

M E R E D I T H H E R A L D

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Wang Kicks Off Faculty Seminar

by Susan Cartrette

On Monday, Feb. 5 at 10 a.m., Dr. Yunkun Wang presented the first faculty development seminar on the topic of "Sino-U.S. Relations." Wang is a professor of politics at the Academy of Political Science in Beijing, People's Republic of China, and he taught in the department of history and political science this past fall at Meredith.

Wang began with a brief history of modern China. In the fifteenth century, China's early Ming dynasty was one of the most advanced societies; the later adoption of a closed-door policy severely weakened the "Middle Kingdom" and caused a decline in science and technology. The British enforcement later of an opium trade marks the beginning of exploitation of China by foreign powers.

Sino-U.S. relations have varied from being "vulnerable to breakdown" to being "susceptible to rapid improvement." American policies toward China have

shifted from administration to administration. From 1900-1949, the U.S. emphasized trade relations with China, maintaining an open-door policy. The allotment of Chinese territory after World War I to Japan, who made frequent attacks on China beginning in 1931, proved "humiliating" to China, greatly increasing tension and suspicion.

Nixon's visit in 1972 signaled the desire for rapprochement, a move which was reciprocated by Deng Xia Peng in 1979. The 1980s brought rapid development of cultural and economic relations. In 1988, the People's Republic of China was the United States' thirteenth trading partner, while the U.S. was China's second largest export.

Other examples of cultural exchange include the current housing in China of the world's largest Kentucky Fried Chicken, which seats 500, and the 30-minute telecasting of Mickey Mouse on

Sunday evenings.

Events of June 4, 1989 caused great political damage, bringing the onslaught of the "big chill" in Sino-U.S. relations. Wang believes China "will lose the benefits of progress" made during the 1980s.

Wang thinks that political sanctions will not affect the octogenarian leaders, as they still function in line with the "middle kingdom syndrome." In fact, economic reforms in China might instead be stalled.

As to the use of military force, Wang reiterates the fact that for 2000 years China operated under a feudal autocratic system which relied heavily on military force. When the Communist Party took over, they also emphasized the traditional thought that "political power comes from the barrel of a gun."

Wang does see the need for reform in China. However, he believes the students went too far last spring.

Great Decisions Lectures Announced

Meredith College Continuing Education is sponsoring the "1990 Great Decisions Lecture Series," which includes lecture and discussion on important foreign policy issues. The program meets Monday nights 7:30 p.m. - 9 p.m. in Kresge Auditorium, Cate Center. The meetings, moderated by Mrs. Inez Ray, are free and open to the public. The remaining lectures are as follows:

Feb. 26: "Vietnam, Cambodia and the U.S.: Return Engagement?", Dr. Timothy

Lomperis, assistant professor of political science, Duke University

March 12: "Third World Arms Bazaar: Disaster for Sale?", Dr. Alex Roland, professor of history, Duke University

March 19: "United Nations: New Life for an Aging Institution?", Dr. Marvin Soroos, associate professor of political science and public administration, N.C.S.U.

March 26: "Palestinian Question: Is There a Solution?", Dr. Leonard Rogoff, writer/lecturer on Jewish topics, executive committee, American Friends of Peace Now

April 2: "Global Warming and the Environment: Forecast Disaster?", Dr. Harvey Jeffries, professor of environmental science and engineering, U.N.C.-C.H.