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A China Diary

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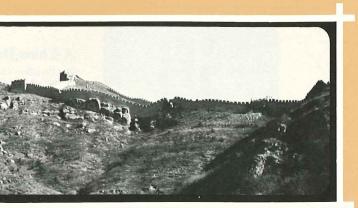
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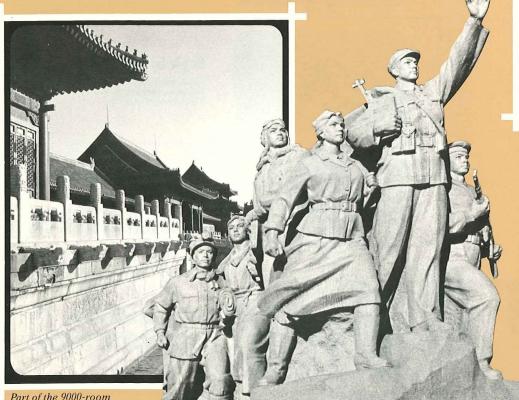
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Chinese farmer in Taiwan harvesting.

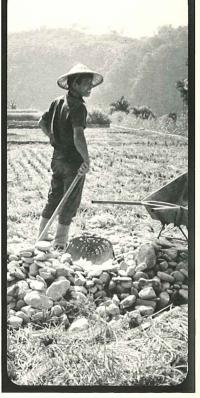


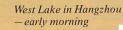
Great Wall outside Beijing.



Statue in front of Mao's Tomb

Part of the 9000-room Imperial Palace Museum in Beijing, once called the "Forbidden City"-The residence of the emperors of China.







Sun Yat-sen Memorial outside of Nanjing





CMMA DIATY

Friday, October 23, 1981, 8 p.m., Narita International Airport

When I was first called and asked to be a member of the Catholic University Delegation to China to investigate educational exchange programs, I hesitated. I'm not a very good traveler on other people's terms: tours and delegations are pre-determined, they leave little elbow room, and I'm not the most seasoned adventurer in the world. Anything beyond pasta, enchiladas, and roast beef I am immediately suspicious of; and I had heard about the rigors of Chinese travel.

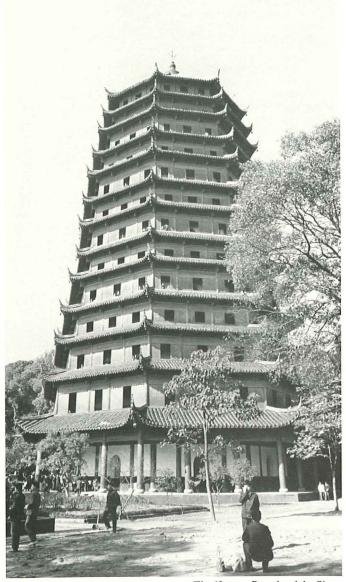
But I was goaded into it by my Jesuit brothers; and I also knew that if I passed up this chance to take the definitive photograph of the Great Wall, I'd never be able to look a camera in the lens again. So pushing aside all hesitations, I decided, "Why

A small group of us met in San Francisco International Airport on Thursday morning and took off for Tokyo. On the plane we saw a very gentle Japanese movie about a retarded man who can see only the beauty in life and becomes a nationally-renowned artist. A worthwhile reminder at the beginning of this trip into uncertainty. For in addition to my own personal hesitations, we have been told that this delegation is the first Catholic delegation since Cardinal Spellman's in 1949. And so although the Chinese Ministry of Education is hosting our visit, we are not sure how a group of archbishops, nuns, priests, and Catholic laymen will be received by a government that has been openly hostile to our fellow Catholics, that has imprisoned and tortured some of our fellow Jesuits. Many Catholic Churches have been restored, and priests have been released from prison; but there are ominous signs that the government will allow the practice of religion only on its own terms. We shall see.

Larry Murphy, the Maryknoll priest who is coordinating the trip, said this morning that we can't go to Beijing (Peking) as planned, but will have to go later because a Japanese conference has extended their stay in the hotel we were to use, so we're going to Shanghai to catch a train to Hangzhou — if possible. But nothing is absolutely set yet. We're playing it by ear.

This change of itinerary, of course, renders all our tickets for travel within China useless. I was told we should be ready for this. More suspicious minds might suggest that this is the government's way of controlling our trip and minimizing the possibility of too much communication between us and special interests

*Complete list of delegates on page 14.



The 13 story Pagoda of the Six Harmonies outside of Hangzhou.

in China; others might point to the inefficiency of what passes for a tourist bureau.

Saturday, October 24, 1981, 11 a.m., Hangzhou Hotel:

A full day yesterday—mostly travel. We flew from Tokyo to Shanghai in a plane that was empty in the first two sections: they crowded us all into the last section, along with another tour from Seattle. We arranged for a train to Hangzhou at 5:30, so they drove us through Shanghai to the Friendship Store first, to change money and buy souvenirs (they seem eager to have us buy souvenirs).

I was startled, as was everybody else, at the sheer numbers of people on the streets. When we speak of the "mass of humanity," this is it. All dressed pretty much alike—though some colored clothes and Westernized styles are becoming evident. And all that can be heard in the streets is the blare of bus horns. The

I had to sit next to one of our hosts so I had to squelch the cowardice and dig in. Strange food. I wanted to stop but he, being polite, kept putting more on my plate.

traffic is made up mostly of bicycles. Apparently only government officials have cars. In many places, sidewalks have been enlarged by putting barriers into the street, just to take care of the crowds. Little vehicular traffic, enormous foot traffic.

People do seem very friendly. But we are told that is a change. In the bar of the hotel where we ate dinner in Shanghai last night, a couple of men talked to us and then said that if they had done so a couple of years ago they would have been arrested and interrogated. The official climate has changed toward American tourists. They want our friendship and our money.

Interesting trip on the train—which was four hours late! All the coaches were packed full, very much like the troop trains in World War II, and we thought we'd have to push in and stand for the three-hour journey. But we received a couple of rooms: they held eight apiece, with a little squeezing. The Bishops—Borders and Gerety—were then called out for a room of their own. The Chinese refer to them as "Cardinals" (there's only one word in the language for both "Cardinal" and "Bishop"). Strange that the Chinese, who espouse the classless society, should defer to those with status—especially religious status. Anyway, it left more room for us, and most of us slept to Hangzhou.

Upon arrival, we were herded (and "herded" is the right word, because Winston Yang, our tour guide from Seton Hall University, keeps saying, "All right, let's go," or "Get in, hurry up.") into a bus and driven to the Hangzhou Hotel. Must have really been a hotel in its day. Even now, it's comfortable, though a bit bare. In each room, on a table, were hot water and tea.

Marco Polo said Hangzhou was the most beautiful city in the world. We'll see what he meant when we go on a tour this afternoon.

8:45 p.m.:

Visited a spectacular Buddhist Shrine in the caves outside the city; people come from all over China to see it. During the Cultural Revolution, some wanted to destroy it, but Chou-en Lai prevented that by simply keeping it closed. It opened in 1975 and they have been repairing it ever since. There are, however, few Buddhist adherents, very few Buddhist Monks, and hardly any new young Monks preparing themselves. The Shrine is a whole park with waterfalls, bas-reliefs cut into the sandstone cliffs, huge buildings with enormous statues, gardens and pagodas. It's so at odds with the Communist manifesto; it expresses a belief, a state of mind and imagination that is totally contradictory to Marxist thought. And here it sits, a monument to a baroque and humane past.

The contours of the Chinese imagination certainly are different from ours. Even such a small thing as staircases in the gardens: they're steeper, narrower, more angular, more shaded, covered with foliage, more disciplined, more accepting of nature.

The staircases do not intrude; they allow you to appreciate, with serenity, what is there.

Sunday, October 25, 1981, 5 p.m., Hangzhou Hotel:

Right after breakfast, I walked to the top of the Pagoda of the Six Harmonies—226 steps—a great structure built in the 12th century, and then ambled through a park: I was struck by the fact that parks do not change very much from country to country. Kids were playing, adults were strolling, tourists were taking pictures. Actually, a lot more Chinese have cameras than I thought would have them; they seem to be a new commodity.

Then we got into a boat and toured West Lake. It really is fabulous: islands, pools of gold fish on the islands, pagodas and pergolas—and all covered with the bright red Indian Paintbrush flowers. Actually, the vegetation here is very much like that in Santa Clara—they even have some of the same fir trees we do.

Liturgy by Bishop Borders, lunch, then a change into suit and tie to meet the Deputy Governor of this Zheigang Province. The Governor is in the hospital in Beijing. The conversation was interesting—long, formal, many compliments from both sides. It takes time because of the need for an interpreter. After the Deputy General left, we received the group from Zheigang University—including the Vice President, Mr. Jiang Ximing. A long session in which we all introduced ourselves individually and explained something about our schools. After we finished, they talked about the schools in this Province. They would like our students to come for an exchange program—but they realize the language problem; and credits and accreditation would be an additional problem. A good exchange program will take some careful planning.

9:30 p.m.:

Just returned from a twelve-course banquet, hosted by the officials of the Education Department of the two universities in town. I am really a coward when it comes to new food experiences, but I had to sit next to one of our hosts, so I had to squelch the cowardice and dig in. Strange food, all right—the strangest I have ever eaten. I wanted to stop, and he kept putting more on my plate—that is apparently the custom and indicates politeness on his part. And then every ten minutes or so there's a toast—and you're supposed to chug it down. I sipped it down. The drink is a colorless, syrupy liquid called moutai, tasting like a mixture of turpentine and urine.

Customs are so different. What we think of as the height of vulgarity is considered politeness for them: for example, they spit out their bones or gristle onto the tablecloth next to their plate. They, on the contrary, think that cutting food at the table, the way we do, is vulgar; they do all their meat and vegetable cutting in the kitchen. And, of course, the chopsticks are therefore more efficient.

I'm not sure I'm going to be able to handle another banquet.

Monday, October 26, 1981, 1 p.m., Hangzhou Hotel:

We visited Zheigang University this morning, and started with a conversation with Vice President Wang and the Deans. They really want to improve their technology: this particular university is geared toward engineering and the sciences, but was once the only university in the city. After the "liberation" of 1949, it was split into four universities. They do have some humanities courses, but generally such courses are not compulsory. Obviously, the emphasis is on technology. One compulsory subject, however, is English. The Vice President explained that at one time everybody studied Russian; now everyone studies English. It will take years, however, before the general knowledge of English allows for fruitful interchange on a large scale.

Besides English, every student must study philosophy—but only Marxism-Leninism. It's clear they do not study anything like history of philosophy, though they did say they touch on Hegel.

Since it is a technological university, they have four factories which are used for training of students and for research and production. The production end of it is interesting: for example, they make silicon chips and sell them like any corporation would—except they can only retain about forty percent of the profits; the rest goes to the government.

During the Cultural Revolution the universities were shut down, but the factories were kept open, and even the Vice President wound up working in them: he swept the floor as a janitor. Perhaps they can't be totally honest, but they were fairly straightforward about the strengths and weaknesses of their university, and even the strengths and weaknesses of the Cultural Revolution. The people who started that Revolution, we were told, did so because they thought that labor was important, that universities were ivory towers. And so, as university people, they deplore the Cultural Revolution but can say little; the Vice President, at one point, told us, "You don't want to hear the horrible things." Yet they do say it had an advantage: it emphasized the practical side of life rather than the merely intellectual. So even now, their emphasis in research is on how it benefits the country. They don't have our scientific approach about knowledge being an end in itself, that formal research, to be successful, does not have to have a practical application. And so they are interested only in those fields that will benefit the people.

Who is to say who is right? Our approach created the atom bomb. Their approach is producing better farming methods. Obviously, they can get into nuclear research or weapons research as heavily as we can, but the point is that they have an end in view for their research, whereas we often divorce research from application.

Zheigang University is a "key" university: one of the best, it receives priority financing from Beijing. There are three types of universities: key, middle, and low. Besides financing, the key university gets first choice in its students. The students who are not picked by the key universities are then picked by the other two. And students, upon application, can specify a major, but then they are picked according to the national plan: for example, ten percent of all students in any given year must go into electrical engineering. So if a student didn't get chosen, it's probably because—besides the question of grades—he or she did not fit into the national plan.

We were surprised to learn, too, that only about one percent of the population goes to the universities; the competition is incredible. The few universities they have just cannot handle the numbers of those who would ordinarily qualify, and the government does not have the money to make higher education more accessible.

The protocol and arrangement at our meetings is worth noting: there are always couches and chairs arranged in a rectangle or circle, with tables in front of each, and a cup of tea on the table for each person sitting behind the table. At the beginning of the session, a girl goes from table to table pouring hot water. The pouring is repeated halfway through the session. The seating is done, for the most part, according to status. The Chinese host sits in the middle of one of the couches, with the two Archbishops on either side. An interpreter sits next to one of the Archbishops, and then everyone else in our party sits where he or she wants. The Chinese retinue sits behind the couches and chairs.



Street scene, with typical advertising billboards in Shanghai.

10:30 p.m., Shanghai, Bao-Shan Guest House:

We went to Hangzhou University in the afternoon and had a less-than-satisfying discussion with the officials there. They were hesitant, answers came slowly and only half-formed. We discovered later that they had never received such a group before, were quite wary of the fact that we were all priests and nuns. They were not totally sure of our purposes. At any rate, everyone was affable.

We caught the 5:00 train for an enjoyable trip to Shanghai. Nice company, box lunches, camaraderie is building.

A note on the idea of China as a "developing nation": from our perspective, they certainly are a developing nation. They have very little technology, and yet they have so many people to feed and care for. Eighty percent of the people live in the rural area, which means that the majority of the population is still basically uneducated, somewhat primitive. Literacy has risen, but it has a long way to go. There are not enough teachers, schools, money, resources to handle this large population, to modernize them.

On the other hand, of course, China was a flourishing and cultured nation when America was still a wilderness; and they were far ahead of European civilization in their learning and artistic expression and techniques. So their history and culture are far richer than ours, but we find ourselves helping to bring them to our level of modernization. A true irony. Somewhere back in the 19th century, when technology took a leap forward, they slipped back, wrapped themselves in their history and their Confucian isolationism and became stunted. So they have real problems, despite their historical wealth, their tradition, their strong sense of family, their great serenity. They are a rich people, struggling to overcome poverty.

Tuesday, October 27, 1981, 8:45 p.m., Bao-Shan Guest House:

Visited Fudan University this afternoon, and it wasn't very successful. The Vice President greeted us and made a point of the fact that Larry Murphy, our tour leader, did not come. It was also clear he disliked the idea of Alice Gallin speaking for us all: they are not staunch supporters of women's liberation. The meeting was extremely formal, and he left after we had given all our little speeches. Then the functionaries took over.

On the way over to their library, we met a couple of American students who are attending the university on an exchange program. Both are graduate students, one from Massachusetts, the other from New Hampshire. One of them told us he is in the area of Chinese Studies. He was an economics major in college but he said he is not allowed to attend any economics courses, political science or recent history courses, because all of them are taught basically as politics, and they do not want foreigners in class to disrupt or dilute the material. Otherwise, he likes it. He lives with twenty-one other foreigners, mostly American, in a special, heated dormitory because they need to recreate with one another and because they would not be able to handle the unheated Chinese student dormitories. As Winston said at the meeting this afternoon with the university officials, "Americans are spoiled."

Bill McInnes, Jim Finlay, Joe O'Hare and I had a discussion this evening about our official "status" here: we are educators and have been invited as such because the Chinese Ministry of Education does want to take advantage of our expertise, but we are also *Catholic* educators—and that can cause a problem, simply because of the government's past repressive policies against Catholi-

cism. It is a further problem because, as Jesuits, the four of us would like to contact some of our brother Chinese Jesuits; but this will certainly not be encouraged by any official representatives of the government.

While we are here, it seems reasonable to try to discover as much as possible the real conditions of the Church in China—much of the religious news is, obviously, censored—we'd like to inquire, for example, about the former Jesuit Bishop of Shanghai, imprisoned in 1955 and apparently still in custody. Some have said he has died. He had always refused to accept the Patriotic Association—the official Catholic Church in China—as orthodox. Many priests do not support the Patriotic Association and are not allowed to practice their ministry.

Basically, the Patriotic Association, with clear advice and help from the government, approves all ministers, appoints bishops, and handles all religious literature. It has no contact with Rome and considers any "interference" from the Vatican as an infringement of its own authority and independence. An Executive Committee in Beijing acts as a ruling body. Thus there is, inevitably, an "official" Church and an "underground" Church.

The delicate question is: how should Rome treat the official Church? Gently, hoping that some relationship may eventually be established? Or in a more straightforward manner, criticizing when it thinks it must, deploring decisions it regards as harmful

Life has indeed improved if seen in relation to the grinding, subhuman poverty that existed before 1949. But something is missing—freedom.

to the spiritual life of the Chinese Catholics?

Should it compromise now for the sake of some future good? Or should it hold fast to principles?

And if it compromises now, what is its attitude toward the priests and laypeople who stand apart from the Patriotic Association because of their loyalty to the universal Church?

It's a thorny issue. And not only for the Church at large, but for our delegation. Whom do we talk to and whom should we be careful to avoid? Our moves and contacts are obviously monitored.

Friday, October 30, 1981, 10 p.m., Bao-Shan Guest House:

On Wednesday morning, we went by bus into Shanghai to the Historical Museum. I was not enthused about going—there were other things I wanted to see—but I was glad we went because it deepened my realization that China is a far richer country than we immediately judge. There were cooking vessels and wine vessels from the 14th century B.C. that were extraordinary in their beauty, their detail. Great bronze vessels, etched in feather strokes, surrounded by dragons and animal masks, made the Shang Dynasty of those centuries suddenly come to life with a culture and sensitivity that we Americans have never known. And it was at once sad and encouraging to see young art students in the Museum meticulously copying the design on those bronze plates and vessels. Sad because so much of that emphasis on

beauty is lost — officially, art must be pragmatic and propagandistic; encouraging because at least they are recognizing through their mimicry the wealth and artistry of their past.

China has such a rich identity—does it realize this? The Cultural Revolution tried to destroy that identity, and the Chinese are now reacting against that Revolution. As long as they are Communist, however, as long as they adhere strictly to socialist principles, they must logically abandon or foreswear the importance of art in their lives. If they do that, they abandon their past, they cloud their identity with Marxist double-talk.

And yet they are now eating—at least subsisting. Their standard of living certainly has improved. People are poor but honest and hardworking (though there is some criticism that the younger generation, lacking the educational discipline the Cultural Revolution deprived them of, does not share the work ethic of their parents). There is virtually no thievery: we can safely leave our hotel keys at the desk on each floor, with all valuables in the room. It is, in general, a safe country. The other night, there was a great commotion outside our bus as we were boarding it after dinner and we were told a group of people had caught a pick-pocket. They were dealing their own justice. Life has, indeed, improved if seen in relation to the grinding, subhuman poverty that existed before 1949.

But something, of course, is missing: freedom. They must abide by Party principles or be reported; they cannot travel anywhere without a permit; they must request permission for such travel from their work unit, and their work unit gives final approval for marriages. They cannot have more than one child per family.

I suppose absolute control is necessary if you want to abolish poverty and injustice. But the price of that is freedom. If you prefer freedom, you must opt for free enterprise, private initiative and individualism; but often the price of that is injustice. And I suppose the reason for all of that is original sin. There is a streak of selfishness in all of us, and if left to ourselves, some exploitation will inevitably result.

Which is it: Injustice or loss of freedom? Not always an easy choice. We in the West would opt for freedom—and then try to diminish the effects of poverty, to encourage social responsibility. It's more complex than socialism, but it does respect conscience and seems to be, therefore, more human.

After lunch on Wednesday at the Jing Jiang Hotel, we all went over to Zicawei Cathedral, the old Jesuit Cathedral that had a high school and seminary in the same few blocks. Bishop Zhang Jiashu received us. He is the Patriotic Association Bishop who has refused any connection with the Vatican, and who was critical of the Vatican's "confirmation" of Bishop Tang of Canton.

It was an odd meeting: very formal, with the usual couches and cups of tea. Miss Chou, the representative from Fudan University — which was our official host—interpreted for us, and her compatriot, over in the corner of the room, took down every question and every answer. Bishop Zhang is seventy-nine years old, but quick, alert and vital. As the hour went on—and after his formal speech—the questions got a little touchy. Questions about the Patriotic Association; about the difference between love of country and love of government (he said, "If the government is working for the good of the people, as our government is, they are the same"—clever answer); about how the new seminary will be funded ("Partly from the government, partly from donations of the people"; if funded at all by the government, of course, its studies will be at least partially controlled by the government). We were cut off after an hour by his assistant.

He adheres to the Party line—either because he believes it or because someone is taking down his every word. Probably a bit of both. He said, "The job of the Church is to pave the road to socialism." The wedding of Church and State! And if the function of the Church is nothing more than to prepare the people for socialism, then it is nothing more than a YMCA.

How can they continue as a Catholic Church if they are cut



Chinese junk on the Huangpo River in Shanghai.

off from Rome? If the situation continues as it is, the Church in China will become an independent, heterodox religion and ritual—much as it did in 16th century England under Henry VIII—stuck back in the pre-Vatican II period with no sense of an international faith and structure.

Yet, on the positive side, the Church is operating visibly; the sacraments are available to the people in a way they have not been since the early 50s; the parishoners can walk into the churches on Sunday and see an altar instead of an alcove used for warehousing and storage; the stained-glass windows are being repaired. An uncomfortable note, however: the Cathedral is surrounded by locked gates, with armed sentries.

Dinner at the Park Hotel, then a music and dance show—interesting, but a bit long. It was held in an enormous hall—reminded me of an indoor Hollywood Bowl—and was packed to the steel rafters. An incredibly beautiful Chinese woman acted as M.C. and she was unique in one respect: she wore a dress. Nowhere in China have I seen a woman wearing a dress. Even when the odd woman here and there does not wear the regulation Mao jacket and pants (blue or green), she's always wearing slacks. (When our nuns walk around in skirts, the Chinese men manifest an obvious interest.)

On Thursday morning, we again took the bus into Shanghai and we arrived at the docks about 8:15, then boarded a huge boat for a trip up the Huangpo River, a tributary of the Yangtze. We were escorted to the top floor of the boat where we were given a room with fourteen easy chairs, tables, some peanuts and candy and fruit and tea for our convenience. These things always surprise me: I expect that in a socialist country there are no class distinctions, but that is certainly untrue here.

An unpleasant part of the trip was the smog, the ever-present pollution. At a couple of points along the river, we had to leave the deck because the smoke and smell were so bad. All up and down the river, huge industrial plants spew smoke into the air and belch their waste into the river. My overarching impressions of Shanghai are of pollution and people—the sheer masses of people that have to live in this city. No wonder it is polluted.

Worth noting, too, that seventy-five percent of the music they played over the intercom system on the boat was American. Apparently, they prefer American music to any other kind—

even their own. This is where the identity problem comes in again, and I wonder if the Chinese people, while theoretically reacting against foreign influence, may gradually become Westernized simply because they prefer it. Their government may have nothing to say about it. I'm not saying that's good. But I am saying it seems inevitable.

It's strange that America—which does have a history and tradition but has nothing on the scale of the cultural history and tradition of China—should represent the encroaching influence. It seems unfair that an upstart should be the means whereby a civilization is changed. And yet modernization must come for China; otherwise its economy will crumble, the main bulk of its population will remain forever primitive, and it will never be able to compete with the other nations of the world. And China needs that authority for its identity; it also needs that authority so that other people and other nations might recognize its identity.

After the boat trip, several of us had a talk during lunch with one of our guides—a government official—about the Jesuits in Shanghai who had been in prison for so long but who had been recently released. He understandably played down the inhumane conditions of their imprisonment and was quick—as they all are when faced with some of the excesses of the previous fifteen years or so—to blame the "Gang of Four" and the Cultural Revolution for any deviations from what we would consider a standard of human rights.

He said that the Bishop of Shanghai, who is alive and still in confinement, was convicted in 1955 of high treason. (From conversations in other places, of course, we know that "high treason" in this case meant that he had objected to the seizure of Church property by the government.) He said that many other priests and religious were imprisoned soon after when they refused to sign a paper condemning the Bishop for high treason. He related all this with a straight face as if it were completely reasonable—but did add that the present government, in its attempt to encourage religious freedom, had released the prisoners so they could practice their ministry. We know, however, that for many of them such ministry is severely curtailed, and they are denied identity cards—which means they cannot travel or buy food.

He was surprisingly open, although careful, and we threw a lot of questions at him: What is the relationship between the Patriotic Association and the central government? "The government leaves them free to operate." Why does the government forbid contact with Rome?" "It is the Chinese way to reject paternalism." Isn't it true that there is an "underground" Church? "Such associations are forbidden."

The answers are predictable, of course, and they tend to reiterate the Party line without speaking to the issue at hand. This type of response, so frequently given, has the effect of substantiating our suspicions.

"Control" must surely be the key word. Despite the recent openness and the smiling rhetoric, there is no less control over people's actions and words. Perhaps the leash has been allowed to stretch a bit, but it will be all the more cruel when that leash is pulled in.

Saturday, October 31, 1981, 1:30 p.m., Nanjing Hotel:

Yesterday, we rose at 4:00 a.m., drove into Shanghai and boarded the train at 6:30 for a five-hour trip to Nanjing.

The difference between Nanjing and Shanghai was immediate and striking: here there are cleaner streets and cleaner people (and not so many of them: only two and a half million); there are lanes for bikes, so that driving is not the manic and frightening experience it is in Shanghai. Though the city is definitely polluted with all the industry that has been developing here, it is

clearly not as bad as Shanghai. And gardens, flowers and trees are more in evidence. This city is supposed to be, historically, the cultural and religious center of China.

After lunch, we went to the main park—beautiful. A zoo there has giant pandas—scruffy, muddy creatures—and other animals; but I did not come halfway across the world to look at monkeys or bears, so I went walking to take some pictures of the park and lake. I met a young Chinese student who asked if I spoke English. I said yes, and we began to talk. His English was very halting, but he did quite well. He said they have to read and write English, but they get very little, almost no practice speaking it. He seemed grateful for the opportunity. A friendly, open and hospitable person. Difficult at times to consider that such people have been our enemies. As someone has said, it is unfortunate but true that although people have friends, nations have interests. Interests can often destroy friendships.

7:15 p.m.:

This morning, we went over to Nanjing University and it was, in general, pleasant. The hosts were kind and helpful, we gave our little spiel, and then toured the campus: impressive. The Cultural Revolution really did do a lot of harm, and that's evident in the way the buildings have never been kept up, no construction has been done, there are no master's degrees or doctoral degrees on the faculties to speak of. Only now are they beginning to train young people toward academic degrees. Nanjing University is ideally located and it offers the best possibility so far, I think, for an exchange of professors or scholars. The city is more acceptable to a Westerner, the pace is gentle. I'm supposed to speak to the Vice President, Dr. Xu Fu-Ji, on Monday morning about possibilities with our Computer Science Program.

Back here for lunch, then off to Purple Mountain to see an ancient Buddhist Monastery (dignified, quite impressive, the same feeling, almost, that I got from Durham Cathedral in England), and the mausoleum of Sun Yat-sen. He was the revolutionary leader who took over in late 1911 and is revered by all Chinese of whatever persuasion. But for a revolutionary leader, a man who helped to overthrow the Manchu Dynasty in order to form a republic, he had all their pretensions — at least his followers who built his tomb did. There are 326 steps to the top of the tomb—an

enormous plaza, gates, sidewalks, three different buildings climbing the side of the mountain until you finally come to the top: a great building with a statue of him in the forecourt, and behind that, the actual tomb—a circular room where you walk around on a marble parapet and look down onto a brightly lit marble coffin with his effigy carved on top. Very much like Napoleon's in the Hotel des Invalides. And the present government encourages the adulation. The classless society!

Interesting thing today: Joanna Chan, a Maryknoll nun who is with us, said that most of the revolutionary slogans and all of Mao's sayings have been erased from posters and walls. She said there is a general diminishing of his authority—despite those enormous statues that appear here and there in front of universities and factories. All parades have been stopped: there is a great reviewing stand in the square in downtown Nanjing, but our guide says it is not used anymore. Instead, for a celebration they now have garden parties.

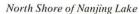
I have a feeling that, over the long haul, the Chinese will simply adapt Marxism to their own ways, that they will never be drastically changed. For Marxism is, after all, a Western philosophy. Confucious has too strong a hold on this. I hope for that, because radical Westernization would destroy them.

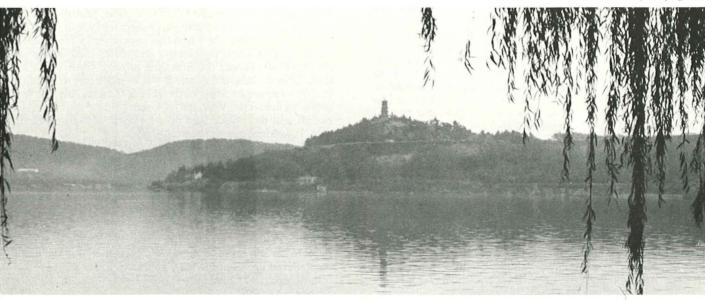
Sunday, November 1, 1981, 8:45 a.m., Nanjing Hotel:

Mass in a local church is scheduled this morning, but I begged off because of a miserable cold. It's fortunate that today is a free day — maybe I can beat it.

I was thinking about the effect of outside influence on China. I've said that they seem to like American music and are opening up to Westernization; I've also said they will probably outlive Marxism because they will not bend the knee, utimately, to any external power.

I'm not sure how those two reflections can be reconciled. But I remember that a Chinese professor at one of the universities said the other day the Chinese are basically selfish people, that they put family before anything else, that they don't have a tradition of service or loyalty to a country as we have had in our past, and certainly not to a government. That's not absolute, of course, but it does seem to be true that the giving of oneself for the country is not at the top of their list of priorities except, perhaps,





for the very few, highly educated young people who are carefully trained to think of the "Party" and the country first. The family, however, still seems to be the main social, economic, or authoritarian unit they adhere to—certainly before all else.

Marxism, of course, has had to adjust to that after some early failures. The government found they could not eradicate the family. It has had to adjust to some degree to the disparate character of the country. Unification has always been a problem precisely because loyalty was restricted, in the final analysis, to very localized regions. There is obviously more unification now than there has ever been, but a great deal of freedom has been lost because of it. The Chinese seem to accept that - after all, poverty has been reduced, everyone is employed - perhaps because they are a resilient people: governments come and go, and they will profit from each and suffer from each. They accept the state of affairs with patience and serenity. But serenity, while valuable at times, can be dangerous because it can allow evil and injustice as part of one's life without disruption of that life. They do not fight back. They allow reality to unfold (or "unravel" as one critic has said).

So it is hard to tell how they will be changed in the future. One is tempted to say that they will never change radically, that their resilience is coupled with the stubbornness that will last far longer

They are not ready as a nation to respond to Communism or capitalism. They could be forced, but they could not be controlled by either one.

than any Western philosophy. If Communism lasts, it will do so only under their terms. Hearts will, I think, remain freer in China than in Russia.

They can, of course, be corrupted, as any other people can. And I think the danger of Westernization is precisely that: they may accept too easily Western capitalism, the spread of McDonald's hamburger, the flashy and easy buck. And the younger generation is tempted to look our way. I don't think they can handle our civilization. Maybe we can't either, but on the whole we do deal with it with some sense of its dangers and a realization of its values.

They are not ready to respond, as a nation, to either Communism or capitalism. They can certainly be forced into one or the other, but deep down they cannot be controlled by either one.

Monday, November 2, 1981, 7:30 a.m., Nanjing Hotel:

Mass yesterday at a local church; a bit weird: all Latin, all quiet, priest facing the wall, only sixteen people in the church, and all of them elderly. It's a fact that young people are discouraged from practicing their religion. Joe O'Hare asked the Bishop why they keep the Latin, and he answered that the Chinese always do things in the traditional way! What an irony: the Western Mass with its Latin was an imposition on their culture back in the 16th century during the Chinese rites controversy; now it's tradition, and they won't let it go.

Tuesday, November 3, 1981, 9 p.m., Beijing, Yanjing Hotel:

Uncomfortable flight to Beijing: very crowded, very hot, but it only took ninety minutes.

Interesting conversation on the plane: there are different currents in our group. Some think we should be more aggressive in our questions in order to get behind the pleasant facades, more blunt in our attempts to find out how the ordinary Christians practice their faith; some think we should move carefully and smoothly because we are here to build bridges, not start arguments. And I think we all recognize the danger of both those attitudes: we want to avoid creating a problem for those who must inch their way toward a modicum of religious freedom, and at the same time we don't want to be regarded as canonizing the present inadequacies. In the concrete, when speaking with government or Church officials, it's sometimes hard to strike a balance.

This morning, we piled into the bus from the Yanjing Hotel gorgeous place, relative to what we've been used to—and went to the former Palace of the Emperors, the "Forbidden City." I was totally overwhelmed. We have nothing to compare it with. No wonder there was a revolution! In the whole property, with all the palaces, buildings and turrets, there are over 9,000 rooms. Absolute splendor: gold and jewels covering everything like plaster of paris. Detailed workmanship that exceeds the limits, it seems, of the imagination. The grandiose scale, the minutest detail—all in perfect harmony. It's easy to see how the people looked on the Emperor as a god: when you walk into his throne room, you feel like kneeling. And you also begin to realize why it was so difficult to deal with him back in the 19th century. He could not believe he was like other mortals, and he expected the "kow-tow" from people who were equal in rank. He refused to deal; England and France just came in and took what they wanted.

Wednesday, November 4, 1981, 9:15 p.m., Yanjing Hotel:

Off early in the morning to the Great Wall. About two hours driving through some congested country roads (it's cabbage harvest time and the roads are crowded with wagons filled with cabbages and drawn by slow-moving oxen—who seem oblivious to the bus's horn), and then up into the mountains—though it really isn't that high up: we reached the Wall at one of passes. It is, naturally, spectacular. A fairly small portion has been restored, but it still takes about two hours to walk it, and we could have continued into the unfinished part except for lack of time.

It was enjoyable. The vision that conceived and executed that marvel was obviously imaginative and daring (and willing to use about 300,000 people the first time around—they had a lot of slave labor in those days), and it was exciting just to stand there and try to re-create some of the scenes from its past: the horses galloping across the Wall, the lookouts spotting the invaders, the swords and the blood. And now a bunch of tourists roam the area. Invasions come in different shapes.

I would like to have been there alone, away from the tourist buses, the souvenir shops, the tight scheduling. To walk the stones and listen to the past, to marvel again at the incredible artistry of a "backward" people. The broad granite soars right up into the sky, following the crest of each hill, and from afar it looks like a grey ribbon that has been strung across the mountain by some god.

And I think it's only by being there alone, maybe as the sun starts to set and makes the shadows uncertain, that the past can be conjured up. That's when China's voice was strong—but no one listened, and China herself was not interested in speaking to anyone but herself.

Then we went on to the Ming Tombs—more impressive edifices: great marble gates, enormous statues, long approaches lined with trees, great wooded gardens. Near the tomb we entered, excavated in 1956 for the first time, stands a large stele situated on a stone turtle (the turtle is a symbol of longevity). It's a beautiful piece of art, incredibly old; but it stands now in the middle of the parking lot, there are women selling tangerines and pears in front of it, and fruit peelings lie all around it. Surely this must be a sacred place. True, the European Cathedrals have their giftshops, but I would have expected more from a people with such appreciation of their past.

The tomb itself is not as impressive—though it is about five stories deep and runs a good way under the mountain—as I thought it would be: large empty rooms. Though maybe their vast emptiness is itself impressive.

A nice dinner out at a Western restaurant this evening, made especially enjoyable by our waiter, a young Chinese man who is studying English on his own—getting it from radio and television—and who does very well. He was totally gregarious, jumping around, laughing, trying to get words straight, making the right grammatical construction—and serving all the wrong soups.

Thursday, November 5, 1981, 2:45 p.m., Yanjing Hotel:

We went to Beijing University today and had a pleasant visit with the Vice President for Academic Affairs; he explained their university and we explained, in general, about ours. Then we asked the usual questions. I've become interested in the possibility of sending our students and faculty on summer school trips and inquired about this; he said he would very much like to see it, but that they have no room in the dormitories. Ten thousand students live on campus and their rooms are reserved for them all year round. Though he said they are in the process of building more accommodations, especially for foreign scholars and faculty. They are looking for all the help they can get — especially in sciences and technology, the English language, business management and law.

Friday, November 6, 1981, 1:45 p.m., Yanjing Hotel:

Yesterday afternoon, we went to the Great Hall of the People because we had been invited for an audience by the Deputy Vice Premier of China, Yang Jingren, a man who is not only high up in China's authority structure, but is a member of the Politburo. We were not sure why he wanted to see us, except that our delegation does have an unusual character and it is becoming apparent to us that the officials in China place much more importance on our visit than we ourselves have placed on it. The Vice Minister of Education, Ms. Yang Yun-Yu, was also there. As we arrived, we all shook hands with both of them and were then ushered into a room set up for photographs. After pictures, we were led into an enormous room that was arranged in the usual way: couches, chairs, tables and tea. Except that this was much more luxurious than any other room we had previously met in: huge Persian carpet, great wall hangings, a ceiling about thirty feet high, chandeliers, over-stuffed furniture. Simple, actually, but elegant.

The Vice Premier began, after introductions, to give what seemed a prepared speech—through an interpreter—and surprisingly enough he spoke to the issue of Catholicism rather than education. We have been careful to underline our role as educators and to play down our roles as Catholics or Archbishops or journalists. But it was clear in his mind that he was speaking to a Catholic delegation. He talked about the Catholic Church in

China, how people have the constitutional right to believe if they want to and not to believe if they wish not to. He emphasized, of course, that the country's welfare comes first, and that if any person, on the basis of religious persuasion, hinders that welfare, that person will be punished. A bit ominous, given the recent history of the relations between the Vatican and the Chinese government. But he was not in any way offensive or threatening, and the conversation developed quite amicably and enjoyably.

Somehow, we got onto the topic of women in education; this had been discussed at every meeting with university officials, and everyone has always seemed quite open about the desire to encourage more women into education. The Deputy was astonished to hear that one- half of our Catholic higher education presidents are women. They did not give any reasons why women have not been as numerous in the professions and academic circles as men, though obviously the cultural, social character of China—the feudal aspect of its history—has had its effect. We asked one of our guides the same question in Nanjing, and he said women do not test as well as men. When we asked why, he said that around fifteen or sixteen the girls start paying more attention to their dress than to their studies. That is obviously superficial and certainly raised the hackles of the nuns in our group, but it says something about the values and expectations that are handed down from generation to generation.

After the session, and after the television interview, we took several individual pictures with one another's cameras with each one of us standing with the Vice Premier. He seemed to handle this little show of tourism with good humor.

Women are not as numerous in professional and academic circles as men... They say "women do not test as well as men."

This morning we drove over to the Beijing Catholic Cathedral to see Bishop Michael Fu Tieshan. We had been told that the Bishop was ill and wouldn't be able to see us; whether it was a diplomatic illness or not, we're not sure. But after we were received by the Vice Premier, we got word that Bishop Fu would see us.

The talk was interesting; when we started to ask questions, he would ask us what we had seen in Beijing. Always changing the subject. Archbishop Gerety made a point of saying he hoped the Church in China would soon be able to profit and grow from its relationship with the Catholic Church throughout the world; and he said Vatican II would have been richer if the Chinese Church had been represented, that he hoped a union between Chinese Catholics and Rome would occur soon so that the whole world could share the blessing of the Chinese Church. But Bishop Fu spoke of "Two Churches." All very polite — but miles apart. And while we were talking, there was a tape recorder running in the background.

Saturday, November 7, 1981, 7:30 a.m., Nanjing Hotel:

Just returned from breakfast where we talked about the visit to the Vice Premier at the Great Hall of the People. We were not

invited there simply out of politeness or out of an exaggerated sense of hospitality. He wanted to make a statement. Here we are, a delegation of Catholic notables, albeit mainly educators, wandering through China visiting bishops, universities, and trade unions. We are obviously monitored; we have been asking a lot of questions; we have been, admittedly, most gracious. We haven't really stepped on anyone's toes, except maybe those of the Bishop of Shanghai. The government undoubtedly felt that they should make a comment on where they stand with regard to religion and Catholicism; and perhaps they want to begin a relationship that might eventually lead to better contact with the Vatican—though about that I am skeptical. The importance of that meeting, however, cannot be underestimated.

2:15 p.m.:

We left early to go to Mao's Mausoleum. Upon arrival in Tiananmen Square in the middle of Beijing, we were led in front of the thousands of people waiting to get in, formed a line four abreast, then marched in formation across the plaza, up the stairs of an enormous building and in the front door. The first room is a hall that holds Mao's statue, in white marble; he is sitting in a chair, much like Lincoln in Washington's Lincoln Memorial. Behind that room, we moved quickly past the actual corpse, enclosed in glass. Apparently the casket is on an elevator, and it's lowered into the bowels of the building for refrigeration when people are not viewing it (and it's on view only three mornings a week). The corpse doesn't seem to be in such good shape, which is understandable—as a matter of fact, it's a bit scruffy, I would certainly hope for better immortality than that.

After lunch, a group of us went out to the tomb of Mateo Ricci - the Jesuit who brought Christianity to China in the 16th century and who himself became a mandarin. It's not far from our hotel, on the grounds - ironically enough - of the Party School (a kind of Continuing Education place where managers and ministers in the Community Party come for periodic indoctrination). Behind the buildings, in what is really a work yard, stand three stone steles, in front of three tombs, all surrounded by a stone wall. Several trees grow inside the walls. On each stele is carved in Latin and Chinese and Tibetan a brief description of each person buried there: Ricci. Verbiest, and Schal, Ricci's is the biggest and stands in the middle. During the Cultural Revolution, the steles were broken in half or torn down, so it is easy to see where they have been cemented back together again. It's the 400th anniversary of Ricci's arrival in China and the recent government has preserved this place — though it's almost impossible to find. He is apparently held in some honor because he became one of them; he did not try to change their ways.

Extremely moving. Jim Finlay led us all in prayer: we said the "Our Father," then prayed that the spirit of our brother Jesuit, Mateo Ricci, may help to bring grace on the people of today's China just as he was the instrument of grace for yesterday's China.

4:00 p.m.:

Just went down to get a shampoo and head and shoulder massage — terrific. The nuns have been raving about it for a week, so Archbishop Borders, Jim Finlay and I decided to try it. I've never had a massage before, and for a minute there I thought



Statue of Mao Tse-tung at Nanjing Bridge on the Yangtze River.

she was going to pull my arms and fingers out of their sockets—much as they wrench apart, with deft fingers and sharp knives, the wings and legs of their "mud chicken" (one of their better gastronomical delights). But such stretching does get the blood circulating. I feel totally relaxed and dismembered now and ready for a liturgy and happy hour.

9:00 p.m.:

I did the liturgy this afternoon, and as the Scriptures were being read, the one from Thessalonians struck me: the nature of death, the Christian response to death, the hope of resurrection. It struck me because today we visited two tombs: Mao's and Mateo Ricci's. At Mao's there were thousands of people, a grandiose building, a mechanized attempt to keep the corpse incorruptible; the building is set in the middle of a great city, surrounded by vast expanses of concrete and bordered by the Old North Peking Gate, the Southern Gate of Heavenly Peace which has been turned into a reviewing stand, and two imposing government edifices. It cannot be ignored.

Ricci's tomb is quiet, hidden, forgotten. Unobtrusive. No one visits. In Chinese and in Latin are written brief words of a life's work, but eloquent words of faith.

He could not speak to him but the priest made the Sign of the Cross and struck his chest three times. Tang understood.

One must wonder, indeed, about the meaning of immortality; and one must wonder which man, Mao or Ricci, will have the permanent impact upon China.

Sunday, November 8, 1981, 10 p.m., Jesuit Community, Kowloon:

Left Beijing this morning at 9:30 and arrived in Hong Kong at 12:30 to overcast skies and sprinkling rain. But the approach to the airport is spectacular! The plane seems to fly over and through several islands, then lands on a strip with Kowloon on one side and Hong Kong on the other. Huge high rises reaching right up out of the mountains.

A Jesuit from our House in Kowloon met the four of us Jesuits and we all said good-bye to the other members of this group. I'll miss them—a great bunch of adventurers, good sports, and good friends.

We went to the Jesuit High School here in Kowloon tonight for cocktails and dinner: the Jesuits came from the whole area to say hello and to be at dinner with us. Living in the high school community is a Jesuit who recently gained sudden fame because he was denied access to his diocese: Bishop Tang, who has been in prison for twenty-two years, six of them in solitary. He was released from prison, chosen by the people as the Bishop of Canton and confirmed by the Patriotic Association - an unusual choice because of his years in prison and therefore presumably his opposition to the government – and subsequently approved by the government itself. He went to Rome, was named Archbishop by John Paul, and thus the furor started. The Church in China wants no interference from the Pope, of course, and they could not accept him back into the diocese without recognizing that John Paul has some authority. So they rejected him, and he lives now in the Jesuit High School Community here in Kowloon.

He is an extraordinary man to meet: very small, soft-spoken, a smiling and gentle face—a wiry sparrow. And he has an obviously deep faith; it informs his words, it shines in his eyes.

He is, naturally, totally sympathetic to the loyal, or underground, Church in China and sees no future for a Catholic Chinese Church if separated from Rome. In time, he says, it will be something else. And he wonders who will speak for those who want to be loyal to Rome, those who lived the faith in darkness, behind bars.

An image comes to mind: Bishop Tang said that after a few years in solitary, he looked up one day through the small bars in the doors. There he saw a face he recognized: a priest who had not been imprisoned and was visiting. He could not speak to him but the priest gestured by making the Sign of the Cross and striking his chest three times. Tang understood and made the

Sign of the Cross in absolution. Then Tang pointed to himself and nodded. The priest absolved him. "It was the only time in twenty-two years," he said, "I received absolution for my sins."

Tuesday, November 10, 1981, 9:30 p.m., Hsinchu, Taiwan:

I got on Cathay Airlines this morning and flew to Taipei. And customs was just exactly what they said it would be: the inspector was very nice, but he looked at everything, opened every box. He saw a Mao jacket I bought for a friend and pointed out that it had a label on it that said "Made in China." I played dumb, and said what should I do? He probably thought I was a naive American (not far wrong), so he took his knife and told me to cut out the label. I had a hard time doing it because the knife was so blunt, but it was a nice gesture. A couple of boxes still had the China label on them, he pointed it out, and I took them off. Then he opened — and I cringed—the inner-sleeve of my camera bag. I had put Chinese stamps for Charley Phipps and Jose Debasa in there. He looked disappointed, then bewildered. He didn't want to do it, but said I could not bring them into Taiwan and would have to bond them. So I took them over to the bonding desk and paid 100 Taiwan dollars so they could keep them till I picked them up on Friday. My luggage has never been so throroughly searched.

Dinner this evening at the Jesuit parish with Dave Reed, Ed Thylstrup, Robbie Ronald—all of them Jesuits I had been in studies with and who are now working in Taiwan. Really good to renew acquaintances.

Friday, November 13, 1981, 7:00 a.m., Hsinchu:

A great couple of days! Early on Wednesday, Dave and I had a light breakfast of tea and rolls. Then I got on the back of his motorcycle and we went over to the high school where he teaches English. I sat in on his three classes; then we took off for Sun Moon Lake down in Central Taiwan—about a three-hour drive. There's a relatively new freeway so it was not a bad drive. Actually, we got there about sundown and a beautiful orange full moon was rising over the mountains surrounding the lake. A tall pagoda on top of the mountains was silhouetted against it. Naturally, I grabbed the camera for the Chinese picture of the year. And the battery was dead! All that picture-taking on the Mainland had worn it out. Arrived at the hotel, got the room, asked if there was a film store in town, found it, and got a new battery. But too late. So the orange moon was not going to be immortalized. At least in my photographs.

We spent most of the next day wandering around the lake, walking or driving. Saw a fantastic Confucian Shrine on the side of a mountain, walked through the poinsettia groves near the hotel, sat for a put-together lunch on the shore of the lake.

We discussed the paradox that is China. It is, after all, the "Middle Kingdom," the first kingdom of the world, and their pride in this created fact, created sensibility, makes it difficult for them to recognize any value in other countries, in other races

At the same time, we were invited to visit because they want to improve their technology, their expertise, their sources of information. They want to establish contacts with the West. There is no other reason we were allowed to travel as we did, no other reason we were treated so well. They stated again and again that they did need help and wanted to begin contacts with our schools.

It's a schizophrenic attitude, however, because they also insist on self-reliance: they repeated to us often that they don't want our money or our charity. They only want education from us. But such a need and such an openness—as hesitant as it may or may not be—to our educational institutions necessarily implies an intimate contact that they cringe from. They want foreigners to teach their students in the classroom, but they will not allow the students to speak to the same professors outside the classroom. They want American graduate students on their campuses, but they will not allow any Chinese students to visit them in the dormitories.

They want tourists, but they will take them to pre-arranged sites only.

They want the imperialistic dollar, but they don't want to be contaminated by it.

They want to look at the outside world—its literature and history and economics—but they insist on censoring all of it, of re-writing literature and history and economics.

They want to learn about our religions but as Mr. Ren Jiyu, the Director of the Religion Research Institute, said in his talk to us in Beijing, they regard all religions as ephemeral social phenomena, to be studied for their sociological effect, but not to be taken seriously because the need for religion will soon pass.

They want technology but they know it will have a devastating effect on employment.

They want to be respected in the world, but they know they are far behind other countries—and how their pride must hurt at that fact.

They are caught between their history and their pride and their socialism on the one hand, and their desire for improvement on the other.

They need the outside world but they do not want to be touched by it.

10:30 p.m. - somewhere over the Pacific:

This morning Dave and I drove to Taipei to see the Palace Museum: I wanted to see the jade and gold and ivory workmanship. Hard to describe the beauty. They brought all the treasures from the mainland over in 1949 and the whole mountain behind the Museum has been hollowed out to store them.

Then to the airport.

It was a good ending to the whole trip because it was a personal ending. A time to reflect on China with a friend who has lived the culture for twenty-three years. A time to relax and look at the sun on the water, the red and white poinsettias crawling along the mountainside, the bamboos shading a narrow walk along the water's edge.

China is a mystery, and it's going to take one hell of a long time before the Western mind can fathom it. I'm reminded of a famous ivory sculpture we saw this morning in the Palace Museum: human figures and bells surrounding a large sphere of seventeen balls—all inside one another. And they're all movable. How did the artist do that? Patience, concentration, hard work. Meaning within meaning; a puzzle that opens to beauty. An attention to detail because a tiny rose must be more delicate—and therefore more moving—than a large one. Harmony. How long did it take to carve that sphere? Years, I'm sure. It's as if time means nothing.

They are a rich people who will finally, I hope, resist exploitation from any quarter, Communism or capitalism. They flourished in a high civilization before time began for our Western hemisphere; they will flourish again.

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