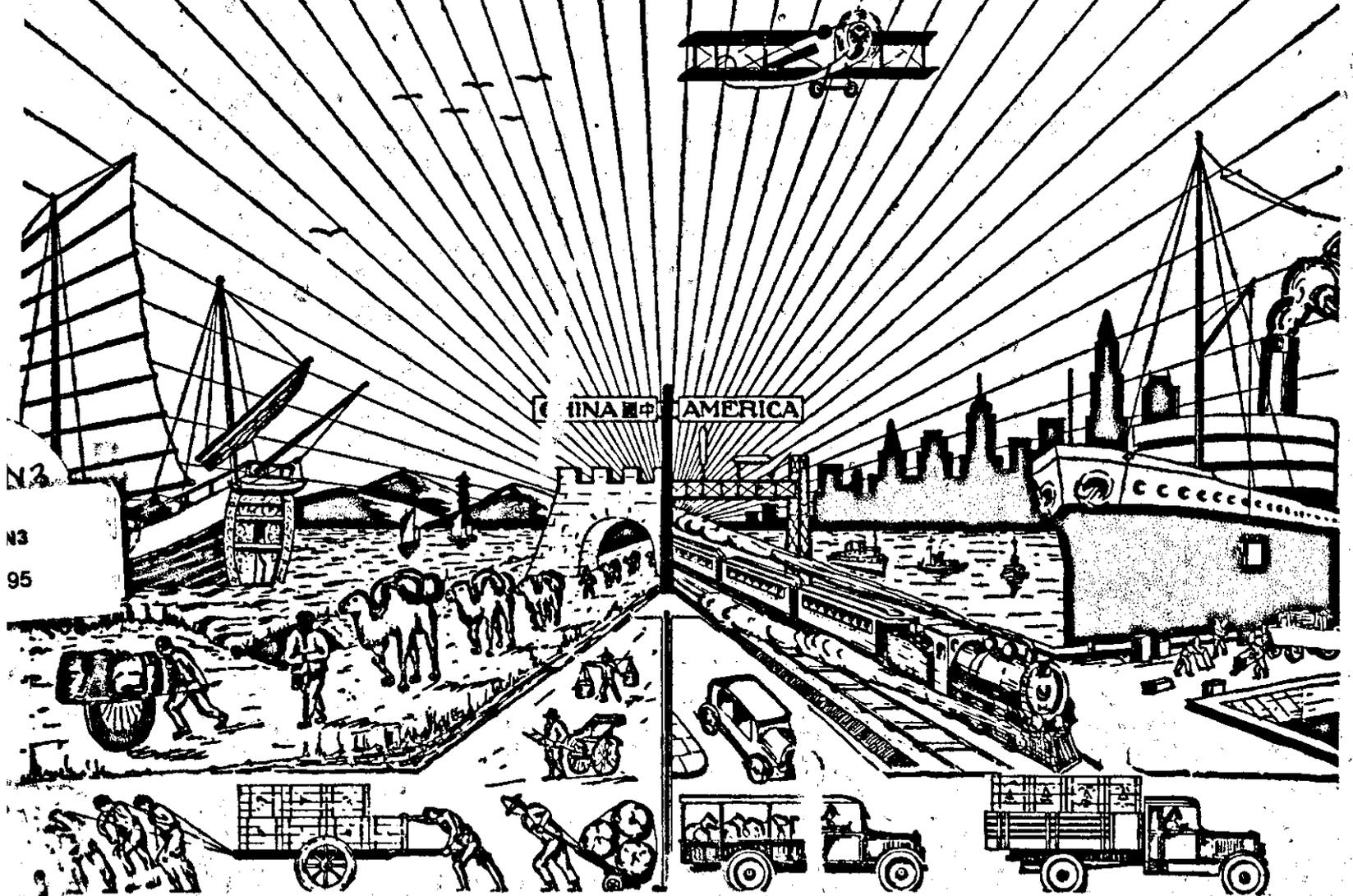


# SOME BIGGER ISSUES IN CHINA'S PROBLEMS

*Julian Arnold  
American Commercial Attache.*



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**Some Bigger Issues in  
China's Problems**

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# SOME BIGGER ISSUES IN CHINA'S PROBLEMS

BY

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## FOREWORD

Mr. Julian Arnold has rendered a great service to China and the Chinese people in preparing and publishing these strikingly instructive charts together with a very persuasive introduction under the title "Some Bigger Issues in China's Problems." These bigger issues are three in number:

1. A system of economic transportation.
2. Increase of individual productivity through education and the use of labor-saving and labor-aiding mechanical slaves.
3. Development by the individual of a sense of responsibility of trusteeship.

These are the three main roads through which America has achieved her marked success and which, Mr. Arnold rightly believes, will lead China to free herself from the fetters of medievalism and find her proper place in the family of modern nations.

These three issues are in reality only three phases of one fundamental problem, namely, the imperative need of a physical basis for China's new national life. To put it in a slightly different way, the fundamental problem facing China to-day is the immediate concentration of all attention and effort to usher in a material and mechanical civilization. As Mr. Wu Tse-hui, one of China's greatest thinkers to-day, has expressed in his most characteristic manner, "We must throw away our so-called 'classical heritage' for at least thirty years, and advocate the establishment of a dry-as-sawdust material civilization." Without this material basis, China can neither be modern, nor a nation at all.

But this material basis will never be built up without a general realization on the part of Chinese leaders of its absolute necessity. What Dr. Sun Yat-sen termed "a psychological reconstruction" must precede the material reconstruction. But the psychological construction needed to herald the great work of national modernization must be something more fundamental than the philosophy that, while to know is difficult, to act is easy. Dr. Sun's philosophy aims at instructing the people to obey their leaders who have the intelligence to guide them. But this philosophy will fail in a situation where the blind are leading the blind and know not what they are doing.

What is needed to-day, it seems to me, is a deep conviction which should amount almost to a religious repentance that *we Chinese are backward in everything and that every other modern nation in the world is much better off than we are*. We must know ourselves. We must confess that we are terribly poor and that our people are suffering miseries which justly horrify the civilized peoples. We must confess that our political life is corrupt to the core and that most of our homes are nests of crimes, of injustice, oppression, lynching, and suicide. We must see with open eyes that we are ruled by militarists who arose from banditry and from the scum of society and whose education and training never qualified them to rule, and by politicians who have no livelihood other than politics and who are never regulated by any system of civil service.

And for all this, we must have ourselves to blame. We have bound the feet of our women for a thousand years and smoked opium for centuries, thereby greatly weakening the race and polluting its moral fiber. And we have wasted the brains of our scholars by making them spend six long centuries mastering absolutely useless literary gymnastics for competition in the examinations. And we have resisted all pressure for reform and modernization, even in the face of the grave danger of the country being partitioned among the Powers. We are only reaping the fruit of the sins of our fathers and of ourselves.

Let us no longer deceive ourselves with self-complacent talks about imperialistic powers hampering our national progress and prosperity! Let us read the recent history of Japan and bury our conceit and self-deception once for all in shame and repentance.

And then, when we have fully and whole-heartedly repented, let us resolve, solemnly and religiously resolve, that *we must learn*.

Let us remember that it does no discredit to a nation to learn from others. On the contrary, it is only great nations that learn. Greece learned everything from the older and contemporary civilizations. And China, in her glorious days, built up her great civilization by an extraordinary willingness to learn from all the races and cultures with which she came into contact. The modern Chinese orchestra, for example, contains almost no instrument that is not of foreign origin: such names as the *pi-pa*, the *la-pa*, the *hu-chin*, etc., bear eloquent testimony to the willingness of our forefathers to learn even from their barbarian neighbors. And for almost a thousand years China had the greatness of heart to regard a foreign country as the "Western Paradise" and make the religion of Buddhism one of the national religions of her own land.

And let us remember that it is a sure sign of senility and decay when a nation refuses to learn from others and hypnotizes itself with comforting reminiscences of its past glory and greatness. When China, in her younger days, was translating thousands of books from the Sanskrit and learning from India, not only her religion, but also her philosophy, literature, art, music, and architecture, decadent India remained totally impenetrable to the influences of Chinese culture. During a cultural contact lasting over two thousand years, India learned practically nothing from China, not even printing, which went from China through Central Asia and finally reached Europe.

Let us learn and rejuvenate ourselves!

May these eloquent charts and warnings of Mr. Arnold's help to drive home this conviction necessary to any conscious and determined national policy of industrializing and modernizing ourselves at whatever cost and whatever risk!

HU SHIH.