

China cities hide tunnels

PEKING—They were built at the height of the Cold War to save China's urban population from the devastation of a Soviet nuclear attack.

For years, millions of shop assistants, garage mechanics and even old-age pensioners hacked at the earth with picks and shovels and even their bare hands.

The result was the creation of vast underground tunnel complexes, virtual cities beneath cities.

Now these complexes are being transformed into commercial enterprises.

Many of China's major cities have tunnel complexes underneath their busy streets. The capital of Peking has the largest and has taken the lead in turning it into a money-earner with hotels, shops, restaurants and even theaters.

In recent months, 58 shelters have been converted into hotels to provide an extra 6,000 beds for visitors in a capital hard pressed for accommodation.

The Hilton it isn't, but for the equivalent of \$1 a night, guests receive a iron bed (six to a room), running water, toilets (Western or Asian style) and central heating — facilities not always available in many of Peking's above-ground hostels.

Several underground restaurants have opened. Other kitchens provide food for overhead factories. Miles of tunnels are leased as storage space for shops. And thousands of people crowd nightly into spacious meeting rooms converted into cinemas and theaters.

The tunnel complexes are even becoming tourist attrac-

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tions. Republican Vice Presidential candidate George Bush recently took time out from talks with Chinese officials to walk through the dank corridors.

Western military experts always have doubted the tunnels could survive massive Soviet air strikes, but the Chinese are proud of them and to a visitor the vast network of interlocking passageways is impressive.

High-ranking visitors in their luxurious guesthouses can scurry into the tunnels from hundreds of entrances in a matter of minutes as can tourists in the downtown Peking Hotel or workers in their local factories.

The tunnel complex in the central Da Sha Lai district is typical of the citywide system.

At the press of a button, an entire section of the concrete floor of the busy Da Sha Lai clothing shop rolls back to reveal a tunnel entrance. Shoppers gawk as a group of tourists pad down underground.

"In this one area alone of around 200 yards there are 90 similar entrances," says Gao Si Feng, the area air raid director who also doubles these days as a tourist guide.

"We can get 10,000 people into the tunnels in five minutes in case of an air raid. And they can stay down here for several months or walk through a system of inter-connecting tunnels and reach the countryside outside Peking."

This section of tunnel is on three levels, divided by airtight doors and concealed stairways. The tunnels are equipped with electric light, fresh air generators, toilets, kitchens and even books.

The walls inevitably are lined with the sayings of the late Mao Tse-tung: "Dig tunnels deep, Store grain everywhere."

It took thousands of shop assistants from the district 10 years to build this particular section.

Many used their bare hands, others picks and shovels.

"We didn't know how to build tunnels," Gao said.

"We had a lot of accidents, but few fatal ones. But there were frequent cave-ins. It took 10 laborers one day to tunnel two feet."

Another Mao quote reads: "Preparation is better than no preparation at all. At least we can reduce the casualties."

The Chinese are convinced that one day the Russian bombers will come and the tunnels will be put to their original use.

"We have to keep the tunnels ready for that day," Gao said. "It will come."



Staff photo by Jeff Lee

Artist at work

Pam Richter, a junior from College Station, spends a little of her spare time in MSC Craft Shop working on pottery. The Craft Shop is open to all students and offers a wide variety of craft activities.

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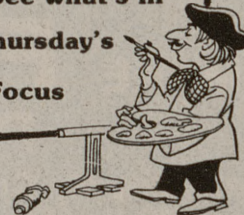
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Doctors worried of risks

Caesareans overused?

WASHINGTON — Caesarean births have tripled during the past decade and now account for an estimated 18 of every 100 deliveries in the United States, prompting concern among many doctors that the surgical procedure may be overused.

Although the safety of the operation in which the baby is removed through an incision has improved greatly in recent years, it still carries four times the risk of maternal death of a normal vaginal delivery.

The rise in Caesarean births has been accompanied by a decline in overall infant mortality in recent years. But a National Institute of Health committee noted that many other changes in obstetric and pediatric care also have occurred.

"The largest, single concern is, however, whether Caesarean child-birth improves the outcome for

either mother or child," said the panel directed by Dr. Mortimer G. Rosen of Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland.

The four most common reasons for a Caesarean delivery are when there is a prolonged or difficult period of labor, a previous Caesarean birth, a breech presentation in which the baby is positioned for a feet first rather than a head first delivery and when there are indications the baby is being deprived of oxygen.

The committee said that there are some emergency situations in which a Caesarean delivery is mandatory, but it urged physicians to reconsider many of the reasons for which Caesarean sections are carried out.

Perhaps the most significant of all the panel's conclusions issued in new guidelines for doctors was one saying

women who have had a Caesarean before do not necessarily have to deliver all their children that way.

It has been standard procedure since the early 1900's for doctors say that once a baby has been delivered by Caesarean section, all subsequent deliveries must be Caesarean. This was to avoid the risk of a rupture during labor at the site on the uterus from the previous operation.

The panel said more than 80 percent of all women undergo a Caesarean for subsequent pregnancies.

A low horizontal uterine incision now in general use compared to the vertical cut that used to be standard. The panel said studies have indicated that labor and vaginal delivery after a previous Caesarean section allow a lower crosswise incision is safer for mother and child in selected and well equipped hospitals.

In cases of difficult or prolonged labor, as long as the baby is in trouble, the guidelines recommend that doctors attempt other means to ease the situation before resorting to a Caesarean delivery.

As far as breech babies are concerned, the panel noted that breech presentations are associated with increased risk to the infant regardless of whether delivery is performed vaginally or by Caesarean.

The new guidelines say vaginal delivery of a breech baby should remain an acceptable choice when the baby is believed to weigh less than 10 pounds and all other conditions are normal.

The panel said more information is needed on delivery outcomes for babies facing oxygen deprivation. The experts said there is still a great deal of difficulty in determining which babies are encountering oxygen problems which can cause brain damage.

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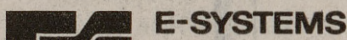
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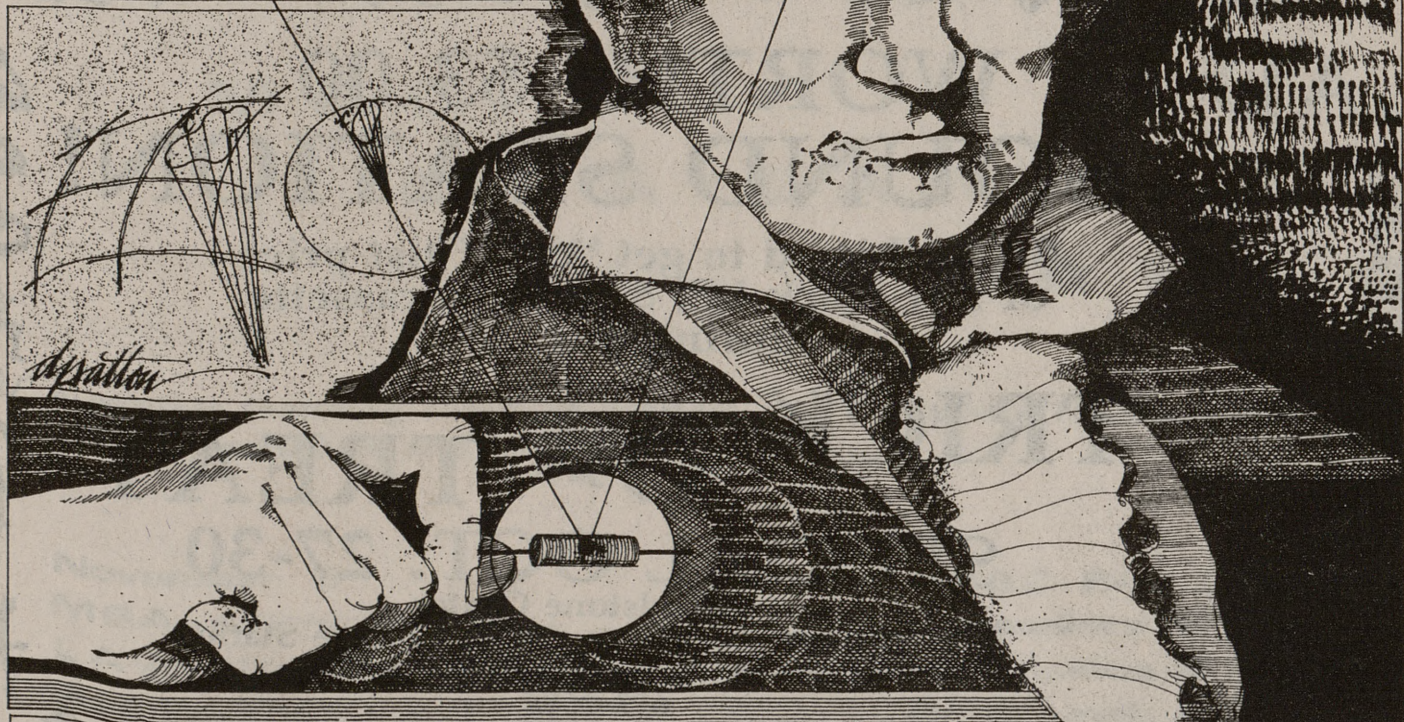
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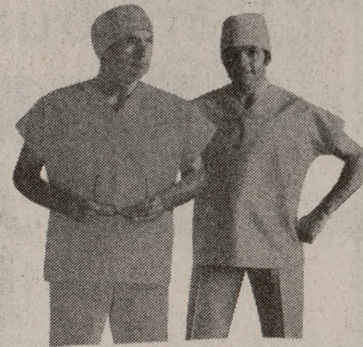
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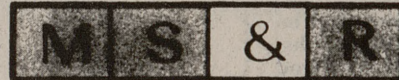
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