

Chapter 15

The Tompkins, Engsts, and Hinton's China Friends

Victims of the Cultural Revolution, Survivors in Post Mao China

Carl Crook ,Marni Hinton' s future husband , was from a famous "China-hand" family. Isabel Brown, Carl's mother, was born in China to Canadian missionary parents who sent her back to Canada for her college education. She studied anthropology, eager to apply her new skill to study and reform Chinese life. She returned to war-torn China in 1938 to study, teach, and aid the Chinese through such organizations as the International Chinese Industrial Cooperatives (popularly known as the Gung Ho foundation) that expatriate Westerners, such as Edgar Snow and Rewi Alley, founded after Japan's invasion. That international private organization established hundreds of cooperatives that gave work to several hundred thousand of China's rural and urban unemployed. Providing start-up loans and expertise, Gung Ho guided the development of small factories that utilized local skills and resources to produce consumer goods. The organization also established a vocational college to train technicians and managers for the cooperatives. Some observers regarded Gung Ho as communistic although it worked with both sides during and after the war. Isabel's efforts with the organization were one of the reasons she began drifting away from religion and towards communism.

In 1940, Isabel fell in love with David Crook, an adventurer .¹ David was a British Jew whose middle-class family faced economic hardships after World War I. Unable to afford an education in England David sought his fortune abroad, first travelling in Europe then in the United States. On both continents the teenager had to work menial jobs, being exploited, he believed, even by his uncle. He decided a college education and development of this writing

skills were his only route out of the working class. In 1929, he enrolled in New York City's Columbia University while continuing to work. He soon became involved with student radicals and joined the Young Communist League. He was a regular at demonstrations and was on the Donald Henderson-Robert Hall organized trip to the Harlan, Kentucky coal strike in 1932.

David did not, like Henderson and Hall, join Harold Ware's radical farm organization. However, he later became involved in a China version of Ware's agricultural reform movement. After graduation he returned to England and joined its Communist Party, becoming a low-level worker. Then he decided to join its Spanish Civil War contingent. As he was recovering from wounds in a Spanish hospital he met Norman Bethune the devoted Canadian Communist physician who soon went to China to become a front-line physician for the Party, dying while at work in 1939.² While David was recuperating, the Soviet's KGB intelligence agency recruited him to spy against Trotskyites in Spain. He pretended to be a professional reporter to uncover such "traitors." He was then asked to do the same in China, receiving a small salary. He arrived in 1938, worked as a writer and teacher while reporting to the Soviets. He was cut loose by the KGB after Trotsky's assassination, but did not return to England. Intrigued by Edgar Snow's account of the Chinese Communists' struggle to reform their country, including its peasantry, David moved inland and found work teaching college English.³ He soon met Isabel, fell in love, and became engaged. Both were distraught over Japan's invasion and sickened by China's poverty. Isabel helped with the cooperative movement and David wrote on the plight of the country's peasants. Unfortunately for the couple they were separated for a year because of Isabel's need to care for her mother, David's jobs, and World War II.

In 1942, as her family returned to Canada, Isabel and David had to take different routes but eventually arrived in England to help the war effort. They soon married, then had to separate

again. Isabel joined the Canadian Party, worked in a bookstore and a munitions factory, then volunteered for the Canadian Army's women's corps. David joined the British Air Force and worked with British intelligence in India, Ceylon, and Burma. At war's end the couple reunited in London and resumed their Party work. Isabel enrolled in the London School of Economics seeking a PhD, planning a dissertation on the anthropology of a Chinese village she had studied before the war. After contacting Edgar Snow about his cooperative program David enrolled in the University of London's Oriental Studies department to learn Chinese. Then, at the urging of the British Party, Isabel changed her dissertation's focus. She and David were asked to travel to China to study and report on the Communist Party's agricultural reforms in the regions under its control. With a British version of America's GI Bill's subsidies for travel, and with credentials supplied by the Party, the couple was welcomed in Communist controlled China for a year's study of the Ten Mile Inn village in Shidong Township, Hebei Province. Like William Hinton, The couple lived among the villagers, observing the results of the peasants' wartime seizures then division of the lands and property, and the Communists attempts to guide the peasants towards a socialist reconstruction of rural life—something the Party was still defining.⁴

Isabel and David were disappointed because the Inn's changes were limited to forming small mutual aid groups and a few cooperatives, leading to only a slight increase in production. The couple lamented the central government's unwillingness to eliminate private land holding, take full charge of agricultural reform through communes, and force the use of advanced technologies. A decade later, the Crooks returned to study Ten Mile Inn after the government had reversed a trend towards inequality and imposed a strict Soviet style full commune system.

They were pleased to report the new system led to health and old age care, schools, and vastly increased production.

Before then, in 1948, as the Crooks were completing their first village study the Chinese party asked them to stay to teach English to members of its cadre. Isabel and David accepted the offer although they knew they would be endangering themselves if the civil war ended with a Communist defeat. Unlike William Hinton's, the Crook's small local school grew into Communist China's leading college-level English language institute at what became the Beijing Foreign Studies University initially located on the grounds of the Japanese Embassy. They trained diplomatic, military, and intelligence students, as well as a generation of Communist bureaucrats. Soon, they were helped by other expatriates such as Bertha Sneck, William Hinton's ex-wife, and the newly arrived American Ann Tompkins.

By the time David and Isabel began teaching they had made another important ex-patriate friend, George Hatem. Shafick George Hatem was born in the United States in 1910 to Lebanese Maronite Christian immigrants. His father began as a laborer in textile mills but rose to create a small but relatively well-off small business in a small North Carolina town. George did well in high school, then in his pre-med college course. He was sent to the American University in Lebanon and then Geneva, Switzerland to earn a medical degree. Then, in 1933 he and some other adventurous young doctors decided to establish a medical practice in Asia. They looked at several cities, then settled in Shanghai where George changed his name to Ma Hai-te (Ma Haide) and specialized in treating wealthy clients, many with venereal infections. George quickly became disgusted with Shanghai's poverty and corruption. Influenced by left-leaning foreigners such as Agnes Smedley, Rewi Alley, and Edgar Snow, as well as Sun Yat-Sens' widow, he gave-up his practice in 1936 and moved to the Communist-controlled area

where Mao was establishing his headquarters. George helped Norman Bethune with medical for the Communists before Norman's early death, then took a leading role in establishing the Communists health-care system. George was soon honored by Mao as he built the post war's public health organization, one that he led for decades. He also became a central figure in the ex-patriate community, advising the Engsts and the Crooks on how to deal with the government.⁵

While at the language school the Crooks refused to live as favored and isolated foreigners. They led a sparse life in a campus apartment rather than living in a fine home or the special Friendship Hotel alongside other foreigners. They dressed like humble Chinese and sent their three boys to the university's Chinese boarding school to avoid westernizing them. They refused to speak English when the boys were at home because Isabel wanted the family to be regarded as Chinese rather than as visitors. However, the Crooks were in contact with other foreigners such as Joan and William Hinton. Other exceptions to "going native" were David and Isabel's keeping their British citizenship, registering the boys as British subjects, taking family trips to Canada and England and later Europe during paid holidays. But Isabel made sure the boys became communists, encouraging them to applaud the late 1950's Great Leap Forward.

The Reason for a "Leap"

Although the Soviet Union had made one of the greatest transfers of technology and expertise in history to China, by the late 1950s China's leaders were gravely disappointed in their nation's economic performance. They decided, despite the tragic failures of Stalin's economic policies of the late 1920s, to imitate them. 1958's Great Leap Forward, China's second Five Year Plan, was a forcibly imposed initiative to quickly increase industrial and agricultural production without relying on foreign investment. Under the Leap peasants were forced to yield all their

property and join huge communes directed by agricultural “experts” who were usually ideologists, not agriculturalists. Some communes were as large as the gigantic Rhode Island-sized Gigant commune the Soviets established during the 1930s. Like the Engsts, the peasants were also ordered to engage in industrial production rather than work on what had been their own garden plots. At the same time, the established urban factories were ordered to increase their production. In addition, across the country thousands of tiny iron furnaces were set-up, using local trees, even furniture, for fuel and the pots and pans of the peasants as ore. (David Crook had one in his backyard.) The iron output was useless and agricultural production fell while the government increased food seizures to feed the growing urban work force. Hundreds of thousands who refused to follow the Leap’s plans were jailed or executed. Tragically, many communes were mismanaged, and the factories did not have the resources and technologies they needed to meet their quotas. The result was an economic disaster and one of the greatest famines in history. Credible historians and demographers estimate as many as forty-five million deaths and a thirty-million decline in births. ⁶

It took several years and a reduction of Mao’s political influence before the government backed away from the last of its 1958 Leap policies. Recovery was hampered by the Soviet Union withdrawing its advisors and their technologies in 1960. An indication of the Crook family’s devotion to communism was David’s insisting his salary be halved to help in the post-Leap economic struggle. Like Sid and Joan Engst, the Crooks never admitted there had been a famine.

The Crooks and Rittenbergs and the Cultural Revolution, Political Madness

China’s mid-1960’s Cultural Revolution did not produce as many victims as the Leap, but Mao’s attempt to return to power and restore economic and culturally pure Marxism by using

radicalized students (Red Guards) killed perhaps a million, sent as many to labor camps, and severely damaged the nations' economy and its intellectuals--and the Crooks' lives.⁷ The revolution became entwined with a factional battles between Party leaders that were as severe as Soviet Union's during the 1930s. China had its version of purges. Its last 1970s struggle had a different ending, however. Stalin purged moderates, but in China the moderates defeated the radical Maoist Gang of Four.

At the Revolution's beginning David Crook reacted as the Engsts and Tompkins had. David urged his boys to follow him and join Red Guard para-military organizations in purging China of capitalistic and "intellectual" influences and by dismantling any organization that was less than ideologically pure, even schools and universities. The Crooks may not have known how brutal the Guard's campaigns were before or after they came under the direct control of Mao's faction but David and Isabel Crook approved the Revolution's anti-intellectual propaganda and purges and accepted their school's closure. Their son Paul participated in home invasions and the other boys, Carl, and Michael, accepted being forced into factory jobs.

Despite that, unlike their friends the Engsts, David, Isabel, and their children were punished during the Cultural Revolution. After returning from a 1966 family vacation and pro-China lecture tour in the United States, and taking-over a radio station for the Red Guard, David was accused of being a spy and of supporting an out-of-favor Guard faction. He was also classified as an "intellectual." David was imprisoned for five years, living in solitary confinement in a bare and small seven by fifteen-foot cell with a near starvation diet. David later admitted that with the solitude and only the works of Chairman Mao to read, he underwent a personality change, becoming a true Maoist while teaching himself to read Chinese. Isabel was kept in a small room at her college, always with a Chinese girl watching her. She spent several isolated years while

her institute , like most others in China, remained shut down. Although British citizens, even the Crook boys were refused permission to leave the country.

Some expatriate friends suffered more than the Crooks. Many of those who had been associated with the Gung Ho cooperative movement that was outlawed in 1952, because it was a non-government institution, were jailed. Even the deeply committed Maoist, the ex-United States army linguist and interpreter Sidney Rittenberg, who was a Chinese Party member and confidant of the nation's leaders, was held in freezing dark-cell solitary confinement and subjected to sleep-deprivation.⁸ He battled insanity for a decade until released in 1977.

Sidney's and his wife's 1968 arrest came despite his showing devotion to Communism by staying in China and working for the government after spending 1949 to 1956 under house arrest and prison because of a false spying claim. As would David Crook in the 1960s, Sidney had become a more devoted theoretical Marxist during his lonely 1950s confinement. Other expatriates suffered, even the revered George Hatem. His home was raided, his wife forced to clean toilets and was constantly humiliated before being sent to a labor camp. George was demoted to a menial job.

Not Seeing Evil, Being Simple Chinese But With Benefits.

David and Isabel Crook were released in 1973. As Rewi Alley of the Coop movement did on his release, both immediately forgave their captors. They were restored to their positions and received an official apology from the government. Isabel returned to teaching at the reopened university while David was made an administrator and the manager of a great project developing a comprehensive English-Chinese dictionary. Over the next thirty years David and Isabel never condemned China for their imprisonment, and they publicly accepted the many policy swings by the Party ---including its move away from economic Maoism in the mid -

1970s. David and Isabel even praised the stability brought by China's new economic and political policies after the defeat of Mai's allies. The Cooks did more for post-Mao China. On paid home-leaves to Canada, England, and the United States during the 1970s they lectured on the wonders of China's new society and economy, even when visiting the farm of their old friend (and now relative) William Hinton. That was a bit impolitic as by then William was decidedly unhappy with China's move toward capitalism and, more than David, hoped for a return to Mao's commitment to equality. It took almost twenty years until the Crooks voiced some criticisms of China's policies. After the suppression of the protest movements of the late 1980s David wrote of his disappointment with China's new leadership and refused to meet with them. But the octogenarian kept his faith in communism.

The Young Crooks, Newer Versions of American "China Hands"

The Cook boys had a different reaction to China's policies during and after the Cultural Revolution. Carl, Michael, and Paul had approved the Revolution at first, including their forced assignment to factories and communes. They remembered that and their activities in the Red Guard as being somewhat of a vacation with enough time to teach themselves English. Their attitude began to change when they discovered their father and mother had been imprisoned. They pressured the government to release David and Isabel while they requested permission to leave China, even if their parents decided to remain. They were denied exit visas and forced to continue factory work until 1973, just as David and Isabel were released then announcing they would stay in China. Although forgiving the government and deciding to remain, they had a different goal for their boys. Like William Hinton and later Joan Engst, they arranged for their children to leave China for education and careers, although they did not ask them to abandon communism or China.⁹

The young Crooks left for England as soon as they could, although they had little money. Carl and Michael worked their way through Europe while Paul went to Australia and took menial jobs while saving for his passage to England. In England, the three boys worked for a year or so, then Michael and Paul took advantage of England's socialist policies and enrolled in college. Carl, perhaps because of encouragement by the Crook family's American contacts, such as William Hinton, decided to move to United States. By 1975 he was enrolled in the University of Massachusetts' teachers' program. William's niece Marni (Hinton) Rosner had enrolled there following a 1971 China visit. The university gave Carl many course-credits for his language skills and his life experiences, and he soon earned a Master's Degree. While still a student Carl began lecturing on China, at least once with William's daughter Carma who William had brought from China in 1971. More often, Carl's lectures were with Marni who he would marry in 1978 at the William Hinton's Pennsylvania farm.

Before then, Carl decided he could do more than give occasional lectures and teach school. Realizing that with signs of the opening of China the United States would want people with China experience and language proficiency Carl decided to take advantage of his skills to become a credentialed China expert. He moved to California. In 1976, at age 27, he enrolled in Stanford University's graduate history program, selecting a major in Asian studies. At the same time, he was tapped for work in the university's new Asian Studies Center and its United States-China Relations Program. The center and program were not purely academic. They dealt with practical problems and opportunities. The language program began during World War II as a Chinese language training course for the military and continued on becoming more comprehensive during the Cold War then expanded as trade with China seemed a possibility. A Central Intelligence Agency-supported branch was established, an intelligence officer was hired

to direct some programs, and directed a growing number of studies of China's economy. Carl was utilized as a source on China's economics and politics because of his contacts including his mother and father who had been restored to favor by China's leaders. Carl was also made part of a Stanford team that constructed a Chinese-American technical language dictionary. Carl continued to work and study in California but also returned to part-time living in Massachusetts where Marni was teaching and staying close to her parents Jean and Steven, helping them with their Civil Rights work.

Carl completed his Stanford doctoral courses in 1980 and was awarded a prestigious Social Science Research Council grant to finish his dissertation. It was an expansion of his mother's 1940's Ten Mile Inn study of the development of the village's economy. Carl never completed his dissertation. He stayed at the Stanford center, often serving as a guide and interpreter for visiting Chinese businessmen while, from Cambridge, Massachusetts he and Marni ran summer tours of China at \$10,000 per person. Carl and his brother Michael also helped write and translate a book of articles by young Chinese who were disappointed by the short life of a 1979 cultural and political thaw. They demanded its revival.¹⁰

A New China and a New Type of Hand

Carl soon became less critical of China's policies after he began working for a China-United State friendship organization and after he took a full-time job. In 1983, he became a new type of "China Hand". That term had been used during the early Cold War to describe Americans in China, such as Owen Lattimore, who supported the Chinese Communists and communism. Most post-1970's China Hands, in contrast, supported the use of capitalist's funds and organizational skills as China moved away from Mao's strict economic Marxism. In the 1970s, more so in the 1980s, China's new leaders recognized the failure of the China-alone policy and began

tempting foreigners with plans designed to entice billions of dollars of investments. Even the Rockefeller oil and banking interests were welcomed back. China's leaders also decided its closed internal economy (but not political system) needed an overhaul. Communal farms and factories were freed from central control or privatized as foreign companies were invited to bring their money and technologies to China to form both joint and independent ventures. More than 9,000 ventures were established during just the 1980s.¹¹ There were many, many more during the 1990s, resulting in China becoming a world economic power-- and, unexpectedly, a threat.¹²

The Hammer Connection, Carl's Opportunity

Among the first Americans to take advantage of China's offers was Armand Hammer, one of the world's most aggressive capitalists, but also a long-time friend of the Soviet Union. His father was a founder of the United States' Communist Party and Armand was one of the first important new foreign businessmen in the Soviet Union. He went-on to head worldwide businesses including the huge Occidental Petroleum while maintaining his relationship with Soviet leaders. He had also been an early advocate of normalizing trade relations with China, influencing America's President Richard Nixon who made an historic China trip in 1972.

In 1979, when the United States normalized relations with China, Hammer began negotiations for participation in a two-billion-dollar project for a fifteen square mile open-pit coal field, and for rights to explore for off-shore oil.¹³ It took years of negotiations until there was a 1983 agreement on the mine. Occidental agreed to contribute a half-billion dollars and technical and managerial advice. China was to build a city to house 17,000 workers, processing plants, and a several hundred-mile-long railroad. Then, Occidental advertised for an on-site China representative. Carl Crook responded, was hired, and moved with Marni to Beijing where his parents were still active at the university. Carl was well paid, and Marni taught English

alongside Isabel. That allowed a comfortable lifestyle for Carl's growing family and frequent visits to Massachusetts and, later, Putney, Vermont. Unfortunately for Carl, in the late 1980s shifts in world markets led to a decline in coal prices. Occidental ended its relationship. Hammer's mining project was not alone in failing. Many of the early joint ventures, including those involving the giants General Motors, Jeep, and Peugeot were unsuccessful.

In 1988, at age thirty-nine, Carl had to find a new way to make a living. He devised a capitalistic, not communistic one.¹⁴ William Hinton introduced him to a young American engineer in China whose plastic bottle company faced difficulties. They started a wine importing business to serve the growing number of foreign businessmen in China. They gained exclusive distribution rights to several French and California wines then were surprised and delighted when China's economic growth led to the emergence of a Chinese middle-class demanding foreign imports. Their Montrose Wines was soon selling several thousand cases a month. With Montrose and other wine businesses Carl became more than well-off. He built a custom house in Beijing and bought a large estate in Putney, Vermont where he helped oversee Carmalita's school while running an international investment company.¹⁵

Carl's brothers Paul and Michael also were involved in the development of the new China. Like Carl they levered their language skills, cultural knowledge, and contacts. Both worked their way through college in England and both helped compile Chinese-English dictionaries. Paul worked on one for colloquial language while Michael helped with another important one for scientific-technical language. Paul soon became a noted BBC China expert, eventually serving as the editor of the system's China section. He supported China's modernization, keeping faith in the nation's future despite the trauma of 1989's Tiananmen Square massacre and the following political crackdown.¹⁶

Unlike Paul, Michael did not make England his permanent home.¹⁷ He finished a science program then was hired to teach Chinese at London's Polytechnic University. He kept busy translating scientific articles, but he soon decided to move to the United States. He spent much of the 1980s teaching Chinese at the elite near Boston, Massachusetts where Jean Rosner had settled. Then, he decided to take advantage of China's partial opening to foreigners. In his mid-thirties he took a job teaching at China's Polytechnic University, reuniting with his parents. Michael became involved in more as he and his family were accepting China's move towards capitalism. He negotiated with the government and was allowed to establish a private English language-based school for foreign children. He also tested how open the new China was when he joined with Isabel to help Canadian sponsors revive the Rewi Alley -Walter Illsley Gung Ho cooperative movement that had been banished in 1952 as part of Mao's drive to eliminate any non-governmental institutions, including those sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee and the YWCA. Michael also revived and directed the Gung Ho's Bailie Vocational Institute to train cooperatives' leaders. He and Isabel travelled across China hoping to fill in gaps left by the changes to China's welfare system. Employment in small local enterprises could provide the needed aid, Michael told reporters. He became an international figure praising the new China while denouncing the racism of the West and leading Beijing's Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding. He was rewarded by the government. He was one the handful of expatriates honored with a place on a special float during the celebration of Communist China's sixtieth anniversary. Special awards and medals followed.¹⁸

There was another variation of New China Hands, Sidney Rittenberg. ***

From Prisoner to Millionaire Capitalist

Benefiting more than Michael or Carl from China's new state-controlled capitalism was Sidney Rittenberg, the young radical American Army linguist/interpreter who stayed in China after World War II. He became the wealthiest and most famous of the newest China Hands. He paid a great price for that however, including his first wife divorcing him after his 1946 decision to remain in China.¹⁹

Despite being close to Mao and the Party's inner circles since 1946, a Chinese Party member, and a major figure in the expatriate community, on Stalin's order Sidney was imprisoned in late 1949 as a spy. Stalin believed Rittenberg was part of an international plot as were Noel Field and Sidney's American friend Anna Louise Strong, although they had been the Soviet Union's supporters since the 1920s. When Sydney's was seized his Chinese wife left him as he spent six years in solitary confinement under constant interrogation. He had a mental breakdown.

Rittenberg became as much or more a "true-believer" than others while imprisoned. After his years of torture and deprivation Sidney decided to stay in China, accepting the Party's apologies and gifts. He was handsomely rewarded. His Party membership was restored, he was given a luxurious apartment (it even had running hot water) generous rations, and was awarded one of the highest salaries in the nation. He was made chief of the English language section of the important Broadcast Administration that shaped internal and foreign news and propaganda. That position was important and gave him access to highly secret documents while he served as an editor and translator. He did much for Radio Beijing's foreign broadcasts and helped translate Mao's writings. He also regained his role as a liaison with the American expatriates, not just the older ones such as Anna Louise Strong and the Hintons and Engsts, but with new arrivals such as Frank Coe and Sol Adler who were escaping possible espionage charges in the

United States. Sidney soon found a new, third wife at the radio station and began a family. However, despite remaining faithful to China Sidney decided to create a safety-outlet. He made sure that he, his wife, and his children had American citizenship and that they all could speak and read English. He enrolled his wife Yulin in a full-time course at the Crook's language school.

Sidney energetically supported the Great Leap and its forced collectivization campaign. On a 1959 government-ordered inspection he reported amazing results in agriculture and manufacturing. He contributed more to the Leap: He had his own little steel furnace. When famine struck in the early 1960s food rations were so small at his department that many of his employees became protein deprived and too weak to come to work. In response, he voluntarily reduced his family's generous rations leading him, his, wife and children to suffer from malnutrition and vitamin deficiencies so severe their bodies swelled. That did not change his beliefs. He reacted as had the Crooks and Engsts and blamed the food shortages on the Soviet's withdrawal of aid and its demands for repayment of Korean War loans in foodstuffs.

Despite the Leap's failure, Sidney continued to be a Maoist. He took a leading part in the Cultural Revolution, appearing on stage with Mao and coveting the autographed copy of the revolution's bible, the Little Red Book, that Mao gave him. Sidney also guided an ex-patriates' version of a Red Guard cadre. He was so convinced the country needed a return to pure communism that he gave his luxury furniture and his collection of Chinese art to the national museum. He went further. Thinking he was being a good Revolutionary he helped with a Guard take-over of the Broadcast Administration and its radio stations. By default, he became the head of Radio Beijing. That put him in danger as all factions in the Cultural Revolution's political

battles were concerned about a foreigner overseeing the nation's most influential propaganda outlet.

Soon, Sidney and his family became victims of factional quarrels over Mao's politics and the struggle for control of economic and cultural policies. At first, the Rittenbergs just suffered from Red Guard invasions of their home and from personal pressures at work. But in early 1968 Sidney was arrested and sent to solitary confinement in a dark cell, again with a starvation diet. All his property was seized. Yulin, his Chinese wife, was beaten, humiliated, and sent to a brick-making labor camp with her young son. The older children were sent to boarding schools and labor camps. Yulin was forced to carry bricks a hundred yards to-and-from the kiln while being spat-on, degraded, and deprived of food. The family suffered for a decade. Other loyal expatriates could not tolerate such punishments for that long. Selma Vos Cao, the Dutch-Jewish wife of a Chinese scholar, committed suicide in her cell.²⁰

Sidney learned that his arrest was due to the machinations of Jiang Qing, Mao's power-hungry wife, who wanted to eliminate any threats to her and the ailing Mao's hardline communist policies by those who desired an opening of China's economy. In the mid-1960s Jiang Qing and her allies had begun a replay of the Soviet Union's political battles and purges of the 1930s. For close to a decade, she and her followers held power but could not force through all their draconian measures as they fought what they saw as a dismantling of all of Mao's truly egalitarian policies, even having to concede to the reversal of some of them. After Mao's death in 1976 Jiang Qing's "Gang of Four" was deposed. Moderates took power, leading to Sidney being released in 1977, Yulin in 1979.

It took several years for Sidney to emotionally readjust but he forgave the government for his decade of suffering. He was rewarded with an important job, a membership in China's

Science Academy, a chauffeur driven car, a spacious apartment in the luxury Friendship Hotel for foreign experts, and access to its restaurant that served Chinese and foreign food. The children were released from their work camps and admitted to the best schools and universities. Sidney again had one of the highest salaries in the nation and received back pay worth some \$10,000 (American dollars), a small fortune in terms of buying power in China.

But he was discontented because of his romantic Maoism. In 1979 he kept silent about his disappointment in the country's drift from true communism under Deng Xiaoping as he announced that he and Yulin were going to the United States for three months to reunite with his rich South Carolina family, one he had not seen for more than thirty years. On arrival, he contacted President Carter's administration to inquire about repatriation. Sidney and Yulin soon returned to China, then quickly made a crucial decision, one that Sidney never fully explained. In 1980, on another "short trip" to America, he decided to make New York his home, while keeping his Beijing apartment and leaving his children with relatives. Surprisingly, the Chinese government accepted his decision.

In America, the sixty-year-old Sidney and Yulin had several financially stressed years, although Sidney quickly became famous, appearing on television shows such as Mike Wallace's *60 Minutes* and contracting for what became four national broadcast television documentaries. In 1982, came the first of many long articles on him and his China experience in the *New York Times* and national magazines.²¹ But none of that provided much money. The couple fell into debt when Sidney could not complete a biography, owing his publisher the money he had been advanced. To eke out a living the couple began acting as on-site guides in China, Sidney gave lectures on China and taught part-time at the New School, while Yulin taught Chinese to businessmen and Chinese cooking to anyone interested. Although scraping by financially

Sidney and Yulin appreciated America's political and social freedoms but were appalled by its crime and lack of a universal welfare system. Yulin was shocked by the personal insecurity of capitalism as she had always had an appointed job, a low but secure salary, and government housing while in China.

Sidney and Yulin survived by living with friends and relatives until their lives unexpectedly changed and then, their attitudes. A leading personal computer company's CEO contacted Sidney for advice. Sidney, still a Maoist at heart decided to work with "capitalists." Leveraging their good standing with China's leaders, Sidney and Yulin soon helped close a multi-million-dollar sales deal. Many more such agreements followed as Sidney represented giant American firms such as Microsoft, Dell, Intel, and Prudential. Sidney also arranged the China visits of his new friend Billy Graham, the famous American Protestant evangelist. Sidney's making so many high-level friends so quickly led to anxiety about the safety of his relatives and children in China. In addition, there were assertions that Sidney was and always had been a CIA agent. Fortunately, the Chinese government dismissed those claims. Sidney's business grew and he became a millionaire with homes on Puget Sound and in Arizona, as well as a large apartment in China. The children were brought to the United States as he and Yulin became international business commuters and as they received honors from American universities and China's government.

Sidney never directly criticized China's new version of communism or its capitalist policies but he always kept hope for a socialist future. While he voiced worries about the growing inequality in China, he could not condemn its Communist government. He eventually changed his mind about China's past, however. In his 1993 autobiography, *The Man Who Stayed Behind*, written when he was near eighty-years-old, he admitted that communism could be used

as a way for a few to dictate to the many and to take away freedom in the name of saving the majority from a few capitalists. He also admitted that he had been blind to Mao's turning his genius into a destructive force. He called Mao both a hero and a criminal.

¹ Useful for David: *Hampstead Heath to Tian An Men - The Autobiography of David Crook*
<http://www.davidcrook.net/simple/contents.html>

² On Bethune as well as Hatem: Porter, Edgar A. *The People's Doctor : George Hatem and China's Revolution* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997); https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norman_Bethune; also useful, Shapiro, Sydney, *Ma Haide : The Saga of American doctor George Hatem in China* (Beijing: Foreign Language Press, 1993).

³ *Red Star Over China, 1937.*

⁴ The Crooks published three significant works on rural reconstruction, each more scholarly than William Hinton's studies. See : *Revolution in a Chinese Village, Ten Mile Inn* (London: Routledge. 1959); , *The First Years of Yangyi Commune* (London: Routledge, 1966); *Ten Mile Inn: Mass Movement in A Chinese Village.* (NY: Pantheon, 1979).

⁵ Porter, "The People's Doctor," *Op cit.*

⁶ A history of the plan and the famine is Dikotter, Frank. *Mao's Great Famine: The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe 1958-1962* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010):.

⁷ On more recent estimates of the deaths (millions) and destruction caused by the Revolution: Lu Xiuyuan, "A Step Toward Understanding the Popular Violence in China's Cultural Revolution," *Pacific Affairs*, 67 4 (Winter 1994-5):533-563.

⁸ Important for Rittenberg: Yulin Wang, *After the Bitter Comes the Sweet* (np: East West Insights, 2015); Rittenberg, Sidney, Sr., & Amanda Bennett, *The Man Who Stayed Behind* (Durham: Duke University Press. 1993); . Porter "The People's Doctor," *Op Cit.*

⁹ The young Crooks' histories were traced through the published Crook related histories and numerous a newspapers and web pages. For example: *Christian Science Monitor*, 2008;
http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2007-10/16/content_6177238.htm

¹⁰ Siu, Helen F Siu and Zerlda Stern (eds,) *MAO'S Harvest: Voices from China's New Generation* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1983).

¹¹ For example: *NYT* 1-14-1979, 5-24-1982, 12-20-1987.

¹² Informative on the new economic policies and their consequences are: Klatt, W.. "China's New Economic Policy :A Statistical Appraisal," *The China Quarterly*. 80 (Dec. 1979):716-733; Chow, Gregory C., *China's 40 Years of Reform and Development: 1978-2018.*(Sidney" ANU Press, .2018).

¹³ For example, *NYT* 3-6-1982, 2-25-1984.

¹⁴ Muatacich, Suzanne, *Thirsty Dragon: China's Lust for Bordeaux and the Threat to the World's Best Wines,* (NY : Henry Holt, 2015).

¹⁵ Family history.

¹⁶ <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-15063195>

¹⁷ http://www.chinatoday.com.cn/ctenglish/images/CT_CLbottomBg2_07.jpg

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ On Rittenberg ; Wang, " *The Bitter.* , " *Op Cit.*; Rittenberg, " *The Man Who,* , " *Op cit.*: *WP*, for example, 4-12-1979, 11-7-2004.

²⁰ Hooper, " *Foreigners Under Mao,* " *Op cit.*

²¹ For example : *NYT*, 7-4-1979, 3-18-1980, 8-26-2019.