

Han Suyin on China and USA

HAN SUYIN, author of *The Crippled Tree* and many novels and essays, has been in England for several weeks following a four-month lecture tour of the United States. She will travel next to Paris, India, Cambodia, Singapore and China. During her visit here, while juggling meetings with her publishers over her forthcoming '*A Mortal Flower*' (second volume of her history of China's revolution 'as seen through the people'), she found time to speak at several of SACU's meetings and to offer some informal impressions to SACU NEWS.

Moving, as she does, with great ease between the Eastern and Western worlds by virtue of her parentage and an upbringing which carried her to both ends of the global see-saw, Han Suyin speaks with considerable understanding and sympathy for both East and West. Uppermost in her conversation was the war in Vietnam. 'I think that America is having a great crisis of conscience,' she said. 'Everywhere I went people wanted to talk about Vietnam. Not just university students, but women's clubs like the DAR, even taxi drivers, everyone is asking about the war and wanting to know what is happening and why. I was on TV many times, once with two Republican congressmen for two hours—they bashed me up, I bashed them up, and it was very healthy, very exhilarating. People are coming out and saying what they think. And one thing is certain: nobody calls anyone who is against the war in Vietnam a Communist anymore.'

'As for what the Americans are doing . . . I think it is a hell of a mistake they are making, and I think they are realising it. The time is past for American or any kind of foreign military bases. The British have been aware of that in Singapore; they have always said that we will go anytime that the Singapore people tell us to go, meantime we stay. And the people feel that, though the bases are there, there is no movement against them.'

Implications of the War

Nonetheless Han Suyin feels that the British people do not realise the implications of the war in Vietnam, are not really concerned by it. She likened the situation to the early part of the second world war when people shrugged and said that Czechoslovakia and Austria were very far away. 'But this war will affect them too, and they will have to face it for it will not be solved in the next year or two. The British should be the first to understand the mentality of the Vietnamese. After all, when Hitler bombed them, they swore they would not give in; they should see that the Vietnamese would have the same reaction. Indeed, any decent self-respecting people who love their country would have this reaction. And this has **nothing to do with politics**. If I were Vietnamese I might hate Ho Chi Minh, I might dislike Communism, but if some foreigner comes and bombs me I am going to shoot at him.'

This, said Han Suyin, shows an extraordinary blindness. 'The Americans thought that they would have peace within three months when they started to bomb North Vietnam. It is a year later now, and they are nowhere. You can make a desolation and call it peace, as Tacitus said in Roman times, but what will you have then? The end result of such belligerent action can only be to push all of South East Asia into Communism.'

Confirmed Neutralist

Han Suyin does not herself welcome the incursion of Communism into the countries of South East Asia. She is not a Communist and takes pains to make this clear. 'I would describe myself as an enlightened bourgeoisie, the same kind as De Gaulle. Like him, I am a confirmed neutralist. He feels that military alliances are a thing of the past, they don't work, and he wants to stay out of such military entanglements. That is quite right.'

(continued on page 2)

£150 To Aid Woman Teacher On China Trip

The Dorothy Alton Travel Fund is offering a grant of £150 towards the expenses of a woman teacher taking part in the SACU Teachers' Tour to China August 13-September 5, 1966. This fund was established in 1965 by the Liaison Committee of Women's Peace Groups of which the late Dorothy Alton was a founder. Any teacher who would like to go on this tour but would be unable to go unaided is invited to apply to the Liaison Committee, Castle Cottage, Orford, Suffolk. The name of the recipient eventually chosen by the Committee from among the applicants will be announced later in SACU NEWS.

China Teach-In

AN AUDIENCE of about 500—including many students—attended a 'teach-in' on China held 8 Feb in Cheltenham.

The main speaker was SACU's chairman, Dr Joseph Needham, President of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, who gave an account of China's evolution. Other speakers at the meeting held in Shaftesbury Hall and organised by the Rev Ian Thomson, Chaplain to St Paul's and St Mary's Colleges in Cheltenham, were A. D. Dodds-Parker, Conservative MP for Cheltenham, Colin Jackson, Labour MP for Brighouse and Spenborough, and Henry Osborne, of the local Liberal Party. The meeting was opened by the Mayor of Cheltenham, Cllr Bertram Taylor.

Plans are now being made for a follow-up meeting on modern-day China to be held in June at Cheltenham College.

Library To Open

IT IS INTENDED to open the library on the 14 April. Hours: Mon. 6-8 pm; Tues. 2-5; Wed. 10-5; Thur. 6.30-8.30.

Han Suyin

(Continued from page 1)

The difference in the moral attitudes prevailing in China as compared to England or America is significant and profound. Dismissing the suggestion that economic insecurity is a prime cause of the decline in morals among young people in the West, Han Suyin gave her explanation: 'I think that every human being wants a meaning to his life, wants to know that he is not just throwing sand into the desert, wants to perpetuate himself in a meaningfulness. The most alive and successful cultures have been able to permeate meaningfulness into action, and to this end try to ritualise and convey meaning to crucial events like birth, marriage, death and so on. When people cease to have faith in the meaning of their own actions, they fall into a decline. But in China they know what the meaning of their life is all about. They have 700 million people and I don't know how many million square miles to build up. It will take them a hundred years to do this. They know that not only their generation, but the ones to follow have a purpose. They are building a country, just as the Pilgrims built a new country in America.

'Therefore in China you have a puritan society. All of their energies are being sublimated into what they term meaningful activities. There is a great community consciousness in which the young people are expected to work hard, to marry, and to lead good lives. There is no time or surplus energy for sexual licence or anything of the kind.'

The Need for SACU

Han Suyin sees SACU's role in the momentous task of encouraging a community-consciousness in the world as a vital one, but one which must be shouldered by the British and, if possible, the Americans. She emphatically believes that SACU, or a similar organisation, should be inaugurated in America with branches in every large city, and that now is the time to begin. But she warned that SACU or its delegates must not expect to be shown any special interest by the Chinese. 'The British want to be informed about China—okay, let them find out. China has got a tremendous work to do, bridging a thousand years in ten or twenty years, and you are asking them to be interested in England! Yes, maybe, when they are not troubled by 3,000 bases and when they have not got Vietnam on their doorstep, then ask them to relax a

THE PRESS REVIEWED

A REPRESENTATIVE cross-section of what some of Britain's journals have been saying about China in recent weeks.

The Times—15 Feb.: A Reuter report of a television speech in USA by Senator Barry Goldwater, quoted him as saying that he would like China to offer one provocation so that the United States could knock China's atomic capacity out of the ground.

The Times (same issue): A despatch from its Moscow correspondent under the headline 'Moscow Hopes for Peking Truce,' indicated that there were signs that the Sino-Soviet conflict was coming to a head and it quoted from articles in *Pravda* and *Izvestia* dealing with Russian efforts to repair the breach between the two nations. There had been no denial in Moscow of reports of Party meetings throughout Russia at which members were told that Peking was trying to provoke a conflict between Russia and the United States.

The Observer—20 Feb.: Mark Frankland wrote that China's leaders were reacting to recent serious setbacks in their external strategy by increasing vigilance over the state of mind of the Chinese people. In the cause of 'rectification', a vast number of intellectuals had been despatched to factories and farms. This followed a vigorous campaign to ensure that the Army accepted a party line on military thinking which had more to do with politics than military technique. The Chinese leaders, having announced that the United States was concentrating on a military encirclement of China, were using this to strengthen the case for absolute ideological purity at home.

The Observer—27 Feb.: Robert Stephens, Diplomatic Correspondent, considered the political implications of the British Government's new defence policy East of Suez. One of the political interpretations of which the defence White Paper was capable was that Britain might find herself a prominent

bit. I think they certainly welcome SACU and want it to get on well, but I doubt if they will do anything to help the organisation.'

Finally, she said, it will be necessary for the West to change its attitude toward China. This can only be done by debate and discussion. 'This is the only way. It is a slow way, but the only effective way. It has been used by Mao Tse Tung since 1928. This is true democracy.'

KATE ALLT

member of the American sheriff's posse surrounding China. Asking if such a policy would be wise and whether Britain could afford it, he said the White Paper left the impression that vague and potentially enormous obligations had been added to Britain's commitments.

Stephen Constant **Daily Telegraph**, (8 Mar) said Chinese propaganda had reached a peak of unreality and hysteria that had amazed some seasoned observers of Chinese affairs. Seeking explanations, he offered two suggestions: (1) that the propaganda was intended to offset what he called the unprecedented face-losing that China's leaders had recently experienced; (2) that Mao Tse-tung, now 72, was worried and depressed by what might happen in China after his death; and the super-selling of his image might be intended to avoid a possible 'de-Maoisation' and to establish his political immortality.

BBC-TV: Derek Wood, London editor of an international defence magazine, and Anthony Verrier, a writer on strategy, talking about Britain's decision to buy fifty American F111 aircraft, with special relation to the British role East of Suez.

Mr Wood: 'Nobody likes to talk about this—it is all hushed up, but the fact is that it—(the F111)—carries a very large nuclear weapon. . . . You can use it for knocking out important targets on a strategic basis and its prime job is reconnaissance. But you certainly wouldn't use it for knocking out tanks or trying to attack people in the jungle.'

Mr. Verrier: 'Unless you want to use it and possibly escalate things to a general war you only threaten to use it as a deterrent against a power East of Suez which has or is likely to have an equivalent type of weapon . . .

'Therefore the only logical presumption—and I wish this had been stated in the Defence Review—the only possible opponent that Britain faces in the 1970s and the 1980s is China, and I cannot for the life of me imagine Britain trying to get involved in any warlike situation with China with a force of fifty aircraft.'

Asked if he was saying that—whether by intention or not—by concentrating on this highly sophisticated nuclear air weapon Britain was in a sense getting into a confrontation posture with China.

Mr Verrier: 'Yes. . . . This hasn't been logically thought out. It's positive assumption.'

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

AS MEMBERS ARE aware, SACU came into being on 15 May, 1965. Since that day the Society, which now numbers some fifteen hundred members, has undertaken activities of many kinds. Following the Inaugural Meeting last year, the Council of Management considered the question of the Society's constitution and, on legal advice, it was decided to incorporate it as a Company limited by Guarantee. This incorporation has now taken place and the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding Limited is taking over the assets and activities of the original Society.

In order to give members the earliest possible opportunity of exercising their rights in relation to the new Society, the first annual general meeting of the latter has been arranged for Saturday afternoon, 21 May, 1966, at 2.30 pm in the Central Hall, Westminster, SW1. Further details of the meeting will be enclosed in the next issue of SACU NEWS.

Those members—the great majority—who joined the Society before its incorporation in March have full rights to attend meetings and take part in activities until their subscriptions expire, when they will be notified that they are due for renewal. Renewal subscriptions will be payable to the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding Limited. In the meantime, however, because the incorporated body is a separate legal entity, it is necessary for members who wish to vote at the Annual General Meeting to sign a form of adherence to the newly incorporated Society. These forms will be circulated with the May issue of SACU NEWS, and, when duly filled in, will constitute credentials for the AGM. Forms will also be available at the meeting in case a member arrives without one.

With this issue you will also receive a nomination form with a list of the members of the existing Council of Management and a note of those not wishing to present themselves for election to the new Council. Any person nominated must be a member of the Society and must be nominated by two other members. Nominations should where possible be accompanied by the written consent of the candidate and should be submitted so as to arrive not later than Thursday, 21 April.

Resolution

A resolution on SACU's general policy is also published on this page.

The Council of Management unanimously agreed to submit this resolution

on behalf of the Council to the Annual General Meeting for approval. In submitting any other resolutions for discussion at the AGM, members are asked to have in mind the general tenor of the Council's resolution, which embodies the concepts on which SACU was founded. In order to allow time for the circulation of resolutions before the Annual General Meeting, members are asked to submit

them so as to arrive not later than Friday, 15 April. Any resolution should be signed by not fewer than twenty members. Amendments falling within the terms of a resolution can be accepted, at the Chairman's discretion, at the meeting itself.

Copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association are available at the Society's office for any members who wish to consult them.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING—21 May, 1966

TIME TABLE

Friday, 15 April	Last date for receipt of resolutions
Thursday, 21 April	Last date for receipt of nominations for Council of Management
Thursday, 28 April	May issue SACU NEWS to be despatched with AGM Programme and form of adherence (credentials)
Saturday, 21 May	AGM. 2.30 pm, Central Hall, Westminster, SW1

A RESOLUTION

The following resolution, submitted by the Council of Management, will be presented to the AGM of SACU on Saturday, 21 May, 1966.

THE PRIMARY AIM of SACU is to provide a medium through which developments in China, past and present, may be analysed, understood and assessed by the British people. In essaying this task, SACU recognises the difficulties and problems involved.

China is undergoing a political, economic and social transformation. China's system of government, her political and economic philosophy, are rooted in concepts—some new, some very old—essentially different from those generally accepted in this country. All matters affecting China today have some political content, and SACU does not restrict the rights of its members to discuss any aspects of China's policies and way of life.

But SACU is not a medium for party politics or ideological partisanship. The membership encompasses men and women from all walks of life with varying political, philosophical, religious and social sympathies. This breadth of interest necessarily implies that SACU, as a corporate body, refrains from pronouncing judgment on any aspect of development in China. The purpose of SACU is to provide information, stimulate interest, and offer a forum for discussion. The conclusions that members reach are their own, without attempts at mutual censorship. Similarly, speakers on SACU platforms, and writers in SACU publications, are expressing their own individual points of view.

Branch Launched

SACU's SECOND BRANCH was inaugurated last month in Barnet at a meeting held in the Hendon Town Hall. Speakers included Professor Joan Robinson, of Cambridge University, and author and journalist Stuart Gelder.

Among the sponsors of the local branch are playwright Arnold Wesker, Labour MP William Warbey, and Sir Learie Constantine, ex-Test cricketer and former High Commissioner for Trinidad and Tobago.

Committee members of the new branch are G. J. Carrick (chairman), P. G. Warland (secretary), J. Shapiro, L. Coan and L. Pinner.

400 Hear Han Suyin

ON THURSDAY, 17 March, 400 persons heard Han Suyin speak at a SACU meeting held in the City Art Gallery at Leeds under the chairmanship of Professor Owen Lattimore. This very successful meeting will give added impetus to the Leeds Branch of SACU, to be established shortly, with many distinguished local sponsors. Those interested please contact Mrs Sybille van der Sprenkel, c/o the Department of Social Studies, University of Leeds, 2.

Message Of Sympathy

ON LEARNING OF the recent serious earthquake disaster in North China, the Society's Secretary wrote to the President of the Foreign Cultural Association in Peking expressing members' sympathy.

Camden China Festival Events

FIRM DETAILS of some of the events in the Camden Festival of China can now be given. Sixty Chinese paintings will be shown in the foyer at the Central Library, Swiss Cottage. This exhibition—which will show photographs and some antiques on loan from the British Museum as well as the paintings—will be officially opened on 8 May by the Mayor of Camden, Councillor Samuel Fisher, JP. There will be an exhibition of woodcuts and handicrafts at Kentish Town Branch Library along with a selection of photographs by J Allan Cash, FIIP, FRPS, taken on a visit to China in 1964. At Holborn Central Library there will be a selection of modern Chinese stamps. The painting exhibition will end on 28 May but the other two exhibitions finish at the end of the festival on 4 June.

Three lectures have been arranged at the Central Library, Swiss Cottage—Dr David Adler will speak on 'Medicine in China Today' on Thursday, 12 May, Dr Kurt Mendelssohn on 'Technology in Modern China' on Tuesday, 17 May, and Mary Tregear on 'China's Cultural Treasures' on Tuesday, 19 May. Ernie Roberts, Assistant General Secretary of the AEU and Colin Penn, who lived in China for two years, will speak at the Foresters Hall, Kentish Town, on Wednesdays, 11 and 25 May. Ernie Roberts will speak on 'China's Workers', and Colin Penn will show slides and talk on 'Life in China Today'. Friday, 20 May, Martin Lawrence will give a talk on 'Contemporary Chinese Music' at Burgh House, Hampstead. The last lecture is on Friday, 24 May, when Dr Joseph Needham will talk on 'The Past in China's Present' at Holborn Central Library.

Short Chinese films will be shown at the Everyman Cinema, Hampstead, in the weeks beginning Monday, 9, 23 and

30 May. Felix Greene's film 'China!' will be shown at the Kilburn Classic for one week, starting Sunday, 8 May. Comprehensive catalogues of Chinese films are now available, so that organisations who wish to select suitable programmes can do so. There are also tentative plans to make a film of the festival.

On Sunday, 22 May, there will be a 'Teach-In' on China at the old Hampstead Town Hall. We hope to have many well-known people of all shades of political thinking, to discuss and answer questions on China.

The social committee have arranged two dinners. The first, for Festival Patrons, is to be held at the Asiatique Restaurant, Swiss Cottage, on 28 April. The main social event, however, will be a large Chinese dinner at the Camden Assembly Rooms on 24 May. The menu promises a good evening's eating.

The week-end school originally planned for May at Burgh House has now been changed to 18-19 June, so that all those whose interest has been aroused during the month can acquire further knowledge of China.

During the month bookshops in Hampstead will carry special books on China, and the departmental stores displays of handicrafts.

An information leaflet is to be sent to all SACU members in London as well as to many people in Camden. A larger brochure giving more details of events and carrying articles on Chinese life will also be published. Posters advertising all events will be prominently displayed in the Borough.

During the festival we shall need many helpers to cover all these functions. Anyone who has time to spare is asked to contact Jennifer Chaston at 24 Warren St, London, W1.

A Clarification

We have received the following communication from Liao Hung-Ling whose talk at a weekend school formed the basis of an article 'Study and Work Combine in China' published in the February issue of SACU NEWS.

IT HAS BEEN pointed out to me that there is a contradiction in the statement in the article 'New Schools cannot be built fast enough therefore last August the National Conference on Agricultural Education decided to develop part farm—part study colleges and secondary schools . . .' and the statement that only a part-work part-study system of education can prevent the growth of a privileged class.

As they stand, these paragraphs certainly are not clear enough. Two paragraphs in the original text, the one stating the social and economic nature of the old system, and the other introducing Chairman Mao's theory of the purpose of education and the nature of knowledge, were cut out, doubtless for space reasons. My purpose was to show that the work-study and the farm-study schools and institutions perform two functions: first, the short-term one of providing educational facilities for the greatest number of people in the shortest possible time, and second, the long-term and far more important one of providing an educational system in which a new type of person and a new society can develop.

ABOUT SACU

Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding (Founded 15 May 1965).

Office: 24 Warren Street, London W.1
Telephone EUSton 0074-5
Telegrams ANGCHIN London W.1

Chairman: Dr Joseph Needham

Deputy-Chairman:
Professor Joan Robinson

Vice-Chairman: Mrs Mary Adams

Chairman of General Purposes Committee: Mr Ernest Roberts

Secretary: Mr Derek Bryan

* * *

Council of Management: Mrs Mary Adams, Mr Peter de Francia, Mr Alec Horsley, Dr N Kurti, Dr E R Lapwood, Mr Jim Mortimer, Dr Joseph Needham, the Rt Hon P J Noel-Baker, MP, Professor E G Pulleybank, Miss Vanessa Redgrave, Mr Ernest Roberts, Professor Joan Robinson, Sir Gordon Sutherland, Mr Peter Swann, Professor George Thomson, Mr Jeremy Thorpe, MP, Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper, Dame Joan Vickers, MP, Professor K W Wedderburn.

* * *

Believing that understanding between Britain and China is of the highest importance, SACU aims to make information about China widely available in order to help every interested person in Britain to make his or her own assessment.

* * *

Membership of SACU is open to all who subscribe to the aims of the Society. Members are entitled to receive SACU NEWS monthly free of charge, use the library at head office, call upon the Society for information and participate in all activities of the Society.

Annual subscription: £1.0.0 Reduced rates (5s.) for old age pensioners and full-time students.

SACU NEWS is published by the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding, 24 Warren St, London, W.1. (EUSton 0074-5), and printed by Goodwin Press Ltd. (TU), 135 Fonthill Road, London, N.4.