

Executions long-time feature in China

United Press International
XIAN, China — A noisy, crowded, dusty street suddenly grew quiet. A martial procession went by.

Soldiers, weapons, military vehicles, dignified-looking officials, a young prisoner forced to bow his head by the hands of a guard army officer.

A scene as old as Xian itself. "They're going to shoot him," remarked one onlooker tersely, his face without expression.

As a warning to others, they paraded him down Liberation Road, one of the busiest streets, before the execution at midday.

A phalanx of blue-uniformed public security men on five motorcycles led the way, each with an outrider, automatic rifles slung across their backs.

The whirl-whirl of the cruising machines almost was drowned out by the sirens, and the propaganda blasts from four bullhorns mounted atop a van in the following convoy.

Rows of solemn-faced men, some in uniform and others in civilian dress, sat immobile inside several passenger vans. One unmistakable message in their demeanor: "We mean business."

Then came the People's Liberation Army, protectors of the Communist faith, symbol of the ultimate good guys in China. The young soldiers had mean looks pasted on their faces and

wore starched green uniforms, red stars staring out from their army caps.

It was the PLA, rather than the less inspiring public security forces, that was entrusted with the task of guarding the bound prisoner. The theatrics were obvious: the armed guardians of the revolution holding the criminal by the scruff of the neck.

The same theatrics have been played out on the streets of China for centuries. Prisoners bound and labeled were paraded in cages and on ox carts before facing the executioners. They often were beheaded in public.

Xian, as the center of ancient Chinese civilization for more than a thousand years, is no stranger to processions of this sort.

On this particular Saturday, Jan. 16, there were three truckloads of soldiers armed to the teeth.

A submachinegun with a dis-shaped clip of ammunition was positioned on each driver's cab, manned by a trooper adopting a firing stance.

Other soldiers on the backs of the trucks leveled their rifles at an angle from the front, aiming at some invisible enemy off both sides of the street.

The last two trucks each carried six other convicts. They stood with downcast faces among the troops, who did not

look at them and instead concentrated on maintaining their combat-ready poise. These prisoners were going to serve jail sentences.

The condemned prisoner was in the first truck. Hands tied behind his back, he stood beside the soldier manning the sub machinegun. A burly officer held him from behind.

"Prisoner for execution," declared a cloth banner hung across the front of the truck. The cloth was white, the characters black — the traditional colors of death.

A local cadre said the prisoner was a killer who was convicted and sentenced earlier that morning at a sports stadium in front of thousands of selected spectators.

It was half an hour from noon. The column was moving slowly south on Liberation Road.

The officer kept forcing the doomed prisoner's head into a bow — the prescribed posture for someone soon to die in shame. But the prisoner refused to play the role.

Again and again, he obstinately raised his young, pudgy face and squinted as he looked into the winter sun arching low over the southern horizon.

He knew that when the sun lined up with the road he would have a bullet in his head. He was 20.



staff photo by Eric...

Looks inviting

Jann Licandro, a senior secondary education major from Bryan holds her son, Jamie Licandro, who seems to be

contemplating a swim in Rudder Fountain Tuesday afternoon.

How to exercise without work

United Press International
CHICAGO — It's a lazy person's dream — exercising without working up a sweat. You just lie back and relax and the electricity does all the work.

Phyllis Hartigan, a tall, slim redhead, is running an electro-

nic reducing salon in Chicago.

"It sounds too good to be true, I know," Hartigan said, whose studio is just off fashionable Michigan Avenue. "But not everyone can do physical exercise."

Hartigan said the device is a medical machine used for muscle therapy, and it can keep the muscles of a paraplegic from atrophy.

Its use can be risky under certain conditions.

Dr. John Toerge, medical director of rehabilitation services at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, said there is little danger of

injury if the subject is in good health and has had no joint injuries — and if well-trained people monitor the effects of the electrical muscle stimulator.

But, Toerge said, "Any time you artificially impose activity on a muscle, you run the risk of unbalancing the muscle."

"When you exercise, there is an organ in the muscle that prevents you from over-extending yourself. With the machine, you run the risk of overextension."

Hartigan said they don't take any unnecessary chances.

She said she had one 60-year-old woman client who did not say in her medical history that she suffered from a muscle disease.

"Well, we worked on her," Hartigan said. "She lost so many inches in a half-hour her slacks would not stay on. I had to run out and buy some safety pins for her."

"The next day she was experiencing terrible pain and swelling. She thought one time wouldn't hurt her. Her doctor made her call and apologize."

Hartigan also said Olympic teams use the machine for training, to eliminate the pain of sprains.

She said a nurse is always on hand and Dr. Ron Kirschner, who operates a weight loss clinic on the premises, is on call.

Kirschner has been working with Hartigan about six months. Kirschner said the machine changes muscle tissue in much the same way as other forms of exercise, such as running.

Hartigan's Figure-tone studio caters to the wealthy and to business executives who say they lack

time for exercise.

A client first fills out a history. People suffering from muscle disease, kidney, glandular heart disease, epilepsy, asthma, diabetes, hepatitis, gallstones, certain skin diseases or skin diseases are accepted, she said, nor pregnant women or those on their menstrual period.

Weight and measurements are recorded for those who meet the medical criteria.

The treatment is given on a cushioned table with electrodes attached to the body. "A slight (electrical) current goes into the muscle and it contracts," Mrs. Hartigan said.

"On the first visit, a client loses a quarter to two inches, depending on body structure. I have a lot of people who are bringing their clothes in."

"The impulse feels like a series of pin pricks."

Hartigan said the electrodes can be arranged to work on specific problem areas or for general body toning.

She said 16 30-minute sessions three times a week are needed to reach a maintenance level and one 30-minute session a month thereafter.

The 16-session series costs \$448 and the once-a-month session, \$35.

"I don't like pain — and what a lot of exercise is," Hartigan said. "This is passive exercise. We don't build muscle tone them. We re-educate muscle groups to work together."

She said similar salons are operating in New York, West Coast and in Texas, Ohio.

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