

*Unsanctioned Visit***Bill Worthy Reports on China**

On Christmas Day, William Worthy landed at Peking to spend his Christmas holidays in China. He had been invited and hoped that as the first American correspondent to China since 1949 he might get some scoops. A delegation met the plane. But they came to greet another passenger, the mayor of Bombay. "Name please" was Worthy's greeting, by an Intourist agent. None of the numerous requests he listed with the Swarthmore graduate at the Government Information Department was granted, except a cut-and-dried interview with Chou-En-lai and another with a brainwashed American prisoner. But he had a month in China to form impressions. On his return to Harvard for the second semester, to resume his Nieman Fellowship, he was asked to make many talks. This is from one of them.

Worthy is a correspondent of the Afro-American. For them he went to the Bandung Conference, spent five months in Moscow, toured Africa last summer and followed many other foreign assignments. He was one of

many American correspondents invited to China. The others did not go, after the State Department refused permission. Two correspondents of Look Magazine in Moscow went at the same time as Worthy, but separately. Neither they nor he knew of the other's plans. Worthy had served CBS at times, and broadcast for them from China. The State Department threatened penalties to the three correspondents. Protests against the ban on correspondents in China have been lodged by American publishers, and editors, broadcasters and leading publications. After two months of this, Secretary Dulles said the State Department had decided against penalizing the three correspondents. He said he and the President had considered the question of securing news for the American public from China but had found no practicable way to answer it at present. Worthy had waived all claim to protection under his passport and took no American money into China. His passport expired March 4. He has applied for its renewal.

By William Worthy

Before trying to give my general impressions of China, I want to present as much factual material as possible, with comment, and to let my impressions, some of which are contradictory, emerge in that way.

First, let me cite five comments by five different persons which will give you something of my own frame of reference.

The first comment was made about three years ago, down South, by a repatriated American prisoner-of-war who had lived in close contact with the so-called Chinese "volunteers" in a prison camp in North Korea. He remarked to me that "if you've talked to one Chinese, you've talked to them all." What this POW meant was that you get the same line again and again, no matter how many Chinese you have the opportunity to meet. I found that to be true during my 41 days in China.

The second comment was by a Western diplomat in Peking who has traveled considerably around China during the past several years. He told me of how few chances he and other foreigners stationed in China have to meet ordinary non-official men and women. Even when you speak the language, he said, it's like swimming in a river and remaining dry.

The third comment was by another repatriated American prisoner-of-war whose home is in Kentucky. After reviewing for several hours all of the mental and physical tortures

he had seen the Chinese practice in the camps he summed everything up by saying: "Those people are awful." After my interview with Lutheran missionary Paul Mackensen in the Shanghai Jail on January 16—a man who has been completely brainwashed—I had to agree that the Chinese Government officials who direct what Robert Lifton calls these "assaults on identity and self" are truly awful.

The fourth comment was by a Western correspondent in Peking who observed to me one day that a revolution could break out in any one of the provinces of China, and the handful of Westerners in Peking, Shanghai and other big cities would not necessarily learn a thing about it.

The fifth and final quotation comes from an Indian diplomat in China. He summed up the pervasiveness of the communist system by noting that nothing that happens inside China can be separated from the official ideology. Having been in the Soviet Union I would only add that this is even more true there than in a country that has been communist for only eight years.

Having a particular interest in educational and intellectual affairs in China, and in the life of students, I visited People's University on the outskirts of Peking, Tsing Hua University in Peking—the "M.I.T. of China," as one professor described it—, and Shanghai Conservatory of Music.

At People's University my main purpose was to inter-

view former corporal William Charles White, one of the three Negro American soldiers who remained in China after the Korean truce. I'll run through some of the information I gained from him. Most if not all of it is, I believe, accurate. The students work hard and they have fewer distractions than we here at Harvard, for example, have. I was told that the government, which urgently needs well-trained university graduates in just about every field, prefers to have its schools and universities far enough out of metropolitan centers to discourage the diversions of city girls and city entertainments. I interviewed White just five days after reaching China, and I wasn't at that time fully aware of international transportation difficulties. It was a Saturday evening that I saw him, and I made the mistake of not arranging in advance for a car to pick me up and take me the eight or nine miles back to Peking. When I was ready to leave it took White over two hours to get me a car. Apparently everywhere in China taxis are almost non-existent. It was too late to get an Intourist car. We phoned the Foreign Office Press Department and they had nothing available. Finally, for a fairly steep price I got a ride in one of the three or four cars reserved for faculty use. Needless to say, students don't own cars. Even if they could afford one it would be contrary to government policy of having a one-track scholastic purpose during one's years in school.

Another sidelight on student life: both Arthur Koestler and George Orwell have noted in their writings that every dictatorship seems to feel called upon to regulate and spy upon the people's sex life. Under the Communists, China has become a puritanical country, and the Chinese equivalents of Harvard's parietal rules are very strict. Last week another of the American prisoners-of-war who stayed in China after Korea came home. His name is Samuel Hawkins, and I talked with him several times in Peking. While he was at WuHan University he had trouble and claimed that he was expelled because he didn't conform to the ban on having girls in his room.

The most specific information that I was able to get at any institution of higher learning came from Dr. S. B. Tung, professor of electrical engineering at Tsing Hua University in Peking. Until 1955 he was teaching at Brooklyn Polytechnic Institute after having graduated from the University of Illinois. Then at the age of 35 he decided to return to the motherland. The four-year course that he knew in the States is a five-year course at Tsing Hua and other Chinese technical schools. In China students must spend an overall total of 28 weeks in industry on three separate occasions before graduating. Dr. Tung finds Chinese students more conscientious than the average American student. This, he remarked, makes his teaching more difficult. They receive American technical journals. The courses are in Chinese. Some of the equip-

ment in his department of electrical engineering is Chinese-made; some comes from Hungary, Czechoslovakia and East Germany, with a lesser amount from Russia. He added that they hope before long to get American equipment also.

At Tsing Hua there are 8600 students, with an expected enrollment next fall of 10,000. The teaching staff totals 1100, of which 110 are professors. Most of the professors have studied in the States. Three of them are women. There are departments of electrical engineering, radio engineering, civil engineering, water conservation, architecture, power generating and mechanics. A couple of comparative statistics will give you an idea of the vast expansion of educational opportunities under the Communists—one of the keys to whatever popular support they enjoy among youth. Five years ago the student body was only around 2000. In the fall, as I said, it will number 10,000.

I dropped in on a morning lecture in political science to about 300 students. Almost uniformly the men had the standard blue and black cotton-padded jackets and trousers. Many of the girls wore the same. But there was an occasional girl in brown or maroon or printed blouse. Some of the girls wear braids. Some of the fellows keep their caps on; others don't.

The instructor was a slender man of about 35. He was not an impressive person, but he made up for it in intensity. I'm told that many like him have just emerged recently from their own indoctrination courses, and that there's practically an assembly-line production of lecturers on political topics. Over the blackboard was a loudspeaker connected with the director's office, where announcements for the entire student body are made. I didn't learn whether or not the director can in turn tune in on what the instructor and students are saying in the lecture hall. That, incidentally, is one of the devices which are becoming standard equipment in modern American schools. We tend to look upon such gadgets as mere gadgets, but they have a totalitarian potential.

This political science course meets once or twice a week, for 90-minute lectures. Here is a running translation by my Intourist interpreter of what the instructor was saying:

Our newspapers are different from Western papers. We don't publish so many social activities. We are trying to let everyone know the importance of socialism. Students must heighten their political consciousness. And then he went into a discourse on the true meaning of democracy:

In the West people may enjoy democracy but that kind of democracy is different from the kind here. People in the West view democracy in an abstract light. It is so-called unrestricted democracy. In essence it is capitalist and bourgeois. Some people here have been look-

ing forward to democracy with no bounds or limits. Such an idea would sabotage and decrease production. It would be of no help to the workers themselves. The government pays attention to rectifying such ideas in the minds of those people.

I also visited the Institute of National Minorities where the government is training cadres composed of the various minorities to go back into their home areas and serve as administrators, teachers, propagandists and Party members. Under the Kuomintang there was considerable racial and cultural discrimination against these minorities, but this regime is determined to have a unified country and is bending over backwards to placate any potentially disgruntled elements. I was told that in places where there is a shortage of classroom space, children of Army personnel and children of minority groups get preferential treatment.

In 1954 and 1955, for about 14 months, there was an extravaganza campaign against a Chinese intellectual named Hu Feng. He was charged with counter-revolutionary sins and was target No. 1 for the controlled press during that prolonged period. The man disappeared, and no one knows what has happened to him, but Westerners in Peking say that the press never cited one scrap of evidence against him. It is generally believed that the crime of Hu Feng, rather than being guilty of any specific act against the regime, was simply that he had become too free a thinker, and the Party decided that an example had to be made of him. The campaign resembled the worst precedents ever set in Russia during Stalin's last years. One Britisher in China said that the Hu Feng campaign was the last outburst of real madness in China, and that in a speech about a year ago at a special conference of intellectuals Chou En-lai came close to promising that there would be no more of that ferocious nonsense.

It was explained to me that any remorse on the part of the government was strictly on practical grounds. All the intellectuals had been scared stiff, and no one was doing any work for fear of getting into ideological trouble. No nation committed to industrializing itself rapidly can afford to frighten and alienate its brainpower. During 1954 and 1955 there was even an attempt to import from Moscow the insane doctrine of Lysenko that acquired characteristics can be inherited. Those who believe in Mendel were labeled anti-Marxist.

In the latter part of 1956, after the Hu Feng campaign had been buried, a Chinese paper or magazine reported on something which it labeled as bad as that had happened during the Hu Feng campaign. At some laboratory there had been an experiment in crossing plants or transmitting acquired characteristics. The results of the experiment turned out to be so different from what they should have been if Lysenko had been right. So the seeds were just uprooted. Now the Chinese publicly ridicule such excesses, and the

official slogan today is: "Let flowers of many kinds blossom, let diverse schools of thought contend." No longer must Chinese researchers wait to see what the Russians have to say before announcing their own findings.

I do not mean, however, to give the impression that academic freedom in China has followed this all-out effort of less than two years ago to scare intellectuals into political submission. I personally don't believe that a totalitarian regime can afford to permit complete academic and intellectual freedom, despite the counter-pressure of encouraging scientific and technological development. That, I feel, is one of the contradictions of a dictatorship that cannot be resolved.

I am often asked how much freedom to criticize exists in China for intellectuals and non-intellectuals. The simplest answer is that there is considerable latitude so long as you do not question the premises of the Communist system. I put the question to a Westerner in Peking who reads Chinese and follows the press very closely. He told me that the press carries quite a bit of criticism of management, bureaucracy, technical matters and challenges by individuals to the wage scales assigned to them. But the point is not to cross the razor's edge between permitted criticism and heresy. If your footwork is not fancy enough and you write a letter to the editor, you're likely to be visited by a security policeman, in which case you'd better confess quickly and say that your wages really should be downgraded even further than they already were. But if your complaint is acceptable, a reporter from the *People's Daily* in Peking may come down to your place of work, get the whole story and then print a blast against the management or the government agency concerned.

The prison interviews granted to Stevens, Harrington and me served at least one purpose: we established that besides Rev. Mackensen and Father Fulgence Gross at least five of the other Americans are behind the bars of the Shanghai Jail. Until then, for over a year, even the British Embassy, which looks after American interests in China, could only guess at the men's whereabouts.

Elsewhere in China I came across a Chinese churchman who, presumably through the grapevine that functions in all dictatorships, was up-to-date and, I later found, accurately informed about one of the jailed missionaries whom he formerly knew. Difficult as it would be, I have no doubt that if a corps of competent and not easily discouraged American correspondents were to be stationed in China they would be able to track down bits and pieces of the long and involved stories of these unfortunate political hostages. Because of our policy, or perhaps the bureaucratic instinct of classifying nearly all of the material on the prisoners, and also because of our generally strident tone toward everything on the Chinese mainland, much of the world is predisposed to believe, and in fact believes, that

Washington has all along made far too much of an issue of the prisoners. It was in China and not in the United States that I learned the devastating fact that of the 30 or 40 Chinese prisoners in American jails, whom the Peking government is going through the motions of championing, every last one is in on a murder or narcotic charge. No government is eager to repatriate murderers and dope peddlers. But until the facts are presented to the world, and preferably with a Peking dateline, the Chinese sitting at the Geneva bargaining table with American Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson can conceal their real demands under the camouflage of demanding a humanitarian exchange of prisoners.

The journalistic pursuit of the handful of spot news stories with a specifically American angle would of course justify a heavy budgetary layout by the main news agencies after the hiatus of eight years. But apart from such the question often asked me is how much news could be gathered by permanent U. S. correspondents in China. Most news, as of now, would have to be feature and background material. Much of it would be speculative and based on the "feel" of things which, in the present total absence of any Chinese censorship, could readily be communicated. During my six-week stay hardly a day passed without some little story or insight or inkling of a story coming my way. Hurrying one Sunday morning to tape-record a church service, my interpreter and I listened to five or ten minutes of song and prayer before an usher informed us that we had stumbled into the wrong building. This was a decrepit Salvation Army structure with just a handful of worshippers rather than the well-attended carefully maintained church around the corner to which visitors are steered. From a girl on the staff of a foreign embassy I learned that her tailor and others in the trade who have been nationalized in the last year have lost all initiative and pride of workmanship and now turn out poorly made garments after exasperating delays.

Inside the Shanghai Drug Store I could not help but notice the continuous crowds around the counter which features the birth-control literature and unblushingly sells to men and women the unpackaged, unwrapped contraceptive devices. The literature was also for sale, but the display copies were chained to the counter in the way of our post office pens.

Across the street from the drug store at Wing On Department Store I sensed the undiminished admiration for American products when I was shown consumer goods, from "Singers" to "Florsheims" to "Parker 51s," which retain their private capitalistic names although manufactured now in state-owned factories of the People's Republic of China. The reappearance of beggars during my brief stay

appeared to indicate a dwindling fear of the police and of the Draconian laws against the tin cup. More importantly, it fitted in with the recent atmosphere of relaxation and of real though unavowed liberalization.

As part of the job of assessing the future development of a country largely shielded from any outsider's microscope such footnote items are zealously collected by governments enjoying diplomatic relations with China. The same is true of the American Embassy in Moscow. Choose any morning, afternoon or evening, and in the streets of Peking or Shanghai you will find personnel of the larger embassies strolling along gathering the minutiae of daily life. A visiting correspondent under the whip-lash of a limited visa has no choice but to soak in and later try to check a mass of second-hand reports during interviews and dinner parties at the various embassies. A permanent correspondent could do his own strolling and follow leads that come his way from diplomats and others. Needless to add, any reporter in China who planned to rely on leaks of secret information would be singularly unproductive of copy. Either by learning from the Russians or by devising their own security techniques the Chinese have their country now so rigged that only authorized news gets out. The one difference from the Soviet Union—a difference which makes life in Peking less morbid than in Moscow—is that the Chinese, in their greater wisdom and sophistication, have a less comprehensive and more rational definition of state secrets.

Neither for the permanent American correspondents of the years to come nor for future transients with one-month visas is there any guarantee that the liberty to film and tape-record will remain as broad as it was for us three. Communist rules change without notice. But the regime shows no fear of documentary reporting, and, to pick an example, I strongly suspect that a "See It Now" television camera crew would not only be admitted to China but would also be given remarkably gracious cooperation. Judging from the hundreds of irrepressible children who always came running from nowhere at the sight of my simple 16 millimeter camera the biggest practical problem for a large crew with extensive equipment might be the traffic problem, which usually upsets the police. Bureaucratic headaches would likely be administrative and not political. On the relatively few occasions when, in frustration at delays and obstacles, I wanted to wring the nearest neck, I managed to perceive that I was operating in a country completely severed since 1949 from high-powered, deadline-conscious Americans and that in some cases I was dealing with inexperienced clerks and administrators who only yesterday were struggling not with competition-harried reporters but with their own individual illiteracy.