ma Mona had caught him doing it and he beat her with the back of his hand. He hit the woman hard, hit the woman who by common consent around Kirksville was considered something of a saint for her forbearance of her husband's brutality, and the gentle kindness she always showed to those who needed help. When my grandma Mona had called for my mother, her lip was swollen and split and her left eye blackened by the back of the old man's hand. In two years he would be gone, run away to some more exciting place. The last direct contact my mother would have from him would be a postcard dated December 9, 1941, mailed from Hickem Field in Hawaii, where he was a civilian laborer. The postcard told her that he had been there when the Japs bombed the field, and that he was personally going to get every one of those stinking yellow bastards before the war was over. Of course he didn't. When he died in Phoenix in 1967 only my uncle Pearl went there to make the funeral arrangements and to spit on his grave.

The dirigible *Shenandoa* was still floating over Kirksville and still looked very large from the packed-dirt yard. My mother, still holding Virginia, asked my grandma Mona, "What is it, Mama, is it all right?"

My grandma Mona, still pinning my grandfather's overalls to the clothes line, peered at the thing in the sky for a moment and then said, "Some kind of flying machine, you can see that, child. It must be all right, it has a flag on it." Then she leaned down and pulled a pair of drawers out of the bushel basket on the ground beside her.

The *Shenandoa* began a long graceful turn. She was going to circle the town two or three times to give all of the people a chance to look at her. There was great excitement and even some cheering among the workers of the shoe factory who were probably most greatful for getting an extra 15-minute break with pay. The mayor, in honor of the occasion, ordered one of the old Civil War cannons on the court house lawn fired in salute to the airship. The cannon was usually fired only on the Fourth of July, but old timers remembered a few other special occasions, like the assasination of McKinley and the Armistice, when it had roared. This time, however, the luckless courthouse caretaker had loaded both too much powder and too much wadding, and the old gun blew its breach with a terrifying roar. Almost miraculously, no one was killed. The sheriff, who actually touched it off, suffered only minor burns and lacerations, but every window on two sides of the court house was shattered, as were the plate glass windows in the newspaper office and dry goods store across the street.

The *Shenandoa* did not notice, but continued to turn lazily in the August sky. On the captain's orders crew members fired a small gun of their own in answer to the routine salute.

The distant explosion of the cannon startled Virginia into crying again. My mother patted her gently on the head and rocked her back and forth in her arms. My grandma Mona grew really excited. "They've done it! They've shot off the cannon! I guess it's real important," she said.

My mother shifted Virginia on her shoulder and said in a low, listless voice, "Nothing much ever happens in Kirksville. I guess this must be the biggest thing in years." ■

WORKERS' CONTROL IN CHINA:

AN OPEN–EYED VIEW *

SHELBY SHAPIRO

That ping pong might have political overtones sounded absurd, that the Defender of Quemoy and Matsu would go to Peking sounded even crazier. Now Shirley Maclaine walks arm-in-are with Madame Chou En Lai, and Diseneyland sells Red Chinese flags. (What would the Founder say? I can see it now: Comrade Bambi lecturing the other comrade animals on "socialist emulation" and on the necessity of raising productivity in the "All Animal, Snow White-is-Red-Fern-Gathering Collective No. 1," so that the oppressed Third World Animals should benefit from the teachings of Chairman Mickey Mouse. Minnie goes unisex, and walks arm-in-arm with that "patriotic capitalist" Scrooge!).

China is now allowing foreign visitors to enter, and as if to make up for years of Red-Chinese-Commie-Bastard propoganda, we are being flooded ("Apres mao, c'est le deluge") with a spate of articles, books and pamphlets from both the capitalist and "new left" press, ranging from sympathetic to blatantly pro-Maoist, from writers such as Joseph Alsop, John Kenneth Galbraith and Barbara Tuchman (See, for example, Tuchman's *Notes from China;*[1] *Fortune's* Louis Kraar's "I Have Seen China – and They Work"[2]). Some of this new literature is quite good; other pieces rank with the apologies and praises for Stalinist Russia written in the 30's by the willfully blind.

And so it is that we arrive at the latest offering, the Feb. 1973 issue of *Far East Reporter,* a Maoist drivel-sheet printed in New York City, which reprints Janet Goldwasser's and Stuart Dowty's (ahem!) "Chinese Factories are Exciting Places!" Their article sets

*Footnotes refer to sources, and will be found at the end of the article.

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