

NO DOGS IN CHINA

In 1949 the bamboo curtain clattered down over one-fifth of the people of the world. In one sudden twist of history, a vast community that had been militarily and politically allied with the West was transmuted into the ideological foe of everything the free world stands for. With the surprise intervention by Red China in Korea, a new alignment of world powers was confirmed and the bamboo curtain had been fastened down securely.

If the people of China were inadequately known in the years before the Red Revolution, all free intercourse between East and West was now interrupted completely. Chinese life could be described only by released westerners who had viewed it through prison bars, or it had to be interpreted from the incredibly distorted releases of the communist propaganda bureaus.

Suddenly, in 1956, China offered to open its doors to western reporters wishing to come and see what was really happening in their country. In the spring of 1957, William Kinmond, Staff Reporter for the Toronto Globe and Mail, entered Red China with assurances that he might travel where he wished and report what he liked—or disliked. This is his report on China at this moment in history.

WILLIAM KINMOND, a Canadian journalist, was a staff reporter for the highly respected Toronto Globe and Mail.

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University of Toronto Press

***A REPORT
ON CHINA
TODAY***

***WILLIAM
KINMOND***

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To Chris

who for eighteen years has taken
in her stride all the vagaries of a
husband-newspaperman, including
this trip into Communist China

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Preface

THIS is not a book in the commonly accepted sense of being a literary composition. It is, rather, a report to the free people of the world on the state of a nation which encompasses a quarter of the earth's population. It is, to the best of my ability as a newspaperman, an unbiased and accurate account of how 650 million Chinese are faring under a Communist regime.

Many of the photographs and of the thousands of words that follow are familiar to readers of the Toronto *Globe and Mail*, since it was for that newspaper the expedition to China was made. The decision to reproduce the results of that trip in this form and thus possibly to reach a wider audience was prompted by the enthusiasm with which the original reports were received by my newspaper's readers, and by the persistent urgings of many good friends, and strangers as well, that my efforts were worthy of being bound in book form.

The trip to Red China was not one I sought, but, like any newspaperman, I would have gladly traded ten years of my life for such an assignment. This sacrifice was not demanded of me by Tommy Munns, the Managing Editor of the *Globe and Mail*. He very casually asked me one day how I would like to go to Red China. The reader of these words does not have to be a newspaperman to appreciate the alacrity with which I replied, "Wonderful."

I am keenly aware that this writing effort does not elevate

me to the select strata occupied by those of my colleagues who have realized the dream of all newspapermen—that of writing the great Canadian novel. But there may be for me the satisfying alternative of having given my readers a realistic peep behind the Bamboo Curtain which has so effectively hidden life in mainland China since control of that part of the world was seized by the Communists in 1949.

The kind co-operation of the Toronto *Globe and Mail* in making available the material upon which this book is based is gratefully acknowledged, as is the pertinacity of the newspaper's Editor and Publisher, Oakley Dalgleish, and Mr. Munns. But for their constant prodding of the author, a procrastinator by nature, it is extremely unlikely that the results of the trip to Red China would now be appearing in this form.

W. K.

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Teahouse and pavilion in grounds of Summer Palace
Entrance to Summer Palace
Street peddler on Chungking street
Last of the capitalists
Youthful participant in parade at Changchun
A typical baby carriage
Pedicab operator in Peking
Commercial version of the pedicab
Scene on Pearl River at Canton
Porters pulling a heavily laden cart through Chungking streets
Freight boat on Yangtze, propelled by manpower
Cliffside road in Yangtze valley
A houseboat on the Yangtze River
Famous marble boat in Summer Palace, Peking
Chinese mother and child at Shumchun station
Billboard poster advertisement

between pages 128 and 129

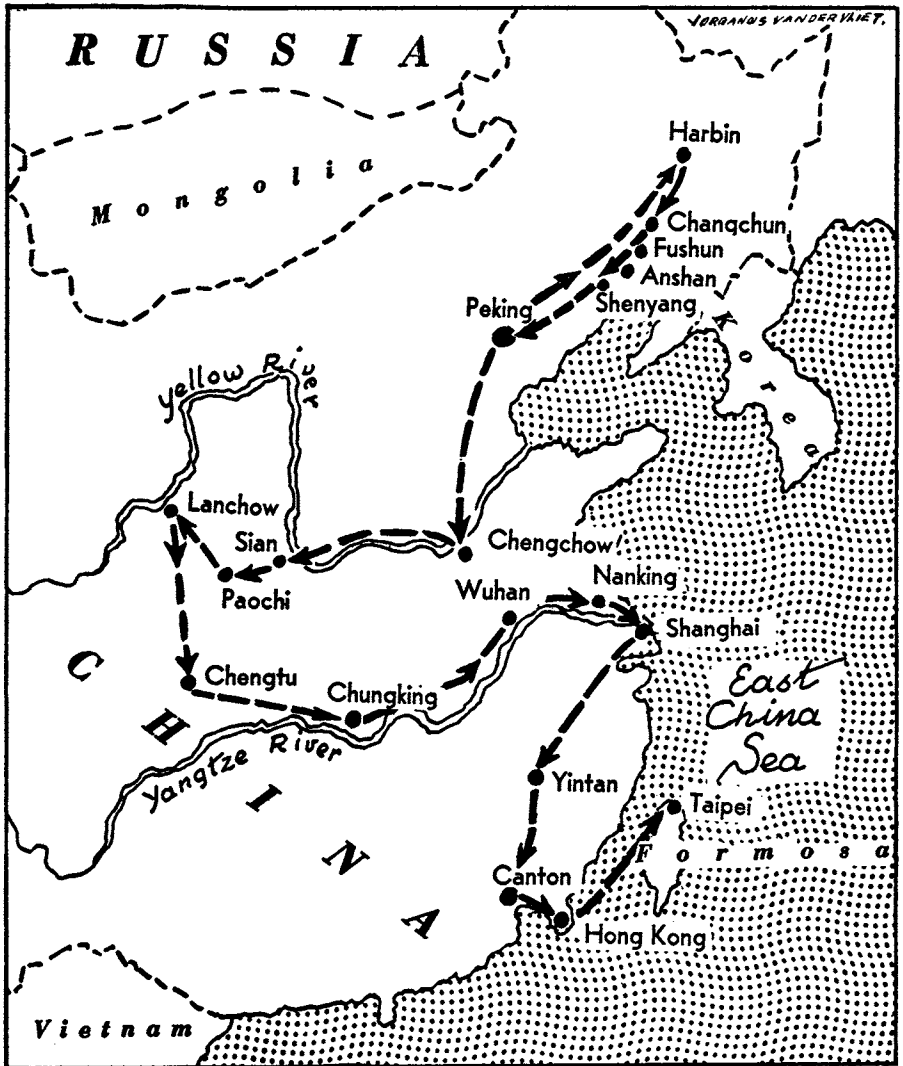
Two aged women and three young children grubbing for coal
Coking ovens behind a hodgepodge of workers' houses at Fushun

New homes for workers in Fushun
Home gardens on outskirts of Anshan
Digging a drain at a machine-tool factory in Anshan
New hotel in Lanchow
Water wheel on co-operative farm near Lanchow
Open-air greenhouse constructed of mud
Pony and plow on co-operative farm
Inflated pigskin rafts used on the Yellow River
Construction work on new oil refinery
Small carts used to carry fill for new bridge
Site of blasting operations in Yellow River for Sanmen Dam
Part of new road constructed from the railway line to the
site of the Sanmen Dam
A worker chips out ancient inscriptions on the rocks using
a hammer and chisel
Archeological dig in the Yellow River valley

MAP showing author's itinerary in China

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MAP SHOWING AUTHOR'S ITINERARY IN CHINA

CROSSING INTO CHINA

SHUMCHUN. Hardly anyone rides into Red China. Some make their entry into this great unknown country from Moscow. This means an eight-day trip by train, and few Westerners or non-Communists can readily acquire the essential papers for making the journey direct from old-Communist Russia to new-Communist China. The transition from the free world to an ancient country that is being transformed by a Chinese version of Marxism is generally made on foot at this railway station, a pleasant one-hour train ride from Kowloon, which is five minutes by ferry from Hong Kong. As the Bamboo Curtain opened just a crack, to permit the entry of about a hundred persons (half a dozen of them non-Chinese, including two whites), it was perhaps only human to sneak a last glance in the direction of Hong Kong. There lay bright lights, gaiety, music, pretty girls, good food, and comfortable hotels—all the things in life we of the Western world have come to view as commonplace. For myself, the enjoyment of the delights of Hong Kong, a truly magnificent and beautiful city, had been brief—exactly forty-three hours.

My summons to appear at the Chinese Legation in London had been abrupt. It came on a Sunday afternoon and the order was that I was to be in London at 4 P.M. the following Thursday. Strangely, all the rush seemed unimportant and unnecessary as I visited that Thursday afternoon with the Chinese first secretary, Tien Chien, over several cups of tea well laced with jasmine. He quoted from a small diary: "You will be in

China by the 25th!" This was followed by some small chat. As I left, Mr. Tien observed: "You are most fortunate to have had your visa granted so soon." Since I had been waiting for six months for the important document, I was tempted to argue the point but grinned and thought to myself, "Surely not even the Chinese are capable of this kind of humor." After all the urgency of getting to London, it had taken three days to obtain the visa. It is a very pretty thing, in three colors, a unique contribution to a Canadian passport.

From London to Hong Kong is about forty-eight hours by the timetable. It actually takes only thirty-nine hours due to changes in time zones. The trip is a boresome telescoping of time, distance, and, what is most important, food. Regardless of the condition of the stomach, B.O.A.C. feeds by the clock. The world's name places are but a blur. Rome, Istanbul, Karachi, Delhi, Calcutta, and Bangkok are still only names on a map, represented by airports that look just like any other airports. Perhaps two can be described as exceptions—Karachi, because it was about 100 above when we were dumped out onto an apron that felt like a blast furnace, and Bangkok, because in the Thailand capital there was the coolness of dawn in the air.

Hong Kong is now merely a kaleidoscope of hazy memories—a humming harbor of world freighters and Chinese sampans; luxurious houses stretching into the sky and Chinese children reaching out their hands for pennies. Two hours after arriving there, I presented myself at the offices of the China Travel Service, to be informed that the train for China left at 10:15 A.M. Saturday, about forty hours away, and that I should present myself to the Chinese representative in Kowloon at 9:45 A.M. I appeared at the appointed hour. It was duly noted that I had five pieces of luggage. I was presented with a railway ticket from Kowloon to Lowu, the last railway stop outside the Bamboo Curtain. For some reason, as yet

unexplained, I was charged an extra \$6 for a radio-phone. From there on I was in the hands of the Chinese Travel Service, as it is known in Hong Kong, or China Intourist, as it is called on this side.

It is necessary to walk over a bridge in the transition from one world to another. The last Westerner I saw as I turned sharply to the right into a narrow channel of barbed wire was a British soldier, who grinned and nodded his head at me. To my left was the train to Hong Kong; on my right a train waiting to transport me into China. It is truly a no man's land, for neither train can meet. A roadblock effectively bars this. The first citizens of Red China I saw were two khaki-clad youthful soldiers guarding the entry to their country with tommy-guns.

I was now in the hands of Fong Jet-min, who managed to wrap his Chinese tongue around my name sufficiently well to make it almost understandable. Mr. Fong assisted me with my luggage and we threaded our way to the frontier shed where returning Chinese tourists (frontier people they are called) were going through a skin-searching customs examination. The examiners were poking into a queer assortment of goods—huge vacuum bottles, umbrellas, Chinese foods and sweets, gaily colored clothing. One old woman clutched a beat-up old portable sewing machine under her arm.

We approached the Shumchun railway station on foot through an avenue of pictures. The first was that of Chairman Mao Tse-tung. Then followed an array of pictures of the new China at work and at play. The first impression of the Shumchun railway station was one of complete order. It was, as a matter of fact, a pleasant change from the brief experience of the confusion of Hong Kong and Kowloon with their multiplicity of signs warning against pickpockets and spitting. Here everything conveyed the impression of being under absolute control. It was an orderliness that was refreshing.

There was a cordiality that seemed to be genuine, almost as if the people of this part of China were indeed glad to see a stranger. They demonstrated a desire to please and assist that seemed natural, not an attitude induced by the desire to make a good first impression. Mr. Fong was most attentive. He ushered me into a reception room, poured a cup of green tea, offered a cigaret (Chinese, and excellent smoking) and in short order accomplished this: changed my Hong Kong money for Chinese currency, procured a fan and a cold beer, and ordered lunch.

There were some forms to complete. A customs declaration wanted to know if I was bringing in any sewing machines or accordions, firearms or explosives. The customs examination was cursory. A smartly attired officer, in khaki, glanced briefly at one opened bag and announced: "The procedure is ended."

The train for Canton was scheduled to leave at 12:04 P.M. and it did. The change from the English-style coach with its first-class accommodation (which runs from Kowloon to the border) to a coach which most closely resembles Canada's colonist cars was unexpected. However, I was assured by traveling companions that this constituted de luxe train transportation in China. A later train contained only coaches with bare wooden seats.

As we rolled through the orderly Chinese countryside, with its mosaic of paddies, and women washing clothes in the creeks, our constant companion was the blaring of two loudspeakers, one at either end of the coach, spouting I knew not what. I could only assume it was propaganda. It takes just over three hours to make the trip by train to Canton and we would have had to listen to the screeching for all that time had it not been for a train attendant who thoughtfully disconnected the speaker nearest us. We had then only to listen to the mouthings from the far end of the coach. Whether the at-

tendant did this out of concern for us, or because he was weary of the blather himself, I do not know. But it became somewhat of a game during the trip, since another attendant, possibly more faithful, insisted on plugging the device in again at every opportunity. The contest ended in our favor, since, for most of the trip, we listened only to the muted tones from the rear end of the coach.

IDEOLOGICAL TOUR

CANTON. "Are you Mr. Willie?" This was my introduction to Miss Fen, an indefatigable representative of China Intourist (Chinese Travel Service) who boarded the train seconds after it had creaked into the station amid the blare of propaganda-spouting loudspeakers at exactly 3:15 P.M., the scheduled time of arrival. Miss Fen's error in assuming that my first name was my family name, as is the fashion in China, unfortunately gave me no clue to what lay immediately before me. While I was in the clutches of this highly efficient new-order femininity, I was treated to a whirlwind ride on an ideological merry-go-round that left me weary in mind and body, subconsciously pleading for mercy and almost prepared to roar out the Chinese version of Long Live Peace.

Miss Fen is twenty-three, about five feet, weighs all of eighty pounds, wears glasses equipped with thick lenses, and when I waved good-by to her at the Canton Airport she was still wearing the same squarish brown-and-white gingham dress of the night before. Her white bobby socks and low-heeled shoes did nothing to generate an illusion that she had even a trace of the legendary oriental feminine charm. These vital

statistics are not, however, an effective measure of the unbounded energy of this product of the new China whose precise, stilted English was acquired from a textbook at the University of Shanghai.

After my luggage had been gathered together and Miss Fen had apologized for the delay in obtaining a cart to transport it through the platform, due to the tremendous number of visitors China is having, she explained, she parked me in a taxi while she went about the business of clearing me into my first real glimpse of China. It was the wait in the taxi, too, which gave me my first experience of being like a monkey in a zoo. No sooner had I settled down in the back of the car than it was surrounded by a swarm of Chinese—young and old—peering in from all the windows as if they had never seen a white man before. I chanced a grin and it worked. All their faces lighted up in a glow of warmth and I got out of the car only to find myself shaking hands with perhaps a hundred persons. It was a delightful, a warm experience. I had, at last, been welcomed to China.

The welcoming committee, impromptu as it was, was broken up by the arrival of little Miss Fen, who swept them aside, crawled in beside me, and chattered directions to the driver. The drive to what turned out to be a hotel was brief. It was sufficient, however, for me to discover that the normal Canadian manner of speaking would not do. The speech had to be slow and carefully enunciated, or I was liable to lose Miss Fen along the way. As we drove through the streets of Canton in what appeared to be a Ford of the early 1940 period, but which actually was a late-model Polish passenger car, Miss Fen made a little speech in her native sing-song fashion, in which she explained that she really hadn't had much of an opportunity to converse in English. "But how do you think my English is?" she asked. She graced me with a thin smile when I replied, slowly and distinctly, that I hoped

I could be as fluent with Chinese at the end of my visit as she was with my native language.

There was no ceremony of signing the register when we arrived at the hotel. Miss Fen briskly whisked me and my luggage into an elevator, we got off at a floor, and I was ushered into a room. The door was left open and Miss Fen sat down. "What shall we do tonight?" she asked. A question like this, coming from anyone but the efficient Miss Fen, could easily have been misinterpreted. Still somewhat confused by the rush into Red China, I simply shrugged my shoulders and suggested it was up to her. When Miss Fen replied that possibly I should want to rest I readily acquiesced. Glancing at her watch, Miss Fen said it was such and such a time by her and if it was all right with me, she would return in fifteen minutes and take me on a tour of Canton. "What time is your watch, please?" Promptly, in fifteen minutes to the second, Miss Fen was knocking at the door.

It was then the ideological merry-go-round began to spin—with a brief interruption, however. Across from the hotel I spotted what looked like the Canadian equivalent of a milk bar. It really only looked like it. It was an open-front affair (without doors) and I suggested to Miss Fen that perhaps she would care for a cup of coffee. Her response to my offer of hospitality was non-committal. So we went into the Canton version of a milk bar. I don't know yet how it happened but I wound up with a cup of black, thick coffee and a dish of pineapple ice cream. I struggled through both.

Our first stop on the tour of Canton was the memorial to Dr. Sun Yat-sen, who founded the first Chinese republic in 1912. It is a truly magnificent structure, a huge glass-domed auditorium, capable of seating 6,500 people. Sometimes it is used for table tennis tournaments, Miss Fen informed me. The memorial auditorium is set in a large park, at the entrance to which stands a bronze monument of the figure of Dr. Sun.

This, according to Miss Fen, is to be heightened by a considerable number of feet.

Next came a tour of what had been a Confucian temple but is now a national shrine, in which are faithfully reproduced the appurtenances of the Peasants' Training Institute when Chairman Mao was president of it in 1926 and Premier Chou En-lai was a lecturer. I gazed wearily at the bed Chairman Mao had slept on, the desk he had sat at, and the table at which he had dined. There followed in quick succession a glimpse at the Provincial People's Hospital of Kwangtung; the memorial to the Canton Commune, where 8,000 Communists died in a three-day battle with Kuomintang forces in December, 1927; and the Pearl River bridge, destroyed by the retreating Nationalist forces in October, 1948, and since rebuilt.

The merry-go-round stopped briefly for dinner, during which I was left to my own devices. In the course of it I was initiated into the game of three matches to see who pays for the beer by a group of business men which included an Englishman, a Dane, a German, a Swede, and a Pole, all strangers to me. Strangely enough, I didn't lose.

Promptly at 8 o'clock Miss Fen was knocking on the door and off we walked (but not arm in arm) to the Canton Culture Park, a sort of Chinese version of a midway with plenty of ideology thrown in. It was a pleasant relief, in a way, to watch the puppet show, a demonstration of magic, and even to stroll through the buildings and view the displays of the products of modern China. There was even the skeleton of what Miss Fen claimed to be the world's biggest fish. As the crackle of fireworks mingled with the jangle of a Chinese band, I suggested we return to the hotel, keenly aware that I would have to be up at 5:00 A.M. in order to catch a 6:15 plane.

Canton, the home of about 1,700 thousand, richly deserves the sobriquet attached to it by previous visitors of being the noisiest city in the world. It was difficult to determine just

when night ended and morning began. The city was a ferment of noise at all hours. The Canton symphony, which made a mockery of attempts to sleep, was highlighted by the strident bleats of boat whistles signaling their approach to the Pearl River bridge. It mattered not, it seemed, that the bridge had not opened its jaws since its destruction and subsequent rebuilding eight years ago. The force of habit is strong, especially among rivermen. In between whistles were blended bicycle bells, the yells of pedicab drivers warning all to get out of their way; the laughter and the cries of children who seemed never to go to sleep; the screaming of tires as Canton's handful of motor vehicles darted around corners.

As we turned into the airport at 6:00 next morning, my one open eye glimpsed a group of about a hundred flower-bearing children, dressed in gaily colored costumes, lined up by the entrance. "So nice of you to arrange this farewell for me," I suggested to Miss Fen. Alas, it turned out that they were waiting to greet Russian President Voroshilov on his way to Peking for the May Day celebrations.

SKYSCRAPERS AND PAGODAS

PEKING. The nine-hour trip from Canton by air, including brief stops at Wuhan and Chengchow, was made in a Russian version of the Convair, a comfortable aircraft which traveled most of the time at about 8,000 feet. Except for the absence of seat belts and a clock where the "fasten seat belts—no smoking" warnings should be, the plane was very much like its Canadian counterpart and the trip as uneventful as a routine flight in Canada.