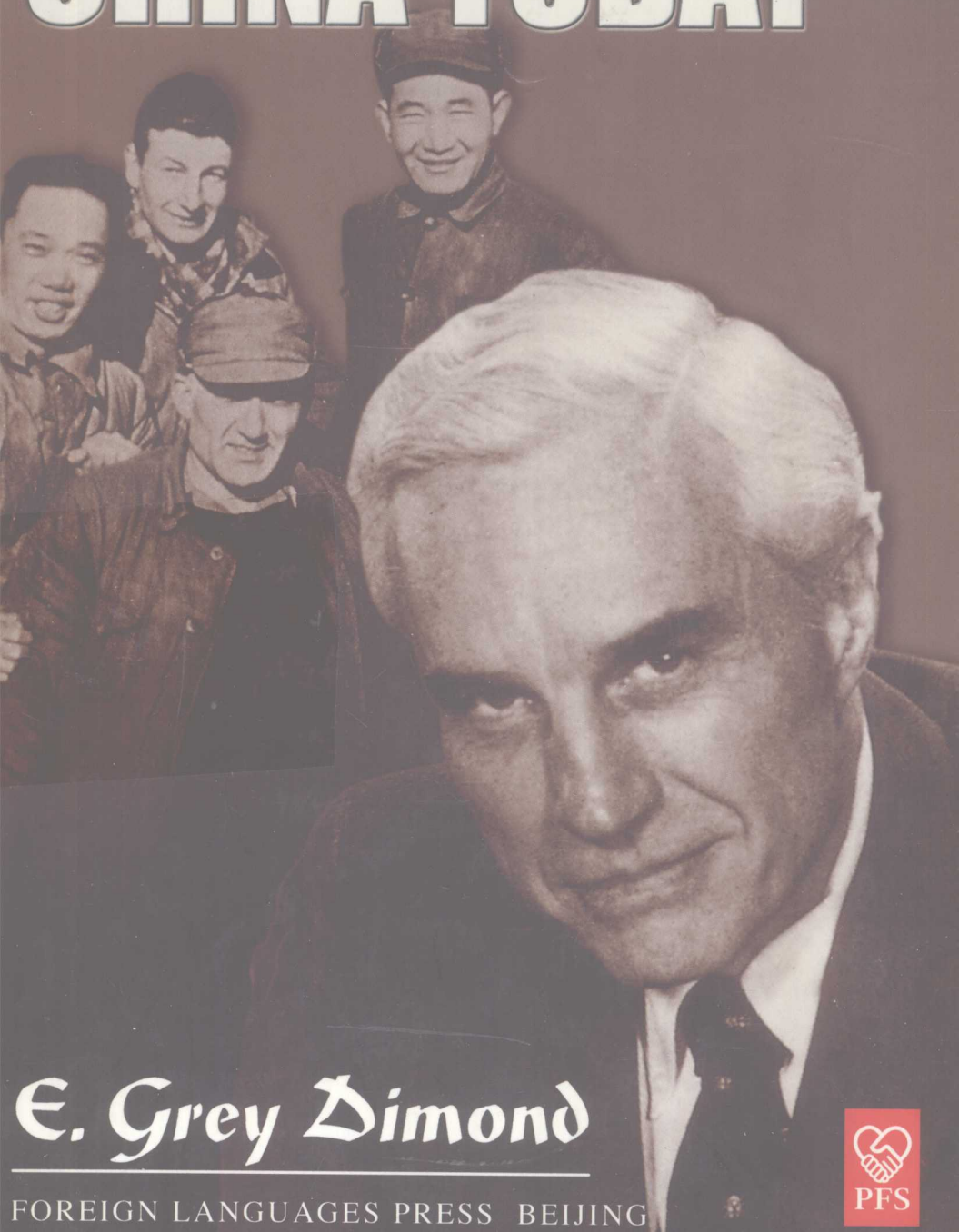


INSIDE CHINA TODAY



E. Grey Dimond

FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS BEIJING

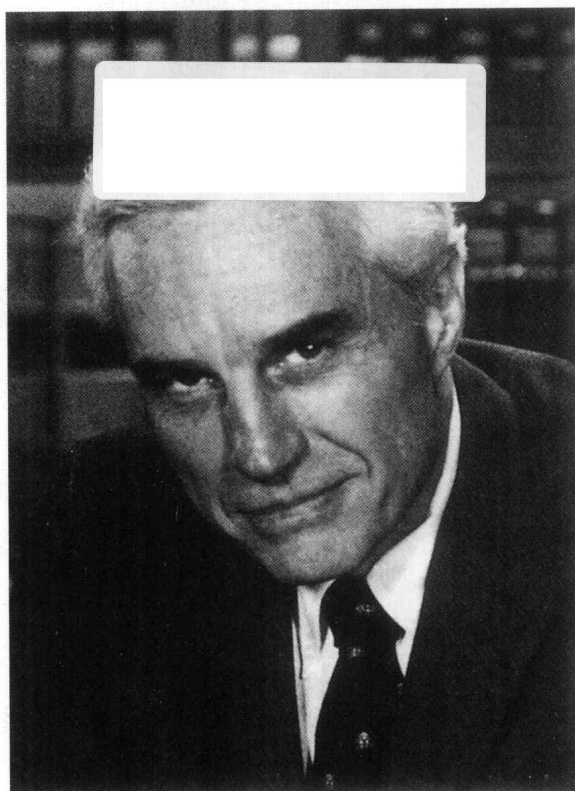


Inside China Today

A WESTERN VIEW

by

E. Grey Dimond, M. D.



Foreign Languages Press

First published by W. W. Norton & Company, New York • London, 1983.

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ISBN 7-119-03463-4

Foreign Languages Press, Beijing, 2003

Published by Foreign Languages Press

24 Baiwanzhuang Road, Beijing 100037, China

Printed in the People's Republic of China

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

今日中国见闻 / (美) 戴蒙德 (Dimond, E. G.) 著.

— 北京: 外文出版社, 2003.12

(中国之光)

ISBN 7-119-03463-4

I. 今… II. 戴… III. 中国—现代史—史料—英文

IV. K270.6

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2003) 第 091238 号

外文出版社网址:

<http://www.flp.com.cn>

外文出版社电子信箱:

info@flp.com.cn

sales@flp.com.cn

中国之光丛书

今日中国见闻

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责任编辑 蔚文英

封面设计 蔡 荣

印刷监制 冯 浩

出版发行 外文出版社

社 址 北京市百万庄大街 24 号 邮政编码 100037

电 话 (010) 68996121 / 68996117 (编辑部)
(010) 68329514 / 68327211 (推广发行部)

印 刷 三河市汇鑫印务有限公司

开 本 小 16 开

印 数 1000 册

版 次 2003 年第 1 版第 1 次印刷

装 别 精装

书 号 ISBN 7-119-03463-4 / Z·663 (外)

定 价 68.00 元

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The map following page 98 was prepared by Tom Mueller.

PREFACE

Huang Hua

It is a great honor for me to write a preface for the new, PFS (China Society for People's Friendship Studies) 50-book series under the general title of *Light on China*. All these books were written in English by journalistic and other eyewitnesses of the events described. I have read many of them over the seven decades since my student days at Yenching University. With some of the outstanding authors in this series I have ties of personal friendship, mutual regard, and warm memories dating from before the Chinese people's Liberation in 1949.

Looking back and forward, I am convinced that China is pursuing the right course in building a strong and prosperous country in a rapidly changing world with its complex and sometimes volatile developments.

The books in this series cover a span of some 150 years, from the mid 19th to the early 21st century. The numerous events in China, the sufferings and struggles of the Chinese people, their history and culture, and their dreams and aspirations were written by

foreign observers animated by the spirit of friendship, equality and cooperation. Owing to copyright matters and other difficulties, not all eligible books have as yet been included.

The founder of the first Chinese republic, Dr. Sun Yat-sen wrote in his Testament in 1925, “For forty years I have devoted myself to the cause of the people’s revolution with but one end in view: the elevation of China to a position of freedom and equality among the nations. My experiences during those forty years have convinced me that to attain this goal we must bring about an awakening of our own people and ally ourselves in common struggle with those people of the world who regard us as equals.”

Chairman Mao Zedong declared, at the triumphal founding of the People’s Republic in 1949, “The Chinese people have stood up.” Today, having passed its 53rd anniversary, we see the vast forward strides that have been taken, and note that many more remain to be made.

Many foreign observers have traced and reported the real historical movement of modern China, that is: from humiliation — through struggle — to victory. Seeking understanding and friendship with the Chinese people, their insight and perspective were in basic harmony with the real developments in China. But there have been others who viewed China and the Chinese people through glasses tinted by hostile prejudice or ignorance and have invariably made irrelevant observations that could not stand the test of time. This needs to be better understood by young people and students, at home and abroad. The PFS series *Light on China* can help them gain an overview of what went before, is happening now, and will

emerge in the future.

Young students in China can additionally benefit from these works by seeing how foreign journalists and authors use fluent English to record and present historical, philosophical, and socio-political issues and choices in China. For millions of students in China, English has become a compulsory second language. These texts will also have many-sided usefulness in conveying knowledge of our country to other peoples.

Students abroad, on their part, may be helped by the example of warm, direct accounts and impressions of China presented by their elders in the language that most readily reaches them.

Above all, this timely and needed series should help build bridges of friendship and mutual understanding. Good books long out of print will be brought back to strengthen the edifice.

My hearty thanks and congratulations go first to ex-Premier Zhu Rongji, who has been an effective supporter of this new, PFS series. They go to all engaged in this worthy project, the Foreign Languages Press, our China Society for People's Friendship Studies, and others who have given their efforts and cooperation.

Chairman Mao Zedong has written: "So many deeds cry out to be done, and always urgently. The world rolls on, time presses. Ten thousand years are too long. Seize the day, seize the hour."

The hour has come for making these books available to young people in China and abroad whose destiny is to build a better world together. Let this series add a small brick to that structure.

Beijing, Autumn 2003

To
EDGAR SNOW
GEORGE HATEM
HUANG HUA
and to their adventure of 1936

CHINA'S NEW OPEN DOOR AND THE WORLD

The reports upon China's state of health made by White, Rosen, Sidel, and myself were unique only in that we were the first American physicians to go, to see, to return, to speak, and to write. In our typical egocentric way, we almost thought we had discovered a new land. Western man has always fostered this attitude and has taken great pride in heralding the seeing by himself of geographic facts as being equal to the creation of them. Balboa is hailed as the first white man to cross Panama and "find" the Pacific Ocean. History books record similar discoveries throughout the world, and "the first white man," "the first European," is the historical landmark by which we have identified the coming into existence of North America, the Grand Canyon, Victoria Falls, and other substantial geography. China's system of medical care is not geographic, but the same attitude, "I now see it, therefore it is," still prevails.

Almost a decade before the visit by the four of us to China, the very competent and respected Canadian neurologist, Wilder Penfield, had inspected China's health care system and had found much which we reported years later, in 1971. He said: "I think I was most impressed by the attitude of those that I met. It was a feeling of enthusiasm, exhilaration, and pleasure that at last they were doing something on their own. They were working, especially the

younger people, and they were working with a will.... I would say in general that there is a feeling of excitement and enthusiasm among the people.”*

Edgar Snow’s own observations in the 1960s had been identical to those of Han Suyin, Dick Wilson, K. S. Karol, and others, including respected physicians. These reports, including our own, must be acknowledged as reliable and true unless one holds that we all were led through a carefully programmed maze with scheduled exposures and thus all of us were misled into inaccurate judgments. Such an explanation is impossible when one considers the varieties of experience, by substantial numbers of observers, covering a large spread of institutions and locations in China. Too many people saw too much over too long a period of time.

The skeptic places himself in the hazardous position of rejecting because he does not want to believe the information. Skepticism becomes dangerous when it refuses to recognize adequate data. Accurate information from diverse trustworthy sources about China’s health system has now reached such proportions that a persistent critic is no longer demonstrating normal judgment but, instead, the resistance of a mind which deals in fixed ideas. Such minds, which we unfortunately aided in the United States by the bias of government and press, are unprepared and unable to accept the largest reality of our time—that China is now a social and economic force on the world scene. The changes in medicine and health are but a sample of the energy of this social change.

One American who knew the potential of China yet misjudged its direction was John Foster Dulles, who said, “We need to remember that although we have developed more rapidly than Asians in some directions, notably in industrialization, they have preceded us in finding many of the ways to make life richer. Their culture and art long antedate our own, and in many respects have not yet been equalled by our own.... They have an exceptional love and appreciation of beauty. They possess in full measure those human qualities which all admire—devotion to family and country, courage and willingness

*Yale Reports, March 10, 1963.

to sacrifice. They possess unusual qualities of patience, reflection, and repose. Therefore, let us not forget that while we have material and technical things to give, they also have things to give. And if we are wise enough to perceive and to take what Asia has to offer, the balance struck between us will not be one-sided by any true measure of values.” *

Americans living today, and especially those who are young enough to anticipate their prime years in the twenty-first century, are not being prepared for the facts of the world in which they will live if their education does not make them capable of absorbing what is happening in China. This does not mean that one must endorse it or even admire it. However, one limits his and his country's potential if he does not open his mind to every accurate fact about the People's Republic of China. To continue hiding from ourselves what is happening there by the use of mind-clouding labels of “Red China,” “Communist China,” “Mainland China” is not only bigotry but petulance. The China upon which we placed our bets ended up on Taiwan. It is not the China of the Chinese people. The Chinese people are a whole, intact, cultural mass, living in China, enthusiastically identifying Mao Tse-tung as their leader. This huge mass of people has been united under an operational form of government that has moved their country from civil war and occupation in 1949 to a world force in 1973.

The reason that it is so difficult for us Americans to accept the full reality of modern China is not only our own propaganda of the last twenty-five years but the absence of a historical experience which could prepare us for the modern existence of a vigorous China. China as a great power stopped with the first demands of the West upon China in 1840. From 1840 to 1949, China was never free of attack, economically, theocratically, and militarily. Almost every nation, from small Portugal to massive Russia, and with Japan, France, England, Germany, the United States, Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands joining in, demanded land fights, religious rights, and trade rights. That vast historical presence, ancient Cathay, set off the explorations for trade

*A report to the nation, March 24, 1956.

routes by every Western nation, and caused, almost by chance, the colonization of North, South, and Central America. The very existence of the resultant nations is due to the original excitement provoked in Western Europe by the treasures of the Middle Kingdom. The piecemeal colonization of Africa began because of the vigor of the Portuguese navigators in seeking routes to the silks, jewels, lacquers, and spices of China. The full colonial sweep which covered Africa, India, Indo-China, the Indies, the Philippines, Formosa, Australia, and New Zealand had its origin in the enthusiasm of Western Europe for finding trade routes to the remarkable Chinese culture and civilization.

Yet, beginning in 1840, the West came close to destroying that which they had sought. As barter for the silk, the English forced opium. To obtain security for their merchants, they demanded the concession of ports. Missionaries came and with evangelical enthusiasm assaulted the Chinese way of life. Resistance to these invasions was logical, yet the West labeled such efforts as rebellion. All of these external forces succeeded in disabling any efforts at a cohesive government and delayed the industrialization of China. China was "discovered" by the West in the fifteenth century with a demand by Portugal for a port at Macao. China tried to withstand the demands of the West through the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries by closing its doors and living within itself. In the nineteenth century and for the first forty-nine years of the twentieth century, the West refused to accept this attitude as permissible and literally forced China into contact with the rest of the world. This forced exposure brought hardship, disease, war, and poverty to China. Now, united and self-governed, and by a form of government which is alien to the United States, the Chinese people are again intact as a cohesive social instrument.

Not only is China now a cohesive social instrument, but for the first time in its history it is obviously looking out at the rest of the world. China has now opened its *own* doors, and no longer is it an inward-looking society, content to designate all others as barbarian. Instead, new China has a social message and is enthusiastically inviting others to come and experience that message. Equally, new China believes its social message may be of use to

other peoples. With the wisdom gained from bitter personal experience, China is not attempting conversion through gunboats. The skilled diplomacy which we are all seeing, and of which we physicians were but a tiny instance, is that of persuasion by demonstration—not by arms or pulpit, but by diplomacy.

New China is abroad in the world, enthusiastic to demonstrate that there is a third alternative in political structure. Just as the early Christians felt they were responding to a “call,” so the Chinese feel they have come through their bitter years with a new strength and moral purpose that others may wish to try. The Chinese government has declared itself an ally for all countries interested in revolution. The Chinese are offering their example as a model for the underdeveloped nations.

China will persist in maintaining its own definition of its borders and justifying the rectification of historical losses, such as areas in dispute with India and Russia. These will be word wars essentially, with careful balance between ringing declarations and occasional conflict. China’s constant cry of a threatened invasion by Russia may or may not be accurate, but it is a form of Russian roulette which carries risk. Heated charges and counter-claims when armed forces are in daily border contact are a precarious condition. Even if both sides are only blustering for international consumption, a miscalculation or injudicious move could produce sudden, uncontrollable conflict.

The government maintains the entire population in a state of preparedness for invasion, emotionally and defensively. The Chinese are able to see threats on all borders, on the north from Russia, northeast from Japan and South Korea, east from Taiwan and the United States, and south from India. Such a level of anxiety, real or magnified, needs to be appreciated from two views: first, the several centuries of immediate past history when China was indeed continuously invaded, and, second, the utility of such tension in maintaining the entire population in a state of national urgency, willing to work incredibly hard, to accept patriotic dogma, and to suppress their individual ambitions for the national good.

China is intact, under strong central control, but it certainly has not been free of major leadership crises. Mao Tse-tung has remained the symbolic

leader, but there have been major periods during which he has lost control of the Party machinery. At the same time, there has been a strong segment of the military forces—army, navy, and air force—which has not agreed with China's hostility toward Russia, or with China's developing relationship with the United States. These elements led to the attempt by Lin Piao to take over the government and call for Russian help, just as had been the sequence in Czechoslovakia. These events also led to the death of Lin Piao. An equally severe policy dispute led to the house confinement of Lin Shao-ch'i, who had displaced Mao Tse-tung as the administrative head of China. For those of us living in other lands, it is important to recognize that these major conflicts at the very highest level did not appreciably alter the historical imperative. That historical imperative is that the largest and oldest culture on earth has survived the invasion of the West and is now enthusiastically ready for the world scene.

I have used the word "enthusiastically," and it is essential to understand the mixture of reasons behind this dedication of the Chinese people. Above all is the full emotional impact of group awareness—that they are the largest continuous culture, that they have mastered and sustained all forms of art, literature, and inventions when most of the world was still a frontier, that their ability to carry out great projects through shared effort, such as the Grand Canal and the Great Wall, equals the feats of any people, that they were victimized by foreign invaders and foreign religions, that the greatest power of them all, the United States, has ignored their existence for twenty-five years—all of these reasons are multiplied by their awareness of what they have accomplished in these twenty-five years. This success they massively credit to the teachings of Mao Tse-tung. Undoubtedly they have had the full effect of indoctrination and constant propaganda. Undoubtedly any one of them who valued personal liberty has had to accept Mao's demand for shared effort and shared reward. Mao has leveled the range of individual privilege, but as Edgar Snow said, "They have been able to move from misery to poverty."

When eight hundred million people have been able to move from vast misery, with starvation, disease, and war all about, and in a twenty-five year period have peace, sufficient food, sufficient clothing, and a disappearance

of pestilence and plague, then they are understandably enthusiastic. The six-day work week, the full employment of women, with children in boarding schools from age three on, the immense “volunteer” communal labor in their so-called free dine—all of this has not resulted in a sullen, resistant population. Instead, the Western traveler can only report an unusual level of calm, peace, pride, and frank nationalistic enthusiasm. My impression is that much of this enthusiasm is due to patriotism in the ultimate sense of the word, *love of one's fathers*. The Chinese people are again a united, significant nation, aware of their inherited culture and proud of their Chineseness. Communism has been the administrative vehicle and is the official message, but the reason for the peace and pride of today's China is more than Communism.

One can but assume there are those Chinese who thoroughly disagree with Mao's communistic China and its exhortations. The press communiqué of August 29, 1973, following the long-awaited Tenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China, carried in bold print the call of adhere to basic principles: “Practice Marxism, and not revisionism; unite, and don't split; be open and aboveboard, and don't intrigue and conspire. Unite to win still greater victories!” Such urgings certainly suggest a continuing insecurity of the Party.

Continued small peeks into areas not seen by the traveler occur when the world press carries a story that the first and second secretary of the Russian Embassy in Peking (January, 1974) are caught in active underground collusion with a Chinese citizen. And the first-hand report of life in a Chinese prison* sends chills through one's Western bones.

George Eliot's statement, “The strongest principle of growth lies in human choice,” may not be adequate to understand the Chinese peasant. Perhaps adequate food comes first.

Is disenchantment widespread and suppressed? I doubt it. The majority of the millions of Chinese have “never had it so good.” The twenty-five years of Communism have been twenty-five years of sufficient food and clothing.

* Bao Ruowang, *Prisoner of Mao* (New York: Coward, McCann, & Geoghegan, 1973).

For the starving millions of the 1930s, the attainments of the past twenty-five years are perhaps well worth the price. The majority *never* had individual liberty. How can one lose that which he never had?

The seeming need for conformity, aided by the intensive indoctrination in school, seems to be fostering personal stability. Will this be at the expense of creativity? How can one know?

The powerful group dynamics now in action has resulted in the world's largest transactional analysis. The confidence radiated by the Chinese can only be described by "You're OK, *we're* OK!," in which the "we" is the Chinese people.

The Communists have moved China into the twentieth century and have successfully pruned the Chinese civilization of the old customs and social rules that had arrested the ability of the Chinese to deal with the industrial revolution. Voltaire, writing two hundred years ago, defined the Chinese dilemma, "It has existed 4,000 years without having undergone any sensible alteration in laws, customs, language, or even its fashion or apparel." Mao and Communism have successfully done the necessary surgery, and the patient, China, is at present adequately grateful for the results and is a willing follower of Mao Tse-tung.

K. S. Karol, a competent reporter, perhaps suspect by many who cannot accept objectivity from a Communist, has compared the two Communisms, Russian and Chinese. His remarks, admittedly biased toward Communism, are perhaps especially useful. Karol said, after his personal inspection of both countries:

"Another factor is that political enthusiasm here is ten times greater than it ever was in Stalin's Russia, and intellectuals accept infinitely greater material sacrifices. Coercion alone cannot explain the frenetic activity of the men who are building China's 'proletarian culture.' These men have not been heaped with honors as were the bards of Stalinism. They do not have private cars, or luxury apartments, or *dachas*, or shops better stocked than the others reserved for them; and they actually go out to work on the land, and afterward they beat their breasts in self-reproach because they are not proletarian