

## TECHNOLOGY

# Made in Red China

► COMMUNISTIC mainland China is producing plastics, drugs and other chemicals in considerable quantities.

Plastic products have been enjoying a wide popularity in Tientsin in North China since the first plant in the city in 1958.

Besides varicolored plastic cups, handbags, curtains, raincoats, tablecloths, shoes and sundries, Tientsin plastics plants are turning out articles for industrial use. Their recent successes include electrical appliances with high insulating quality, and hard plastic tubes and other accessories for farm machinery. More than one million square meters of synthetic leather were made in 1962, a 20% increase above 1961.

The first factory making phenol, a raw material for the plastics industry, was established four years ago. It was followed by a series of factories producing polyvinyl chloride, formaldehyde and various plasticizers formerly imported. Since then some dozen plastic products factories have been built or expanded. There are more than 100 plastic factories and workshops all over the country, set up mainly after 1958.

Eight chemical factories in Yunnan Province, southwest China, are being extended to double their phosphate fertilizer production next year. Most of the factories will add new machines to increase the degree of mechanization. All the machines and equipment needed for the extension are made in the province or come from other parts of China.

A new pharmaceutical industry turning

out more than 1,500 kinds of drugs has been built up in Communist China.

Antibiotics, sulfa drugs, vitamins, hormones and other materials never produced in China are made in large quantities. Previously, the country depended chiefly on imported medicines, while its own handful of small, poorly equipped pharmaceutical plants was engaged mainly in processing imported medicinal raw materials. The industry has developed markedly in the past 13 years after being established, especially since 1958. A rapid increase in varieties has also occurred in the past few years.

In 1949, China turned out less than a hundred tons of medicinal materials. No vitamins or antibiotics were made. Today, several hundred times as much are made annually. Included are penicillin, streptomycin, tetracycline, terramycin, chloromycetin, sulfa drugs and vitamin B-12.

Many pharmaceutical plants have been set up or extended, and are now to be found in practically every province and autonomous region, instead of in only a few coastal cities. Several of those doing processing work are now turning toward the manufacture of drugs. One of the big plants in Shanghai, now specializing in antibiotics, was previously a dispensary making only cough mixture and eye lotions.

Shanghai and other cities have set up scientific institutes to increase further the variety of drugs and improve production techniques.

• Science News Letter, 83:77 February 2, 1963

## AGRICULTURE

# Food Surplus Inadequate

► IF ALL the surplus food in the United States were distributed to the hungry people of the world, it would be used up in two or three months.

That is why the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has recruited and sent out more than 4,000 specialists to train individuals in their own countries so that science and technology can maintain a world granary that can always be normal.

Charles Weitz, coordinator of the World-wide Freedom From Hunger Campaign headquartered in Rome, told trustees of the American Freedom From Hunger Foundation that training people to feed themselves is the only answer to the world's burgeoning population. By the year 2000 there will be six billion people in the world—double the present population.

Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman considers the campaign something new in history. Primitive man, he pointed out, sought food for himself or his family. Even when tribes gave way to nations the hunger fight was national. The old wars for food at the expense of neighbors have gone on till the present period of history. Food

enough for all was the hope that was the basis of launching FAO 20 years ago.

American farm products are supplementing food resources of more than 100 nations, with a combined population of more than one and a third billion persons, Secretary Freeman said. From 1955 through 1962, Food for Peace shipments had a total value of \$11.2 billion.

The World Food Congress will be held in Washington June 4-18.

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## SPACE

# Giant Saturn Rockets Take Boat Trip

► TWO GIANT Saturn rockets, one of which will streak into space later this year, are taking a slow boat trip to National Aeronautics and Space Administration's launch operations center in Cape Canaveral. The one to be launched this spring is coming from Huntsville, Ala.; the other, to be used for ground tests, from Santa Monica, Calif.

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