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A Scientist in China: One Chinese Moon

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"cannot create but can only record the existence of a favorable investment climate." What she means obviously is a favorable psychological climate; it cannot even create a readiness on the part of a host suspicious of foreigners in business to receive foreign investment. It does not affect at all the cosmological climate, as it were—whether or not the complexus of real conditions exists which make investing abroad profitable enough to persuade capital to leave home. Here the essay illumines one hitherto obscure point. It is usually taken for granted that foreign investment, especially in less advanced economies, has been enormously more profitable than capital invested at home. But it appears that whereas petroleum investment has verily gained handsome earnings, in other fields domestic and foreign profits are approximately equal, except in public utilities, where foreign returns are considerably less. In a word, where general conditions are not attractive to new foreign investment, guaranties against inconvertibility and expropriation are not enough to bring investors forward. One of today's truly baffling problems is how to bring less advanced countries to realize, first, that they need foreign investment to attain their present goals and, second, that they must be smart and energetic in alluring it to their shores.

One notes with respect that Marina von Neumann Whitman wrote her paper originally in 1958 as a Master's Essay at Columbia University. It is a thoroughly assured and professional piece of work.

MICHAEL MCPHELIN

A SCIENTIST IN CHINA

ONE CHINESE MOON. By J. Tuzo Wilson. New York: Hill and Wang, 1959. xiii, 274 p.

This book is a very honest report on what a scientist can see in China today. The author, President of the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics, went to Russia as Canadian delegate to the final meeting of the committee that organized the International Geophysical Year. As he himself says, "one should never miss a chance to see something new," and thus decided on this one month's trip through China.

The book is also a delightful travelogue, describing in a vivid and precise narrative the peripatetics of the author: the bureaucratic maze of the Moscow Intourist, the long trip on the Trans-Siberian, the border crossing ("for an apparently peaceful frontier

both sides seemed to be uncommonly cautious"), the Manchurian vista, the entry to Peking.

An inquisitive mind, a scientist's observant and retentive eye, an equable temper, an open heart and a pleasant sense of humour make Dr. Wilson's guided tour of China a most pleasurable adventure.

It was Dr. Wilson's first visit to China, and we believe he has succeeded in giving what he wanted to give: "a reasonably impartial account". As he says in the preface, "it naturally gives the first impressions of a traveller and not the dicta of an expert."

The book has a freshness and an engaging sense of wonder not always found in tourists' narratives. That the author fell in love with Chinese food only proves his good sense, but his lively description and appreciation at first sight of the Chinese theatre, and in particular of the costumes and make-up, show something more—a keen and versatile mind. His chief aim, however, was to "try to create friendly international relations between scientists." We very much hope that he succeeded.

We feel certain that Dr. Wilson would want us to be as honest and impartial in our criticism as he has been in writing his book. We confess to mixed feelings on reading the last chapter, "BROAD THOUGHTS FROM AT HOME." No longer in China where he was at his best, noting details accurately and making quick calculations or reflexions, the author now sits at home and allows his mind to wander over the immense and complex problem which in one Chinese moon was brought suddenly and forcefully to his attention: the necessary influence of the changes in China on world affairs.

Our criticism does not bear on the general tenor of Dr. Wilson's plea that since a world divided into two enemy camps may well precipitate a third and devastating world war, all efforts must be made to bring about some sort of rapprochement and closer contacts between peoples. This governments today are not in a position to achieve and therefore the author asks the universities to give a lead. These are noble thoughts and evidence of a laudable zeal.

We agree with the author when he says that "a proper understanding of what is happening in China today is essential." He notes that his "are the first impressions of a traveller" and that "for anyone who has been in China for only a few weeks it would be presumptuous folly to chart a course [of action] dogmatically." This is sensible.

Dr. Wilson is devoted to the Western way of life, and his mind is alien to anything Communist. However, we fear that in his zeal to find a solution leading to a certain rapprochement he tends to sim-

plify the complex problem of "understanding what is really happening in China today."

He deplores the fact that in the case of the Chinese and the Americans, "each side fears and hates the other," that the American press does not give a fair picture of the news from China. All of this may be true, and the author tries to explain the American bias by "their sensitivity to the wrongs done to them in the past," by the fact that they are "often made in China the chief target of unwarranted hate campaigns;" and also by the fact that "they have had no chance to see China for nearly ten years," and thus have let their "resentment grow, unchecked by any contact with realities."

The author goes on: "On the other hand, people who go to China are attracted by the positive things they see;" "that would explain," he adds, "the disparate views of those who merely read of present-day China and those who have seen by themselves."

Keeping in mind that what is essential is to get "a proper understanding of what is really happening in China," we can hardly admit that those who "have seen" are in better position than those who have studied the problem.

First, they have seen only what they were shown. Dr. Wilson deplores sincerely the "shocking things" of which he said "he saw little," for "some of these things have passed already, several years ago," and others were "intangible, or kept from me." While Dr. Wilson was touring China "as a representative of Science", thousands of university professors and teachers, tens of thousands of university and college students were labouring in the fields, spreading manure, digging canals, etc. in a kind of indirect corporal punishment—mind reform through labour—because a year before, in 1957, they had opposed the Party.

Dr. Wilson had hardly left the country when the movement of the Communes started, depriving 500 million people of any possession, regimenting their lives and minds, in the most advanced and massive experiment of collectivization ever witnessed in the world. It is hard to imagine Dr. Wilson liking the commune system, at least for himself, his wife and his two daughters. This of course he could not have seen, but he could "have read" about it before the last chapter was published.

We do not reproach Dr. Wilson with ignoring these facts, but we do insist that they are part—a very important part—of what is really happening in China today.

Dr. Wilson makes it clear that he does not deny any of this, for "he has entered no Chinese home, viewed no Chinese heart." His

aphorism that "that which one does not see makes little impact" (to explain his own attitude) is psychologically true; but it makes a poor scientific basis for solving a problem, especially when confronted on the same page with his truism that "the mind tends to magnify unseen evils" (to explain the American attitude).

Second, they "have seen" only what they have seen. For example, among the positive things that Dr. Wilson has seen for himself are "the rapidly growing schools and colleges." What he did not, and could not see, was that the dire "reform of mind through labour"—the Party's answer to the 1957 revolt of the intellectuals—had turned the whole education system of the country into such disarray in 1958 that the Party relented in the Spring of 1959 and said that "the Party will do all it can to win over the intellectuals," not because of "their political thinking, which is totally incompatible with the socialist revolution," but because "their cultural and scientific knowledge is indispensable." This from an article in CHINESE YOUTH, February 1959 (pp. 5-8). The same article, written by a member of the Party Central Committee, condemns "the still existing 'leftist' tendency in the Party" that "regards the suppression of the intellectuals as the only safe method (of dealing with them). For the time being, the intellectuals will be "permitted to use their knowledge to help the people."

Such articles give perhaps a clearer "insight" into the education problem in China — and ultimately a clearer understanding of it—than the "sight" of many new schools and colleges, "seen" by Dr. Wilson.

In a similar way, Dr. Wilson "felt that there was no terror, but a genuine and tremendous impulse of patriotic fervour, especially among the youth." It is surprising to read that a few months later the Party felt exactly the opposite. In a four-month discussion, published last year in the magazine BOOKS, on the influence of a few old novels, in particular HOME, it was reported that youth, today's youth, is turning to pessimism. "They [the youth] ask for personal liberty, they lose interest in group-life, they dream of the pleasures of the great family life of the past." This writer insists that the youth he is talking about are "the sons of the revolution, whose father and mother have died for the revolution, who are themselves the hope of the revolution." This was in 1959. In 1957, students in universities everywhere in China were calling for "an Hungarian affair".

One who has studied for years "what is really happening in China" could write a book, perhaps a few books, on the disparate views expressed by those who have visited China and have seen for themselves, and those who rule China, the Party, when they are talking not to foreigners but to their own people.

Dr. Wilson advocates "the path of intellect rather than passion". We are all for it. It is this alone which will bring us to "a proper understanding of what is happening in China today", provided one does not confound "understanding" and "seeing", as a scientist of Dr. Wilson's stature will immediately concede.

His appeal to universities to take the lead is a splendid idea very well worth trying. His opinion of the influence of the universities in China today is, however, not well founded. Intellectuals have to conform to the dictates of the Party, even in their own field of learning. The well-known economist, Ma Yen-chu, for ten years president of Peking University, a follower of the Party who approves of Communism, had his own doubts on certain phases of the economy of the country, and upheld his opinion courageously and publicly up to last March. He is no longer President of Peking University. The philosopher Feng Yu-lan, one of the few men well versed in both Chinese and Western philosophy, made last year at a public meeting of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference his "136th confession". Hundreds of other names could be given here.

All these remarks should not in any way be construed as denying any worth to the general tenor of the "Broad Thoughts" of Dr. Wilson's last chapter. Nor should any of the above qualifications deter the reader from enjoying, as much as we ourselves have enjoyed, the pleasure of touring China and seeing new things with such an observant and charming mentor as Dr. Wilson.

A last note on a sentence of the Introduction: "Science dries up when politics obtrude. They have not, so far, obtruded in China." Any one familiar with the upheaval of the last two or three years in China, and in particular with the fate of the intellectuals, cannot but raise his eyebrows at such a statement.

MARC HARDY