

# Red China Gearing For War

**EDITOR'S NOTE** — U.S. reporters are barred from Red China. The writer of this dispatch, a Briton who lives in Palo Alto, Calif., has been there four times and has made films and written two books favorable to the country. This dispatch is presented to show the situation in China as he observed it on his latest trip.

By **FELIX GREENE**  
Distributed by

**THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

**LONDON (AP)** — The government in Peking is convinced that a U.S. attack on China has become highly probable.

I was not told this by Mao Tze-tung or Chou En-lai, but after five weeks of recent travel through Communist China, I find this conclusion inescapable.

There is evidence that the people are being prepared for a major confrontation.

Chen-yi, the foreign minister, declared last September:

"It is up to the U.S. President and the Pentagon to decide whether the United States wants a big war with China."

If the United States is determined to launch a war, he said, "they are welcome to come sooner — to come as early as tomorrow."

Empty bombast?  
I don't think so.

Behind this "Come on, we're waiting for you," challenge is the belief that the United States if it faces an impasse in Viet Nam and is unready to concede defeat — may, against its better military judgment, attempt to find a solution by widening the area of conflict.

Chen - yi's challenge also springs from a supreme confidence in China's defense capacity.

Wherever I went in China I saw young people drilling and taking target practice. The civilian militiaman has been reactivated and extended so that almost every 18-to 40, women as well as men, is in training.

Every commune, every village I visited had its civilian defense unit — sturdy young peasant girls and boys becoming proficient with rifles and bayonet.

As a result, China today can mount the greatest defense-in-depth that the world has ever seen.

She could mobilize, I was told (and after what I saw I could believe it), a civilian defense army of 100 million in a matter of hours.

Britain's Field Marshal Lord Montgomery was in China in 1960. After seeing the country's civilian militia he laid down a cardinal rule of war — never

commit an army to fight on the mainland of China.

The civilian militia has since been greatly extended.

But, I asked one military commander in the country, what use is all this defense manpower against bombing attacks on the cities?

His reply ran something like this:

"Bombing cities cannot alone win a war. It is, of course, humanly destructive and damaging, but it cannot seriously diminish our resistance capacities."

"In Korea, The U.S. bombing had virtually no effect on the capacity of North Korea to continue the fight."

(Looking this up afterward I found that the official history of the U.S. Air Force appears to corroborate this. "In little more than a month," says this history, "U.S. bombers had neutralized all but one strategic bombing objective contributing support to the North Korean people's army"—but the war went on for another three years.

Yet with all this drilling the Chinese are not in what would be called a "militaristic" mood.

I have seen militarism in pre-war Germany—the parades, the incessant glorification of war, the strutting officers, the arrogance and narrowness of the military mind.

There is none of this in China today.

I have been to China four times in recent years. I have never seen them more militantly prepared yet more relaxed than they are today.

The people walking in the streets, or strolling through the parks, were more at ease and certainly less suspicious of a foreigner like myself, than I have ever seen them.

Part of the reason is that after years of difficulties, things are improving greatly in China.

Two years ago they were just pulling out of the lean years — the food shortages and industrial setbacks of 1960-62.

Today there were no signs of food shortages. Food stores have ample supplies. Meat is no longer rationed and seemed to be plentiful. Rice and wheat still are rationed, but the rations are generous and are not normally fully used.

If we in the West still have an image of China as a "hungry nation" we must abandon that idea. China is hungry no more. (Peking has imported several

hundred million dollars worth of wheat.)

appreciably in price since 1963. Streets are crowded with them.

Though there is certainly no traffic problem, there are many more automobiles on the streets than two years ago. As taxis become more available, pedicabs are being withdrawn. The majority of trucks now are of Chinese manufacture. Formerly they were mostly Russian.

From what I have seen I believe that within a few years China will need to import only a relatively small amount of the more advanced machinery and equipment.

While the general well-being of the Chinese people undoubtedly is advancing, no one in China is allowed to forget the "struggle against U.S. imperialism."

In the village communes, in the factory discussion groups, in school rooms, it is the major topic.

They applaud the stand in Viet Nam. In remote rural schools, I saw special blackboards set aside on which successes scored by the Viet Cong could be announced. As each U.S. plane is shot down in North Viet Nam, in thousands of schools throughout China signs are changed to show the latest total.

One evening I had dinner in a small restaurant in Peking with a Chinese friend I have known many years. My friend—a distinguished historian—was educated at Cambridge University and speaks English fluently. He said rather reflectively:

"It's a little ironic, isn't it, that it is the United States, of all countries, that is saying we are aggressive and expansive. China doesn't have a single soldier outside of China—not one. And how many does America have—a million and a half?"

There is nothing in this world more confident, or more uncompromising, than a Chinese who feels he is right.

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The department stores are crowded and in the larger cities special stores have been opened for children's clothes and toys. For a year or more "quality" has been stressed in factories. Bicycles are up to Western standards and have come down

Myron Bloy, Protestant Episcopal chaplain of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, contended that reaction against the increase of technology and mechanization is a likely basis for student unrest on U.S. campuses.

He said such unrest could be an outgrowth of students' insistence upon more personal involvement in areas where they

can still exert individual influence.

Philosophy Professor Nathan Rotenstreich of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, disputed Bloy's view, saying he felt many students "acted out of a desire for instantaneous significance."

Sykes took sharp exception to Rotenstreich, saying that "youth is upset because it is not

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THE POST, Frederick, Maryland  
Tuesday, December 28, 1965

getting much of a world. They feel themselves being speeded up by technology, losing the time they need for a good education."

The symposium speakers concluded mankind's intellectual accomplishments have reached the moon, but mankind's values remain earthbound.

The failure of society to create values to match man's intellectual giant steps in science, several speakers suggested, dates from the last 100 years or so, since man has learned to provide for his needs and then devote time to fulfilling his wants.