Cheng Jie
and Our Correspondent Zhou Yi



To many foreign readers, Gansu, with its capital Lanzhou, is probably a strange name. Yet it is intimately familiar to historians because one-fifth of the celebrated Silk Road crosses the province as it meanders its way from hinterland China to the Mediterranean. Art lovers around the world know it for the veritable treasure house of ancient

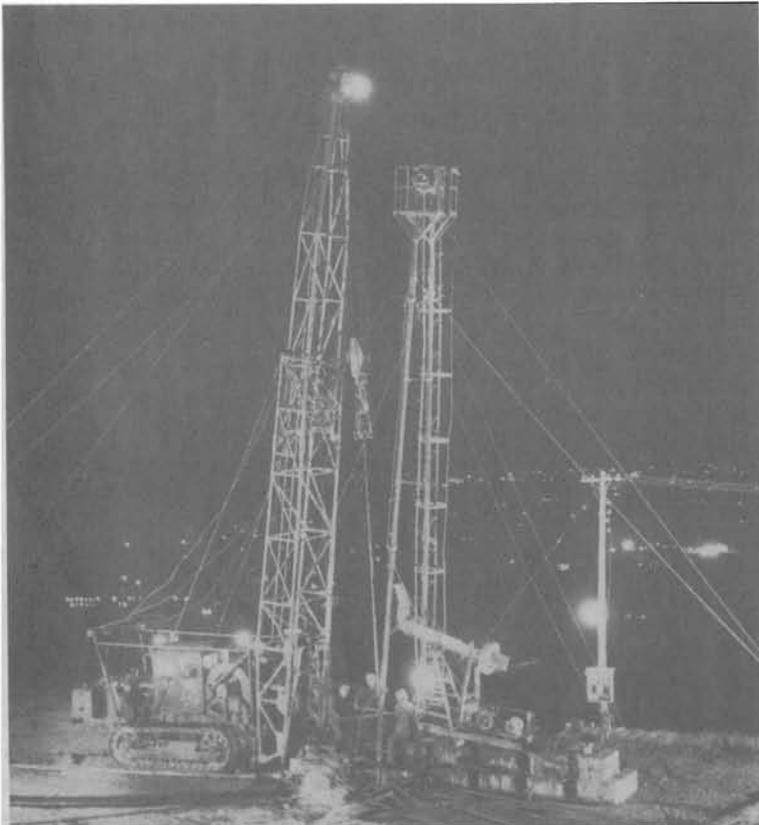
traditional Chinese painting in the Cave of the Thousand Buddhas in Dunhuang County in the western part of the province.

Industrialists abroad may be aware that an oil well drilled in the late 1930s in what is today's Yumen Oilfield in the west of the province launched China's oil industry; while observers of

military industries probably know that at Jiuquan about 800 kilometres from Lanzhou there is a Chinese carrier rocket launching site.

The latest news about this remote province, of civic interest, is that it has established a sister relationship with New Zealand's Christchurch. The link, announced during Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang's recent visit to that Oceanian country, was cemented because Rewi Alley, a 85-year-old close New Zealand friend of China, was educated in Christchurch and during the early 1940s worked in Shandan County, Gansu, for the establishment of a small industrial co-operative.

But above all, Gansu is typical of China. For one thing, it is both ancient and young, a mixture of a rich cultural heritage with developing modern industry; for another, while it is where China's most destitute areas are located, it has one of the nation's major high-yield grain-producing centres. In both respects, this remote, landlocked northwestern Chinese province is a microcosm of China, a developing socialist area still struggling to shake off poverty and secure prosperity.



Yumen Oilfield, the earliest stronghold of China's oil industry.

A brief introduction

GANSU, with a relatively long history as an administrative division, derived its name from the two significant towns, Ganzhou (today's Zhangye) and Suzhou (today's Jiuquan), during the Qin and Western Han Dynasties (221-8 B.C.).

The province has a territory of 450,000 square kilometres, approximately five-sixths the size of France, and a population of 19 million, about 1.9 per cent of the nation's total. Its land, narrow and long, stretches 1,600 kilometres from east to west but only 25 kilometres from north to south at the narrowest point.

Most of Gansu is covered with rugged highlands 1,000-3,000 metres above sea level. The plateau in its eastern and central areas is blanketed by a loess layer 100-300 metres thick, a unique formation in world geology. Mountains and deserts dominate its south and north; and plains and oases can be found only in a strip of land west of the Huanghe (Yellow) River.

On the whole, Gansu is handicapped by an arid climate. In its northwest, central and east areas, the annual precipitation can drop below 200 mm. Only its subtropic southernmost part enjoys plentiful rainfall.

Agriculture is predominant in its economy, but livestock breeding is also important. In fact, Gansu is one of the nation's five leading livestock bases. The province also abounds in traditional Chinese medicinal herbs, some of which enjoy brisk sales all over the world.

Gansu figures prominently in China in the development of cer-

tain nonferrous metal resources. Over 60 kinds of mineral ores have been discovered there and abundant are the reserves of nickel, lead, zinc and copper. Sunshine lasts 2,000 hours a year in most areas, which augurs well for future solar energy development.

At present, it still lags behind most of the 28 other provinces

on the mainland in industrial development.

Forty-one nationalities inhabit Gansu, including 9 minority peoples who make up 7.6 per cent of the provincial population. Two prefectures and seven counties are under the autonomous government of minority peoples. Three nationalities, the Dongxiangs (population: 230,000), the Yugurs (population: 10,569) and the Baoans (population: 9,027), are native only to Gansu.

A treasure house of ancient civilization

THE Huanghe (Yellow) River basin is the cradle of ancient Chinese civilization. During the Zhou Dynasty about 3,000 years ago, our ancestors in east and central Gansu created China's earliest agriculture along the Jinghe and Weihe Rivers, tributaries of the Huanghe, thereby engendering the splendid culture and history of the river basin.

The innumerable historical sites and relics, whose enduring, surpassing beauty never fails to overwhelm scholars and tourists from all over the world, have since become part of the landscape of Gansu.

Dunhuang and the Silk Road

In ancient times, when ocean shipping remained undeveloped, traffic was heavy along a narrow serpentine trail that wound its way for several thousand kilometres from Changan (today's Xian), the capital of ancient China, to the Mediterranean. Camel caravans herded by men riding on horseback trudged laboriously across mountains and rivers and the

vast Gobi Desert, shipping oriental silk, brocade, tea and paper to Persia and Europe and bringing back full loads of Western grapes, Indian Buddhist scriptures and large herds of European horses. The Silk Road played no small part in facilitating the cultural and commercial exchanges between West and East.

One-fifth, or over 1,000 kilometres, of the Silk Road ran through the narrow strip of land of Gansu. In 138 B.C., it was the route taken by the famous Han Dynasty explorer Zhang Qian on his first mission to the Western Territories (embracing the part of Xinjiang that is west of Yumen and Central Asia).

Later, the 8th-century Tang Dynasty Monk Xuan Zhuanq traversed it on his pilgrimage to India for the much sought-after Buddhist scriptures.

The Silk Road also led the famous 13th-century Italian traveller Marco Polo through the Pamirs, Xinjiang and Gansu on his way to China proper.

FEATURE/GANSU

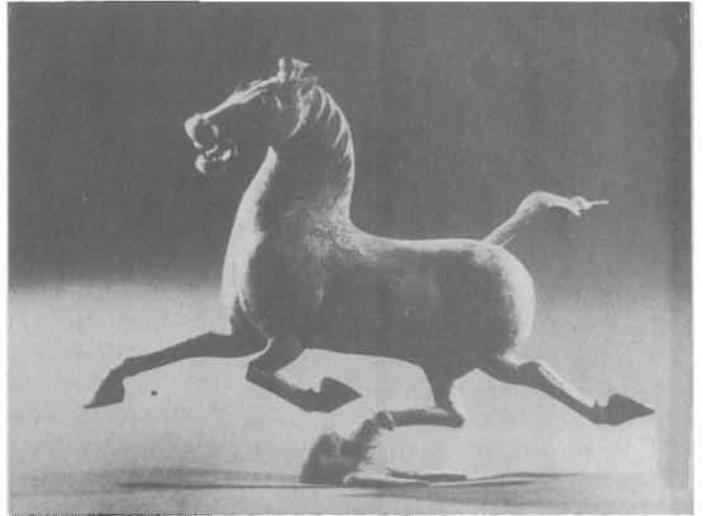
THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA
 REACHES ITS WESTERN TERMINAL
 AT JIAYUGUAN



Jiayuguan, where the Great Wall reaches its western terminal.



A Tang Dynasty bronze Buddha statue, one of the many artifacts contributed by Rewi Alley.



Galloping horse poised on a flying swallow (a Han Dynasty bronze sculpture, unearthed in Wuwei, 1969).



Dunhuang Airfield, located on the Gobi Desert.



Hovering Angel. This is a Dunhuang mural replica.

The Silk Road
 (The white section refers to the length that runs across Gansu Province)

Many grottoes and monasteries along the road bear eloquent witness to the once flourishing cultural exchanges between China and the rest of the world.

In east Gansu's Tianshui, the Maijishan Grotto is known for its clay sculptures. There is also the Bingling Cave Temple in Yongjing near Lanzhou and the Yulin Grotto in west Gansu's Anxi County. They are all crystallizations of Buddhist art of ancient times.

The Mogao Grottoes (the Cave of the Thousand Buddhas) in Dunhuang County, west Gansu, houses one of the world's rarest collections of art.

Construction of these grottoes started in the fourth century and was finished in the 14th century, a period which saw the rise and fall of nine dynasties. Over 1,000 caves were carved, but only 492 remain somewhat intact to this day. Altogether 2,000 statues in glowing colours were immured in these caves; 790 have been restored to their former grandeur through uncanny engineering and artistic work.

Some of them are 33 metres high and are marked by their solid monumentality whereas others measure only a few centimetres and are fragile and exquisite.

The most grandiose of all are the murals, totalling 45,000 square metres, which, placed end to end, would be 25 kilometres long. Painted in vivid images and bright colours, these pictures are mostly about Indian folklore and religious life. Some of them picture life in ancient China, including hunting, farming, weaving, warfare, wedding and funerals. Many of them are so vivid they look as if they were painted quite recently.

The varied collection of art enshrined in the Cave of the Thousand Buddhas also includes voluminous rolls of Buddhist scriptures and manuscripts of history and anecdotes. Rendered in stylized calligraphy, they present intense, kaleidoscopic pictures of China's social life in different feudal dynasties and the East-West economic and cultural interflow in the intervening millennium.

This wealth of priceless art was first discovered in the early 20th century by some foreign adventurers, such as A. Stein of Britain and Paul Pelliot of France. After greasing the palm of some of the care-taking monks, they made away with a good number of religious scriptures, sculptures and paintings, packed in dozens of boxes. Many of them have been lost in alien lands since, and more often than not, Chinese scholars must go to Paris, London, etc., to consult them before they can complete their research.

Large quantities of other cultural relics from the prehistoric period onwards have been excavated in Gansu and more are expected to be found. To date, over 1,000 historical sites and tombs belonging to the Palaeolithic and Neolithic Ages have been unearthed.

Some of these recent discoveries are of unmatched value, such as the fossil of a Huanghe elephant, found in Heshui County, east Gansu, which is by far the most complete stegodon fossil in the world.

Wuwei County, 270 kilometres west of Lanzhou, boasts a sizable museum of cultural relics. It has several rooms full of objects from each historical period from the Neolithic Age to the Ming and Qing Dynasties (from the 14th century to the early 20th century).

Archaeologists around the world may still remember themselves oohing and aahing over the 1969 discovery of a bronze sculpture from an ancient tomb in Wuwei. It is now housed in the Han Dynasty collection of the Wuwei Museum. The piece, which dates back 1,700 years, is cast in the breathtaking image of a galloping horse with three hooves flying in the air, balanced by the sweep of its long tail, while its fourth hoof is poised on a flying swallow.

In mountains 500 kilometres west of Wuwei nestles an imposing structure complete with defence installations. This is Jiayuguan, built during the Ming Dynasty (the 14th-17th century). The Great Wall, which starts from Shanhaiguan in Hebei Province in the far east, runs through Jiayuguan and reaches its western terminal a short distance away. Recently refurbished, Jiayuguan has become one of the country's most spectacular scenic spots.

Protection and Utilization

In old China, nature and human vandalism wreaked great havoc with the numerous cultural relics. Since the birth of New China, much has been done to protect them and use them to benefit the people. Special funds have been allotted for preservation and restoration work, and systematic research has been organized. Only in the turmoil of the "cultural revolution" (1966-76) were some of the relics destroyed or lost.

The Mogao Grottoes, with their superb artistic and historic value, are now under special protection by the government. Millions of yuan have been spent in the last three decades to reinforce the caves, a project which will be completed next year.

Interior refurbishing is also in

high gear, with devices installed to control the temperature and moisture inside. Experienced experts are still racking their brains in search of the best ways and means for the restoration of the murals, which involves enormous, complicated work.

The early 20th century saw the rise of a new branch of learning in some foreign countries—the Dunhuang studies. The Dunhuang studies involve many fields, such as sculpture, painting, architecture, literature as well as politics, economics, warfare, religion, nationalities, science and technology. China has also set up its own Dunhuang research centre near the Mogao Grottoes. Though it has only 30 researchers, it has accomplished much in protecting the relics, collating historical data, copying the pictures and sculptures and publicizing them.

Dunhuang research has picked up momentum in recent years, since the "Left" mistakes were corrected. Great progress has been made in determining the periods of development of the grottoes, the historical and geographical background of Dunhuang County, the Buddhist meanings behind all these relics and the contents of the murals. Many researchers have dedicated their whole lives to the study of Dunhuang.

Just as China's cultural policy calls for "making the past serve the present," so painstaking efforts are being exerted to make the rich cultural heritage in Gansu accessible to the world.

An example of this is the staging of *Tales of the Silk Road*, a dance drama by the Gansu Provincial Song and Dance Ensemble. The drama became a national hit shortly after it appeared on stage. It also was performed abroad and

brought down the house in Paris and Milan. It is based on the history of the Silk Road and many of its artistic aspects were patterned after the Dunhuang murals.

Dunhuang today is attracting more and more tourists. The local airport, completed last August, has helped shorten a trip from Lanzhou to a little over three hours.

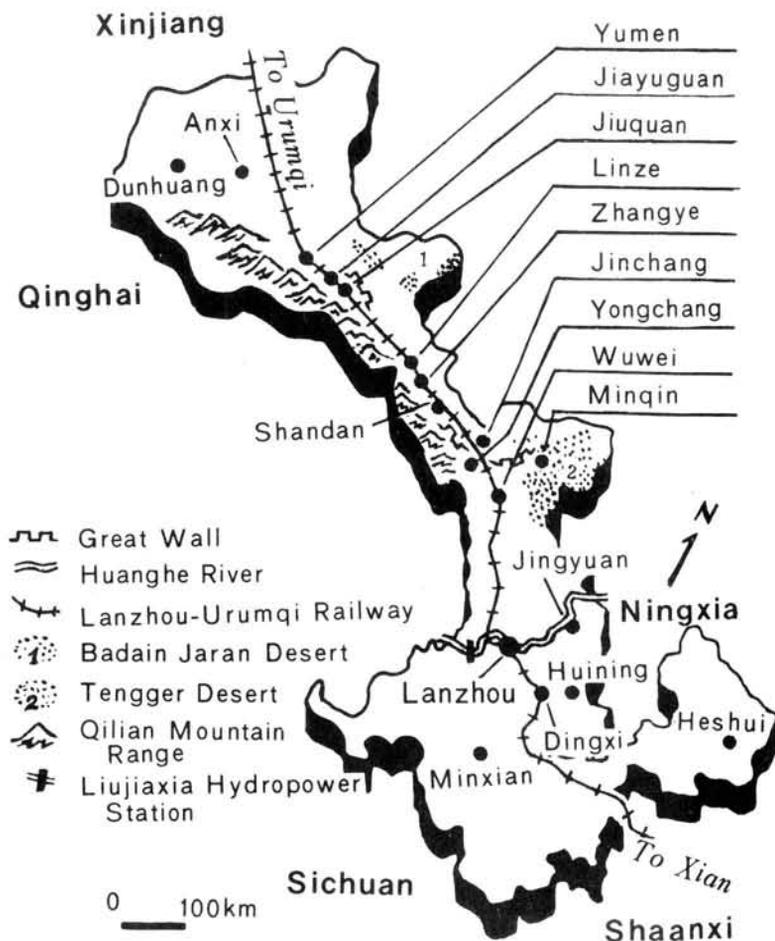
For a prosperous tomorrow

GANSU's affluence during the heyday of the Han and Tang Dynasties (from the 3rd century B.C. to the early 10th century) was attributed to the hustle and bustle along the Silk Road. Consequently its two important caravan towns, Ganzhou and Suzhou, were referred to as towns of gold and silver. Had such prosperity not been lost in the ensuing years, Gansu today would have become one of the nation's rich provinces.

Yesterday's Plight

History, however, often does not go the way one wants it to. Ancient Gansu's golden days faded into nothingness, helped into its decay by ruthless exploitation of the local people in the hands of corrupt, effete feudal dynasties.

Frequent wars also increased the people's suffering. Here was the battleground for the Hans against the other races such as



the Huns, Siempis, Ouigours and Qiangs.

In modern history, as China gradually turned into a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society, the people suffered further from the tyrannical warlords, heartless landlords and greedy money-lenders. Their plight was often beyond imagination.

In autumn-winter 1935, Fan Changjiang (1909-70), a well-known *Da Gong Bao* reporter, went on a fact-finding tour to northwest China. At the time, the Japanese imperialists had invaded northeast China. The whole country was engulfed in a patriotic movement against Japanese aggression and for national salvation and the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army had pushed its way through Gansu into Shaanxi on its epic Long March.

Fan's reports, which were collected in his best-seller, *The Northwest Corner of China*, revealed for the first time the grim reality of that part of the country.

His first impression of the so-called golden town of Zhangye of old was: "Bitter winter. Cold moon. The north wind chilly to the bone. Too many people without pants." People in groups of threes or fours could be found on street corners and end of alleys struggling to survive the cold night and waiting anxiously for the daybreak so that they could begin a new day of begging in the streets.

Fan Changjiang pointed out that the plight was not due to the laziness of the people but to brutal exploitation by the rulers. In addition to taxes in cash and kind imposed everywhere in Gansu, Zhangye had "opium fines." In the name of "prohibiting the growing of opium," the provincial government stipulated that every year Zhangye



Labuji, a model Yugur herdsman at the foot of the Qilian Mountain Range.

had to pay a fine of 200,000 yuan. The amount had to be paid whether or not opium was grown. To ensure payment, the magistrate of Zhangye was allowed a 5 per cent commission on each fine.

The truth, however, was that the people did not grow opium. Indeed, they had no land to grow anything. Even so, each able-bodied person had to pay an annual fine of 8 yuan, a very substantial sum for a peasant in those days.

Liberation in 1949 changed the Gansu people's inhuman plight. In 1982, the province's total industrial and agricultural output value was more than 10 times what it had been before 1949. The problem of feeding and clothing the local people was basically solved. Even in times of serious drought, today nobody dies of starvation or flees his village to seek a better lot elsewhere.

Yet Gansu remains to this day one of the most backward provinces in China, and tremendous efforts will be required before poverty can be completely wiped out.

Fighting Drought

The poverty today has much to do with the backward agriculture, the life-blood of Gansu's economy. The province's total agricultural output value accounts for only 1.22 per cent of the nation's total despite the fact that it has 1.9 per cent of China's total population and 3.6 per cent of the nation's total farmland acreage.

Livestock breeding is no better either. Although the province is one of China's five largest livestock bases, it has only a meagre 4 per cent of the total head of livestock.

In both fields, drought is the chief culprit. Annual precipitation in the 18 counties (including Jingyuan, Huining and Dingxi) on the loess plateau in central Gansu, where one-fourth (5 million) of the provincial population lives, stands at 200-300 mm. As subterranean water is nowhere to be found in the solid hundreds-metre thick loess layer, the mountains remain barren and lifeless.

Even when water is found, it is usually alkali-charged and

FEATURE/GANSU

thus useless for drinking or irrigation. The main source of drinking water is rainfall, stored in wells carefully lined with a special red clay.

According to incomplete records, in the 2,051 years from 104 B.C. to 1947, Gansu was hit by 252 droughts, an average of one every eight years. In some cases, the dry spell lasted several years. Each drought took the lives of thousands of people. In a serious dry spell that struck Gansu in 1929, for example, 2 million people died, with the mortality rate topping 30 per cent.

Many attempts have been made and measures adopted to offset drought, but little has been achieved in easing the acute shortage of water in mountain areas. In the late 1950s, some people tried to divert water from the Taohe River, hoping thus to solve the water shortage once and for all. Colossal sums of money and labour were invested in this gigantic project, but it was unsuccessful.

Today, central Gansu remains one of the nation's dozen most destitute areas. The local people still have trouble making ends meet and must rely on government relief for funds and grain.

In Dingxi County, the government spends 300,000-400,000 yuan a year on supplying drinking water for the peasants and their livestock.

The per-capita annual income in most Gansu communes still falls far behind the national average, which stood at 270 yuan in 1982.

The government has shown consistent concern for the people in the province in their struggle with poverty.

In 1973, when a serious drought hit central Gansu, Premier Zhou Enlai immediately ordered an increase in relief grain and funds for the area and ensured that clothing and other daily necessities were rushed to the spot. He also instructed the local government to help the peasants expand sideline occupations to make up for their losses. As a result, they survived the disaster.

In autumn 1982, Premier Zhao Ziyang made an inspection tour of Dingxi County. He discussed the vicious cycle of the local ecology with commune cadres and members. They finally decided to plant drought-resistant trees and grass on a large scale so as to expand the vegetation cover on the land and provide fodder for animals. More livestock would then produce more manure needed to boost grain yield.

In addition to afforestation, the province has built government-funded hydropower projects along rivers and deep ravines. Large numbers of small pumping stations also have been

set up to help increase the grain output.

Controlling the Deserts

Deserts are another scourge of the Gansu people.

North and northwest Gansu is virtually a vast sweep of deserts and gobi (vast areas of rocks) totalling 120,000 square kilometres, or one-fourth of the province's total area.

In the past it was not uncommon to see farmland and villages submerged in sand. In the century before liberation, drifting dunes buried 6,300 villages and 17,400 hectares of farmland in Minqin County (300 kilometres west of Lanzhou), which is surrounded on three sides by the Tengger and Badain Jaran Deserts.

After the founding of the People's Republic, the government of Minqin County put research and transformation of the deserts on the top of the agenda. Integrating engineering efforts with the planting of trees and grass, the county has successful-



Work is in full swing to harness the Tengger Desert.

ly removed the threat of high winds and drifting sands from 20,000 hectares of farmland.

Minqin today has China's first botanical garden on the desert, which occupies 67 hectares and serves both multipurpose research and international scientific and technological exchanges.

Lingze County has also done a remarkable job in this regard. There, the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Lanzhou Desert Research Institute has worked in close coordination with a local forestry research centre to build sand-fixation forests and reclaim the land. Several years of arduous work have turned what used to be 3,300 hectares of desert into an oasis. More than 100 peasant families have settled there, bringing in their wake thriving farming and livestock breeding.

Developing the Rich Land

Certainly not all the land of Gansu is arid and barren. In a deep ravine on the loess plateau of east Gansu stretches a strip of fertile grain-yielding land. To the south, the high mountains between the Changjiang and Huanghe Rivers are covered with luxurious subtropical forests and fruit trees, and the dense virgin forests provide the ideal habitat for such precious animals as giant pandas, cakins, golden-haired monkeys and stone martens and breeding grounds for over 300 kinds of traditional Chinese medicinal herbs like the root of hairy asiabell and *Rhizoma Gastrodiae*. The Chinese angelica produced in Minxian County, south Gansu, has long enjoyed an international reputation for its quality.

Between the high mountains west of the Huanghe River and the deserts lies the Hexi Corri-



Chen Pei with fellow commune members in a wheat field.

dor, a 100-kilometre-wide strip of land that extends 1,200 kilometres from Wuwei in the east to Anxi County in the west.

The snow-capped Qilian Mountain Range that runs parallel to it provides a constant supply of water for irrigation. The Lanzhou-Urumqi Railway and Highway link the corridor with Lanzhou and Xinjiang to its west and Shaanxi to its east. Hexi is also an indispensable route in the interflow of commodities to and from Xinjiang and other places.

The Hexi Corridor developed gradually after 1949. In 1980, its grain output totalled 170,000 tons, six times the pre-liberation figure. This meant that every peasant there produced an average of 554.5 kilogrammes, doubling the provincial average figure.

Qiaopo Production Team No. 3 in Wuwei County's Dalu Commune is another good example of a Hexi success story. The 178 people in 32 families there farm 17 hectares of land. In the last three years, they have vastly improved their living standards by instituting the re-

sponsibility system in production and organizing surplus labour in expanding sideline occupations.

In 1981, the team's per-capita income from collective distribution reached 401 yuan. Brick-and-wooden houses have replaced outmoded adobe huts, while TV sets and upholstered armchairs have become standard for every family. A watertower has been built, which supplies tap-water to all corners of the village. By the rural Chinese standards, Qiaopo Production Team No. 3 is definitely in the nations' well-to-do bracket.

The team members owe much of their improved lot to their leader, 40-year-old Chen Pei, who recently was promoted to be the leader of a production brigade (composed of a number of teams).

In an interview with our correspondent he said he would use his experience to help more commune members gain prosperity.

Improved livelihood has kindled a strong desire for better education and more knowledge. The commune-run Banqiao Mid-

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dle School of Linze County is just one result of this desire.

The school courtyard, over 3 hectares wide, is clean and quiet, secluded in big groves of full-grown cypress trees. Its 280 students, apart from schooling, also lend a hand in farm chores. At present, 40 per cent of the children of school age in the Banqiao commune attend school.

Tapping Mineral Resources

With its total industrial output value accounting for 1.4 per cent of the nation's total, Gansu Province places 22nd of its 28 counterparts on the mainland. However, its potential for industrial development is immense, because it abounds in diverse, high-grade natural resources.

By the time Gansu was liberated in 1949, the province had only a few small factories and handicraft workshops. Since then many modern enterprises, big and medium-sized, have been built. The Lanzhou Refinery, with an annual capacity of 2.5 million tons, produces more than the whole country did in the old days.

The Lanzhou General Machine Works is capable of producing drilling and fracturing equipment for export. It is hard to imagine that the factory was developed on the basis of a dilapidated Qing Dynasty factory built during the 1870-78 period for repairing firearms and making sabres.

In the liberation year, Gansu had only 52 kilometres of railways. Now 1,900 kilometres of railways run through it and Lanzhou, the provincial capital, has become an important hub in the transport network of north-west China.

Gansu also abounds in hydraulic resources. Three hydropower stations have been

built on the Huanghe River upstream from Lanzhou.

The biggest is the Liujiaxia hydropower station, whose construction began shortly after liberation. Its cofferdam stands 147 metres high, its 130 square kilometre-wide reservoir has a storage capacity of 5,700 million cubic metres and it boasts a generating capacity of 2.5 million kw, which makes it the largest in the Huanghe River basin.

The well-developed power industry has not only supported Gansu's own industrial development but also supplies surplus electricity to neighbouring Shaanxi, Qinghai and Sichuan.

The Yumen Oilfield is the birthplace of China's oil industry, and the Yumen workers and technicians are its pioneers. The oilfield today has reached its late productive years, but the workers are proud of the fact that the builders of the famous Daqing Oilfield came from among them, including Wang Jinxi, the "Iron Man" whose name is a household word in China because of his contributions to building Daqing.

Not far from Wuwei in the eastern part of the Hexi Corridor stands Jinchang, a new city built in 1981. The Jinchuan Non-ferrous Metal Company there is China's largest nickel producing area and a centre for extracting platinoid. Jinchuan abounds in paragenetic nonferrous deposits composed mostly of nickel, mixed with a good variety of rare metals. Its sulphurous nickel reserves rank second in the world. Since 1978, the output of nickel has been vastly increased and new results in scientific research and comprehensive utilization of the natural resources have been achieved.

Clearly, nonferrous metal industry is one of the strong

points of Gansu. In 1980, the province produced 13.5 per cent of the nation's total output of 10 nonferrous metals. Recently Gansu has built three lead works with the construction work of another one in high gear.

* * *

Prospects

In the ongoing drive for modernization, the Gansu people have a long, difficult route ahead.

According to the province's sixth five-year plan (1981-85), in the next three years Gansu will continue to devote its major efforts to boosting agriculture in order to set up a rational farming system. It will emphasize two aspects. The first is the continuing fight against poverty, which includes improving the ecological environment of the arid central Gansu so as to speed up the agricultural development and effect a quick improvement in the people's living standards. The second is to develop the Hexi Corridor in order to turn it into a marketable grain producing centre. If a good job is done in both aspects, a boost will be given to the growth of the agricultural economy of Gansu as a whole.

By the end of this century, the province will double its total grain output and become self-sufficient in grain supply. The total agricultural output value will rise 5-fold and the peasants' per-capita income will surpass 600 yuan. Thus Gansu will bid farewell to poverty.

In the long run, Gansu, together with the vast northwest China, will in the next century become a strong base in building China into a powerful socialist country. □

MODERN DRAMA

New plays of historical themes

In China 60 years ago, writers began to write plays based on real-life historical personalities and events.

Historical plays attained remarkable successes during the period of democratic and socialist revolution. However, during the "cultural revolution" (1966-76) they were accused of "using the past to disparage the present" and were ruthlessly suppressed by the gang of four.

Recently, a number of new historical plays have been staged in Beijing. They are no longer regarded as "insinuation" literature.

Different playwrights have offered varied approaches to historical material.

The Story of King Goujian, written by the famous writer Bai Hua, was staged this year by the Beijing People's Art Theatre.

Set late in China's Spring and Autumn Period (770-475 B.C.) it depicts King Goujian of the State of Yue working hard to strengthen his country after being defeated by King Fuchai of the State of Wu. The King defeats the oppressor State of Wu through 10 years of protracted struggles with his people. However, he later forgets the bitter lessons of the past and once again indulges himself in luxury and pleasure.

Bai Hua had been to Shaoxing, the capital of the ancient State of Yue, in Zhejiang Province in the early 60s. He was greatly impressed by the vivid folktales about the State of Yue. He wondered why King Goujian embarked once again on the road to doom after his victory.

In order to set the play true to historical facts as well as to accurately represent the feelings of the people, the author incorporated both historical records and folktales in his creation. The depictions of kings, councillors, beauties, soldiers and common people

invariably impress his audiences.

The 1861 Coup d'Etat staged by the Chengde Modern Drama Troupe of Hebei Province tells the story of how Empress Dowager Ci Xi (1835-1908) became one of the most powerful rulers of the last imperial dynasty in her young days.

Much has been said about the Empress Dowager in literature, most of which describes her treacherous acts and her luxurious life during her rule. However, the play *The 1861 Coup d'Etat* covers new ground. It gives us a vivid picture of how Ci Xi manoeuvred her way to power.

The play makes the audience understand the plain truth that people should be vigilant against careerists and conspirators before a coup happens.

Another historical play highly commended by theatrical circles is *Emperor Taizong and Wei Zheng*, staged by a theatrical troupe of the Ministry of Railways.

Emperor Taizong (Li Shimin, 599-649 A.D.) "of the Tang Dynasty" was one of the most successful emperors in Chinese history. Wei Zheng was his loyal councillor. In old China, even a close councillor risked his life if he tried to correct the misrule of the monarch. Although emperors named loyal high officials to advisory posts so they would dare to express their opinions, nevertheless such subjects enjoyed no safety under feudal rule. The play depicts the relationship between the emperor and his loyalists.

Critics acclaim for the playwright's thorough understanding of historical materials,



A scene from "The Story of King Goujian."



A scene from "The 1861 Coup d'Etat."

which has been matched by his observations of history in the light of historical materialism. In seeking the true colour of history, the play well portrays the feudal ruler Li Shimin, both his historical role as well as the limitations imposed by his times. The character Emperor Taizong is a lively person who is courageous in accepting criticism but wants to maintain his dignity at the same time. The other principal, Wei Zheng, also is realistically portrayed.

The Shandong Modern Drama Troupe's presentation of *Sultan and Emperor* opens up another facet of historical play-writing.

The play is about the 1417 visit to China by Paduka Pahala, the Sultan of Sulu in the southern Philippines. His was the biggest foreign delegation China had ever received, which included his wife, children and 300 subjects.

He met with Emperor Yongle (1360-1424) but before he could return to the Philippines, he became critically ill and died in China's Dezhou, Shandong Province.

The playwright uses the stage to reflect the friendship between the peoples of China and

the Philippines during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). He interweaves national songs and dances of both countries into the story which gives it a sense of local customs. It is considered a breakthrough both in subject matter and in artistic form.

MUSIC

Student composer wins Dresden award

The second prize of the 1983 Dresden International Weber Chamber Music Composition Contest went to Tan Dun, 26, who will graduate this summer from the Composition Department of the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing. He is currently in the German Democratic Republic attending the awards ceremony.

His *No. 1 String Quartet: Feng-Ya-Song* (folk songs-court music-temple hymns) was inspired by the *Book of Songs*, China's first anthology of poems compiled by Confucius and his disciples in the Spring and Autumn Period (770-475 B.C.). It combines Chinese tradition with modern techniques. It is

at once lyrical and magnificent.

The competition received 82 works from 25 countries and regions, including Argentina, the GDR, Japan, the Soviet Union and the United States. China, participating in the biannual event for the first time, sent four compositions.

Tan Dun was a violinist in a local opera troupe in Hunan Province before he entered the conservatory in 1978. He began to compose music when he was in middle school.

"I had been a peasant for two years and developed a great love for folk songs during that time," he said. He also found classical Chinese literature "greatly nourishing."

His first symphony *Li Sao* (on encountering sorrow) was based on a poem of the same title, which has exerted a great impact on Chinese literature of various periods, by Qu Yuan, China's first known poet of the Warring States Period (475-221 B.C.). This work won a prize at China's First National Symphonic Competition in 1981.

Professor Zhao Xingdao commented on his student's success, "It indicates that a composition of national character containing new expressions is understood and accepted internationally."

The department's five-year curriculum incorporates rigorous formal training and study of national music. One component of the curriculum is that students are required to spend one month every year in localities that are rich in folk music, so that they can study the origins and evolution of the local music and observe local conditions and customs, especially celebrations and festivals.

The first movement, *Feng*, of Tan Dun's award-winning string quartet drew on folk songs Tan learnt during a trip to Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

ART PAGE

Traditional Chinese paintings by Chen Dayu

Born in 1912, Chen Dayu is a native of Chaoyang County, Guangdong Province. He is a professor in the painting department of the Nanjing College of Arts and is vice-chairman of the Jiangsu branch of the Chinese Artists' Association.

Chen specializes in traditional Chinese flower-and-bird paintings characterized by vigorous brushwork. His paintings are not only lifelike but also magnificently conceived, full of artistic impact.

He has developed his own unique painting style after years of efforts towards new artistic dimensions.



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