

The peasants (poor farmers) in China used to live in very great poverty before the people placed the Mao Tse-tung Government in power. Here New Age reporter RUTH FIRST tells of her visit to a Chinese village and the great change that has been brought about.

LAND FOR THE PEASANTS

THE calm serenity and orderliness of the lush Chinese countryside was shattered as two large busloads of foreign delegates drove up to Pai Chao (the Village of Eight Corners) one hot August afternoon.

Chattering different languages, seeking answers to scores of questions, we clambered out, button-holing peasants, women, the young people standing nearby. The villagers took us in hand. We were shown into a large meeting room, and then the village head, an elderly man of 60 or over, unperturbed and unfrilled, faced the battery of questions and quietly and methodically he answered them all—how the land was distributed to the peasants; what happened to the landlords; how "class status" in the countryside was determined; the effect of the co-operative movement on agricultural production.

Pai Chao, we decided at the end of the afternoon, was not very different from many other villages in China. Indeed, the Indian delegates with us said that outwardly it reminded them of villages in their own land. Except, they added, pointing: "These new homes are far finer than in Indian villages, the rooms are larger, the school much bigger, the clinic a great achievement."

To the peasant owners of Pai Chao the village does look much the same as they have always lived in.

But it's different

Grass grows from the cleaved tiles on the roofs, the courtyards lead off the same winding lanes, in the fields grow kaoliang and millet. The same crops, the same earth, the same backs bent to their task. But for the first time in his life-time, and in the history of all China, the peasant now owns the land he tills and the crops he harvests. So the very earth looks new to him, and in the same village fields he is a different man.

He shows you, said Pablo Neruda,

"new things older than the world,
the rice and the grapes,
the eggs from his hen.
And can find no words to speak.
All is his,
for the first time—"

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all the rice, all the land, all of life."

The wretchedness of the life of the peasant of feudal China has passed into literature. All the year round he worked for the landlord and lived himself as a beast. After paying rent, taxes, interest on debts, many peasant families kept less than one-third of their annual output. In the latter years of Chiang Kai-shek rule the peasant paid away 80 to 90 per cent. of his income. Half the year he ate frugally of his produce. For the remaining six months he and his family ate husks of grain. Each year there was a spring famine. Deep in debt, unable to pay the cruel rates of interest, peasants were forced to sell their daughters into arranged marriages or concubinage. The landlord had not only to be paid his debt and his levy of crops, handed every young girl he fancied, but he had to be given gifts on festival days and carried in his sedan chair.

In Liaoning Province I met a peasant woman who, as part of her tribute and service to the landlord, had to nurse his youngest child. The landlord's baby grew fat and strong; her own, of the same age, died of starvation.

In China before liberation the landlords and rich peasants owned 70 to 80 per cent. of the land, though they were only 10 per cent. of the agricultural population. In Hunan Province 30 per cent. of the village population owned no land at all.

LAND REFORM WAS ESSENTIAL

Land reform was essential for the Chinese revolution. Its purpose was not only to relieve poverty in the countryside, but essentially to eliminate feudalism, the cause of China's backwardness. The feudal system of land ownership was the principal obstacle to China's independence, prosperity and the growth of democracy. The industrialisation of China would depend on the vast rural markets, and without land reform and the full development of the productive forces of the rural areas China would remain backward.

So change had to come to the village, and land to the peasants. In the old liberated areas land reform was carried out in 1946 and 1947. In 1950 the movement swept over the whole country, with the exception of some areas inhabited by national minorities, who, enjoying regional autonomy, will take their own decisions about when to apply the law.

In all, 300 million formerly landless and poor peasants received land. A total of 47 million hectares once owned by landlords were redistributed. How was it done? By law? Yes, in a sense. In 1950 the People's Government passed the Land Reform Law. But 300 million people do not receive land and the power of a landlord exploiting class is not broken merely by official edict. In every village the peasants carried out their own land reform.

For generations the landlords have been also the local despots, wielding great power and striking terror into the hearts of the common people. "If you want to stand up," says the Chinese proverb, "your heart must stand up first." The peasant had first to challenge the might of the overlord who had ruled his family for generations, and wrest from him the land he had worked but never enjoyed. One can understand little of the nature of the tremendous changes that have swept over China's lands and people if one does not understand the land reform movement.

Its full significance began to dawn on me in a train compartment bound from Shanghai to Peking during the floods in August, when, to while away the time we were held up by the torrential waters, Lee Ping, my young girl interpreter, told me the story of her work with a land reform team in her native countryside near Canton. Like thousands of other young people, she had volunteered for the work, and then one month in 1951 had arrived at a small village with the slogan of the land reform workers drumming in her head—"Live with the peasants, eat with them and work in the fields at their side." This was clearly the way to win their confidence.

From talks with the ordinary peasants and labourers sprang the "speak bitterness" meetings, where peasants at last spoke out their hatred of the landlords and the system that was misusing and oppressing them, and where they confronted the landlords with their crimes, and publicly assessed and re-divided the land of the village. "We (the team of three volunteers) had studied the land reform law," said Lee Ping, "but it was for the peasants to carry it out."

By 1952 China's agricultural production output attained, and in some areas even surpassed, the highest pre-war figure. The year after, the movement to intensify agricultural production started.

The Chinese peasant could conceive of no more profound change in his life than to own the land he farmed. But how to persuade him that this was not an end yet? Working his own small strip, scratching the earth with his one-man implements, he could win so much from the land but no more. The combine harvester, the tractor, the mechanical insecticide sprayer, peasants labouring together in a mighty army to glean the harvests—this should be the shape of the future in China's countryside.

CO-OPERATIVE FARMING
The first hesitant steps to co-operation were taken through the mutual aid teams. To-day 50 per cent. of the population on the land is organised in this movement. Peasant families band together to sow the crop, weed, reap and thresh.

After the teams came agricultural co-operatives. The peasants do not always take to them willingly at first. Wang Hsui-mei, woman vice-director of a co-op at the outskirts of Shanghai, said—"The peasants are conservative. They did not want to try in our village. My husband was among them. I said to him, 'Look ahead. Do not be so short-sighted.' Some of us worked the land together and then divided the harvest. The work is hard. We have callouses on our hands, but no complaints. Our neighbours watched us from over the fence and saw how much better our results were. Our cotton yield is four times as much as theirs, also our rice. We have been taught new methods in rice planting and pig breeding. So this year as they looked at our results our neighbours said aloud, 'Next year we shall join them.'"

Co-operatives, however, are still not the end of striving in the countryside. One afternoon in the north-east we drove to a village hidden from view as we approached by the towering kaoliang grain stalks, so often only 10 years ago the "green screen" that sheltered peasant guerrillas from probing Japanese bayonets. We were visiting the new phenomenon of China—the collective farm, and this

farm was a new-born infant, a collective of only five months' standing. Before us lay the rice paddy fields and the maize, millet and wheat in great green stretches rolling evenly over the earth, no lanes cutting through the heavy-headed stalks and slicing the fields into the neat, small portions still so predominantly the feature of the countryside in China.

Here, in this village, the houses were well built and with tiled roofs. Telephone wires connected Kao Kan village with the town of Shenyang (once Mukden) and the wider world.

In the main street, as though by design, two different, important buildings stood side by side. One was the machine tractor station, housing the four tractors which serve the 18 farms in the neighbourhood (thus far only Kao Kan village is a collective). Perhaps 40 paces off was the village creche, where eight self-possessed children of four or five years started up an impromptu song and dance as we entered. We were given no more than a cursory glance from time to time as, arm-in-arm, these infants trotted out the steps of the national dance we ourselves had to perform 10 minutes later among the primary school children in the playground dominated by the large see-saw. The tractors, the school, the creche were the outward signs of the new.

We learnt more of the new life that day in talks with the peasants.

Up to 1948 eight landlord families had owned 92 per cent. of the land in Kao Kan village. To-day seven of these landlord families (the eighth has gone to a nearby city) are still in the village, working their fair portion of the land (six mou each) given under land reform. In the hands first of the peasants, organised in a co-operative and now in the collective, the land has given double the previous yield. The three village wells were once owned by the landlords. Now 48 wells belong to all. The brick houses are signs of prosperity, so is the co-op store stocked with canned fruit, table tennis and billiard balls, oil paint sets, books, fountain-pens, bales of cotton and silk, watches, talc powder, torches.

To-day over half of China's peasants are organised in co-operatives, in all 100,000 co-ops of 1,700,000 peasant households. Their meaning in the lives of the peoples has been expressed by a 61-year-old peasant poet, Wang Hao-chiu. Before 1949, on New Year's Eve, the traditional time for settling debts, old Wang had to leave home to flee his creditors and go begging with his young son. He wrote:

I'm old Wang,
a peasant,
for 40 years,
living by my sweat
behind the ox plough,
strength given,
sweat run dry,
leaving only
a heart full
of bitterness.

Of his native province to-day he has written:
Broad plains of Shensi lying
three hundred miles in width,
wheat standing with great ears
like a cluster of bees on a flower;
changed peasants working their
best,
spirits rising as high as the
heavens,
each acre giving double yield
in the granaries the grain piled
high,
white cotton bolls like big eggs,
great heads of millet hanging in
strings,
great days, these, that grow still
greater as time goes by.



Our picture shows Chinese girls picking tea.

APARTHEID MENACES THEIR INVESTMENTS!

Foreign Capitalists Are Worried

BRITAIN and the United States should show their opposition to South Africa's racialist policies and at the same time reduce the "explosiveness of the Union" by developing the three British Protectorates—Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland—"on political principles consonant with their own domestic policies."

This is the view put forward in an editorial in the London Observer which predicts that the election of Mr. Strijdom to the premiership "means that the present racial policies in South Africa will be intensified."

"The eight million Africans," said the Observer, "treated as helots and deprived of all legitimate means of expressing their will, are rapidly losing all confidence in Europeans."

The Observer added that while it was well known that Europeans in South Africa resented any discussion of their affairs, the outside world, particularly Britain and the U.S.A., had every reason to feel concerned. "The simplest reason is that we have invested vast sums in South Africa—Britain has invested more than £400 million since the war—and are continually asked to invest more," said the Observer. "The strongest reason for Western concern is that it will not be possible to confine the effects of inter-racial strife to one corner of Africa: inevitably it will damage the influence of the West in the rest of Africa and in Asia."

"THE IMMEDIATE DANGER"
Western statesmanship is inevitably concerned because in Africa, from the North to the South, "the immediate danger is an anti-European attitude," said the Observer.

It is, therefore, to show the African population "an alternative prospect to that of seeking to break 'white domination' by incineration, sabotage and other forms of violence," that the Observer suggested the development of the British Protectorates in South Africa.

If Britain invited America to co-operate in this development, the Observer maintained further, "it is not likely that the Union would dare to seize the Protectorates, or even to blockade them economically. She would herself be equally vulnerable to economic blockade by a simple Anglo-American unwillingness to buy her gold, wool and wine production."

The newspaper added: "The South African capacity to embarrass the West by talk of withdrawal of the use of naval bases and other such military pressures are likely to decrease in the less warlike climate of world affairs that we seem to be entering."

Progressives Win In Greece

ATHENS.

A popular front of all the anti-Government parties scored striking successes in the recent municipal elections in Greece. Out of the 74 largest towns in Greece the candidates supported by the democratic parties captured nearly 60, including the capital city, Athens; the largest port and industrial centre, Piraeus; and the second largest city, Salonika.

These successes were achieved despite the intimidation and terror unleashed by the Greek dictator, General Papagos, who tried to pre-empt the elections were "non-political." In Mytilene, for instance, the candidate for Mayor, who was put up by the Popular Front, was Mr. Galinos, a former Deputy Speaker of the Greek Parliament. Ten days before the election he was jailed for five years. Nevertheless, the people elected him Mayor by a huge majority.

The Popular Front was based on an agreed list of candidates supported by the Centre parties and the United Democratic Left Party (E.D.A.) and the outlawed Communist Party. The candidates stood on the platform of "Peace, amnesty, democracy and independence."

Since the elections Papagos has warned the Mayors elected on the progressive ticket that "they are not permitted to transform municipalities into centres of political activities."

But the Opposition parties have naturally interpreted the elections as a sign of the complete lack of confidence of the Greek people in the Papagos Government, and are calling for the dissolution of Parliament and new elections on the basis of proportional representation.

U.T.C. WORRIED BY BOYCOTT

PORT ELIZABETH.

The New Brighton Branch of the African National Congress last week distributed 10,500 leaflets replying to a leaflet issued by the United Tobacco Company requesting householders to buy U.T.C. cigarettes.

In their reply the A.N.C. explained to the people why it was necessary to continue the boycott until the company reversed its attitude towards its African employees who went on strike.

STALIN PRIZE FOR PRITT

LONDON.

THE British lawyer and former M.P., Mr. D. N. Pritt, Q.C., who is a courageous defence of Kenya leader Jomo Kenyatta won the admiration of South Africans, heads the list of prizewinners issued by the Stalin Peace Prize Committee recently.

The awards were all made "in recognition of outstanding services in the cause of preservation and strengthening of peace." Their value is about £9,000.

Other prizewinners were: Alain Le Leap, secretary general of the French Trade Union Confederation;

Thakin Kodaw Amainou, the Burmese writer;

Bert Brecht, German poet and playwright;

Professor Felix Iversen, of Helsinki University, Finland;

M. Andre Bonnard, Professor at Lausanne University, Switzerland; Baldomero Sanin Cano, Professor at the Universities of Edinburgh and Bogota (Columbia); Professor Priyono, of the University of Jakarta, Indonesia; Nicolas Guillen, Cuban poet. Professor D. Skobeltsin, chairman

WORLD STAGE by SPECTATOR

EUROPE IN ARMS AGAINST GERMAN ARMY

MENDES-FRANCE has succeeded in getting the French National Assembly to approve the Paris Agreements for rearming Germany after a week-long debate and months of agonising doubt and hesitation. In the Western world his achievement has been hailed as a triumph. In fact, however, the vote represents not the will of the French people but the capitulation of the French Government to the bullying and blackmailing of their British and American "allies."

Threatened with the stopping of American "aid," the withdrawal of British forces from the Continent and their eventual exclusion from NATO, the French politicians voted into existence the very monster they fear most—a revived West German Army.

But, as British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden pointed out, the West German Army would have been built with or without French agreement. Furthermore, the Assembly's decision, far from strengthening France, has still further divided and weakened her.

The fall of the Mendes-France Government in the near future is practically certain as the Assembly politicians gather their strength to revenge themselves on the smart-alek who has forced them to eat humble pie in the presence of their old enemies the Germans.

Before the Assembly debate began the correspondent of the London Times, surveying the prospects, concluded—"What is true, as the moment approaches for the great decision on German rearmament, is that, scattered right through the parties, there is an almost consistent thread of argument which basically refuses to admit the real need for German rearmament, or rather admits that it can be approved only as a last and, for many, a desperate resort."

POPULAR REVULSION

In other words, France still fears West Germany more than she fears the Soviet Union, and hates the Americans for getting her into the present dilemma. The Paris Agreements still have to be ratified by the French Upper House, and popular revulsion against the Assembly vote is likely to grow from now on, and may eventually bring about its reversal before it is too late.

The most consistent opponents of the German Army plan have been the Communists, but it would be wrong to say that only the Communists have been against it. National figures like Gen. de Gaulle, M. Daladier, the Radical Party leader, and M. Moch, the Socialist, have also come out strongly against it and called for further Four-Power talks with the Russians before a final decision was taken. Party loyalties have crumbled under the strain.

The Grand Old Man of the Assembly, M. Edouard Herriot, made one of his rare appearances to deliver a moving appeal against German rearmament. He could not understand the attitude of the Americans, he said. "I like America, but I love France more." M. Paul Reynaud, a former Premier, said the Paris Agreements established the political hegemony of Great Britain and the military hegemony of West Germany in Europe.

M. Pierre-Henri Teitgen, a Popular Republican Minister, said the Paris Agreements create "behind a European appearance a German Army, a British control, an American general."

Throughout the debate delegations of French workers from all over the country came to the Assembly to protest to their M.P.s against the German Army, and in factories, mines and docks the workers conducted short protest strikes.

ITALY DIVIDED

This, of course, is not only true of France. Italy, too, has been divided by the German Army plan. "All Christian Democratic deputies have incurred the displeasure of the party leadership by acts of in-

New Moves in Indo-China

THERE has been further evidence in the past week of the United States' determination to sabotage the Geneva agreement in Viet-Nam and to provoke a new war there before the free elections are held in 1956.

Representative James Richards, who will be chairman of the House foreign affairs committee in the new U.S. Congress declared after his recent visit to Viet-Nam: "As things now stand the Communists are certain to win the 1956 election."

To prevent the democratic exercise of the people's will, Richards proposed that the French should "get out" of Viet-Nam and "the task of building up an anti-communist force must be assumed by the United States."

The French are clearly succumbing to U.S. pressure. An important move, unreported in the South African press, was the decision to send the French Far Eastern Fleet to Haiphong, the great port in northern Viet-Nam which, under the Geneva agreement is due to be handed over by the French to the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam.

discipline during the debate on Western European Union," reported the Manchester Guardian in the middle of December.

One Christian Democrat, Signor Melloni, was expected to be expelled from his party for introducing an amendment proposing a three-month suspension of the Paris Agreements, after ratification, "to allow time for negotiations with Russia." The paper added—"Except for the time-limit of three instead of six months, this proposal is identical with the amendment presented by Signor Togliatti, the Communist leader."

Another Christian Democrat, Signor Bartesaghi, was expected to be severely reprimanded for arguing that the revival of the German Army would put an end to the prospect of "peaceful co-existence."

BRITISH LABOUR SPLIT

Even in Britain the Labour Party has remained split on the Paris Agreements. In the first week of December Aneurin Bevan was saying—"Before there are German troops in the field we should seek a meeting with the Russians to see whether we can find agreement on Germany." He added that he thought he was expressing the views of the vast majority of the people of Great Britain on the subject.

Two weeks later his colleague Mr. Herbert Morrison was attending the Socialist International in Amsterdam with the express object of trying to persuade the German Social-Democrats to agree to German rearmament!

Up till now the German Socialists, together with the trade unions and democratic youth groups, have also demanded talks with the Russians about reunification before West German rearmament.

In fact, perhaps the bitterest opponents of German rearmament are the mass of the German people themselves, in both East and West Germany. West German Chancellor Adenauer was given a rough passage in the Bundestag last month when the Paris Agreements were debated, and found it particularly hard to answer the Socialist criticism that German rearmament meant abandoning East Germany and would in time lead to a civil war between two armed Germanies.

Adenauer got round this by frankly admitting he saw no other prospect than war. "There is no longer a choice between straw hat and steel helmet," he said. "The choice now is between a steel helmet with or without a Red Star on it." (Reprinted in Time magazine of December 27).

Adenauer also found his own coalition government divided over the Saar question, which most Germans see as a plain concession to France. But his reason for accepting the Saar agreement was made plain by his Minister for Refugees, Dr. Oberlaender (formerly a major in the Nazi storm troops), who declared at a meeting in North Rhine Westphalia:

"We must accept the Saar agreement as it is because in exchange we will get 500,000 German soldiers. Two or three years from now it will be possible to get the Saar back into Germany, and it will no longer be possible for French justice to indulge in excesses like those committed against the former Mayor of Strasbourg.

"And thanks to our military force, the Paris Agreements will have to be cleaned up. In the same way we will be able to act quite differently with regard to Bolshevism and the Soviet zone."

The West German militarists are itching to get their fingers on the trigger again. And French fears that the German army will again turn west and not east for its first conquests are, not by any means groundless.

Up till now Western Europe has been forced to accept the German army in the name of "unity." But nothing has so undermined this "unity" as the German army itself. Behind the impressive facade of NATO the Western Wall is already crumbling.

The announcement was made shortly after Admiral Arthur Radford, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chief of Staff and a leading advocate of the bombing of China, had left Saigon after a four-day visit. It may be a move to try to restart the Indo-China war.

In Saigon, French officials said that the reason the fleet had been sent was that strikes and protests were expected from workers in Haiphong as efforts were made by the French to strip the establishments and factories of all valuable equipment before handing over the port.

Such stripping of property is not permissible under the Geneva agreement.



NEW AGE LETTER BOX

From Israel

Kol Haam (People's Voice), the Hebrew daily of the working class and the toiling masses in Israel, congratulates you on the first number of your paper, which has reached us.

The name was chosen rightly—those evil forces which you are so vigorously fighting against and who try (in vain!) to silence the voice of the people of South Africa belong to the Middle Ages and will, therefore, never be able to ban the advance of the masses towards the new age of peace, democracy, brotherhood of peoples and socialism!

Peace and Friendship!
ZVI BREITSTEIN,
Editor-in-chief.

And here is the letter Kol Haam wrote to Swart at the "Palace of Justice":

It is with great indignation that our readers and broad sections of the population of Israel learned about the wanton police attack on Advance, the one progressive newspaper in South Africa.

This ban demonstrates the even more bluntly fascist, racist character of the new Government of South Africa.

The only reason for the attack on Advance is that it is a paper which has consistently expressed the rightful desire of the overwhelming majority of the South African population for democracy, against racist discrimination and national suppression, and that it has voiced the common interests of the toiling masses as against Anglo-American imperialist warmongers and local reaction.

This new attack on the freedom of the Press must be stopped in the name of the basic democratic rights! There can be no Ministry deserving the title of justice which allows Hitlerist injustice!

In the name of broad sections of the people of Israel, who follow with sympathy the struggle of the South African people for democracy, we urge you to suspend this McCarthy-like investigation!

A.N.C. and a United Front

The African National Congress report will be widely welcomed as the clearest and most incisive analysis that Congress has published for many years.

The section on organisation, perhaps more than any other, shows a realisation of the need to change Congress from its traditional form of an annual conference into a disciplined, tightly organised and continuously active political party, giving leadership at the local as well as the national level.

The part dealing with international affairs is another impres-

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sive feature of the report. It stresses, perhaps for the first time in Congress literature, the importance to our own struggles of the world-wide fight for colonial liberation and peace. If Congress succeeds in making the relationship clear to the people it will perform an invaluable service not only to the peace movement but also to the movement for national freedom.

The report is rightly centred around the dominant issue before us, i.e., how to defeat the Nationalist police state and its fascist policies. For this purpose Congress has put before us the perspective of an anti-fascist front.

If, however, there is any weakness in the report, it appears in the discussion on how to develop such a united movement. To explain my point, I should like to refer briefly to the past experience on which this concept of unity is based.

South African progressive forces are in the position of those people who opposed fascism in Europe before the war or who took part in the resistance against Nazi occupation troops during the war. Our policy ought to be based on the principle they adopted with so much success, of achieving co-operation on the widest possible basis between all organisations and persons animated with a determination to defeat and remove the forces of fascism.

Unity of this kind cannot be brought about if any one organisation claims to have a monopoly of the right to formulate policy, or a dominant voice in any other respect. The essence of the United Front is co-operation on a basis of equality between all anti-fascists.

The report of Congress does not, to my mind, express this need as clearly as it should be stated.

Thus it criticises "Liberals and the reformist trade unions" but does not suggest that they could be prevailed upon to co-operate in a United Front. It attacks the Liberals for encouraging "the illusion of social change through Parliament," but does not explain that the fight against fascism has to be carried on by all methods, parliamentary as well as extra-parliamentary.

On the other hand, the report makes no mention of the Labour Party. It is small, but it does surely represent a section of progressive Europeans, also potential recruits to the United Front.

There is silence also about the All-African Convention. I am no admirer of this organisation, and regard its politics as foolish and often harmful to the people.

But the A.A.C. does influence a section of the African and Coloured people, especially teachers, and should not be ignored. If it cannot be won over to participation in the United Front, then its mistakes and weaknesses should be exposed.

If, as the Congress points out, our main task is to rid South Africa of the dictatorship that is destroying our country's peace and welfare, then we must apply all our energies and subordinate all other considerations to the completion of this great historic task.

ANTI-FASCIST.

Cape Town.

[This letter, though not necessarily reflecting the views of New Age, is printed in accordance with our policy of keeping New Age Letterbox open as a forum for all democratic opinion.

Readers' comments are invited.—Editor.]

HOW DARE THEY DENOUNCE "MAU MAU TERROR"!

LONDON.

A LETTER expressing concern that of the 756 Africans hanged in Kenya in the last two years "no fewer than 508 were charged with offences less than murder" has been sent to Mr. Michael Blundell, Minister without Portfolio in the Kenya Government, by a number of prominent Englishmen.

They include Bertrand Russell, Lord Boyd-Orr, Canon C. E. Raven, Canon John Collins, Mr. Benn Levy, Miss Ethel Mannin, Mr. Reginald Reynolds, Lord Stansgate, Mr. Augustus John, Miss Monica Whateley, Mr. H. N. Brailsford, Mr. Victor Gollancz and a number of Labour M.P.s.

One of the signatories, Mr. Fenner Brockway, told the House of Commons that no one could look at the figures of death penalties in Kenya without being shocked. Over the last four months an average of 50 Africans a month had been hanged—but less than a quarter of these were hanged for murder.

How could the British retain any moral right to denounce the atrocities of Mau Mau if they themselves were pursuing this policy of 50 hangings a month?

Men were hanged for unlawful possession of arms, for consorting with terrorists, for administering unlawful oaths. An African Quaker, sentenced to death because two bullets were found in his shirt, was reprieved because he had friends.

But, asked Mr. Brockway, how many without friends or ability to state their case had been hanged?

FIREWOOD?—JAIL!

Every week new crimes are created in Kenya as the authorities frantically try to "end the emergency." In future, any African carrying a can of petrol or having one in his possession, or even carrying or possessing firewood or any other inflammable material, is liable to arrest and imprisonment up to 14 years. The onus is on the arrested person to prove he did not buy or possess the material with the intention of committing arson.

In the forced labour camps, where 46,000 Africans are detained, prisoners who refuse to work are first starved and then flogged in an effort to make them submit. On a first refusal to work they can be sentenced to spare diet for seven days. If a prisoner refuses for the third time to work he can be flogged.

Raising this in the House of Commons last month, Mr. Anthony Wedgwood Benn asked the Colonial Secretary, "Are you seriously telling the House that detainees who are held on suspicion and who have not been tried are liable to flogging for a third offence of refusing to do what amounts to forced labour?"

The Colonial Secretary, Mr. Lennox Boyd, objected—"It is not flogging."

"What is it, then?" asked M.P.s. "Corporal punishment of not more than 12 strokes," replied Mr. Lennox Boyd amid cries of "Oh!"

COMMISSIONER RESIGNS

Following the recent exposures of the shocking methods, including systematic beatings, employed by the Kenya authorities to obtain evidence and confessions from detain-

ees, Kenya's Police Commissioner, Col. Arthur Young, resigned because his suggestions for reforms in the force were rejected by the Government.

He insisted that every police officer, African as well as European, should be accorded the powers of a constable in common law, and that the force should be independent of Government control. One result of his recommendations would have been that African policemen would have had the power to arrest Europeans, but the Government would not tolerate this.



Co-operative Christmas Parcel schemes which give workers and their families the opportunity of putting aside a little money each week for a bumper value Christmas hamper at holiday time are now firmly established in a number of centres, and particularly in Cape Town and Johannesburg.

The top picture shows members of the Guardian Co-operative Xmas Club collecting their parcels at Alexandra Township. A total of 1,500 parcels were delivered in Johannesburg, and the woman (right) seems very satisfied with hers.

In Cape Town over 9,000 parcels were distributed, and in the coming year the Cape Town scheme (Johnny's Parcels) expects, like the Johannesburg club, to continue growing.

A popular feature of the schemes is the fact that included in the parcel is a weekly subscription to New Age, and that

the contents of the parcels are planned only after thorough discussions with a large number of housewives.

These discussions ensure that the Christmas parcels contain just what the working class woman needs to carry her over the festive season.

Burma's Prime Minister Enthusiastic About China

LONDON.

THE Burmese Premier, U Nu, in a broadcast from Peking at the end of his recent tour, said he had been impressed by the "spirit of freedom" in China and the enthusiasm of the people in the work they did. The speech emphasised three features he had found outstanding in the course of his two-week visit.

The first was the "great transformation." U Nu said that in the old days "vast millions in this great country were like frogs under a log, as our Burmese saying goes. They were unable to move or to express their discontent. Now things have changed. I found Chinese people everywhere discharging their responsibilities in a spirit of freedom."

The second "significant feature" was the firm determination of the Chinese people. "At every place I visited I talked to leaders and workers alike and I noticed that

people were discharging the tasks assigned to them with enthusiasm and determination. It is evident that they are determined not to lose this new order of things which is their heritage earned five years ago with their own blood, sweat and enthusiasm."

The third significant feature was "the unmistakable process of consolidation from a fluid state to a firm basis. In plain words new China is developing into a strong and stable country."

The Burmese Premier called

attention to the unprecedented unity of the country and said he was confident that China would successfully build a new society.

On his return to Rangoon, U Nu said he believed China would accept the invitation to attend the forthcoming Asian-African conference.

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