

# Women in China: submersion by "bureaucratic caste"

By JOANNE PRITCHARD  
A book sure to be of equal interest to feminists and China-watchers alike is the recently published *Women in China* by

Katie Curtin. Curtin is a young Canadian feminist who has been active in the Women's Movement for a number of years. In her book, Curtin examines

the position of women in feudal society, the development of the women's movement through the late 1800's and early 1900's, the support given to the women's liberation movement by the

Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and its subsequent betrayal of the movement. She then critically examines the role of women in China today. A woman in Chinese feudal

society passed from the control of her father to that of her husband. If her husband died — her brother or son controlled her life. Curtin quotes a proverb to illustrate the position of women, "A woman married is like a pony bought - to be ridden or whipped at the master's pleasure."

And, of course, the infamous tradition of foot-binding. An excruciatingly painful process which ended in permanent crippling, it was designated to make women 'dainty' and sexually attractive, but more significantly, it effectively restrained them.

Curtin studies the rise of the women's movement highlighting some of the outstanding leaders. She documents the rights that were won, but points out that women were becoming aware that their liberation was tied to the fortunes of the struggle for socialism.

In the early 1920's the CCP established itself as a fighter for the rights of women. But with the emergence of a privileged layer of bureaucrats in Communist Parties around the world, including the CCP, the issue of women's rights was submerged. In an interview printed in *Labor Challenge* Curtis says, "In China under the CCP a privileged bureaucratic caste exists. In order to maintain itself, this caste has to foster all kinds of backward prejudices about women and maintain the family, which is a basic unit necessary for any authoritarian society."

Curtin is currently touring the country lecturing on her book. She will be speaking at York on November 6, at 1 p.m. in Curtis Lecture hall E. All those who are interested in the achievements of China and their implications for women's liberation should attend.

## Art and Arthur

The Stong Fellows unite in a show of group solidarity this coming Tuesday at 8 p.m. A. Bayefsky, D. McGibbon, H. Sandberg, T. Jaworski, and L. Oesterle join in a show that is to run through to the 19th of November in the Samuel Zacks Gallery in Stong. Visiting hours are from 2 to 7 p.m. Sunday to Thursday. Don't miss this exceptional opportunity to see these fine artists' work.

Winters is presenting us with the latest in the Monty Python series of insanities this weekend when they bring us the Holy Grail all three days of the weekend this weekend, at 8:30 p.m. in CLH I.

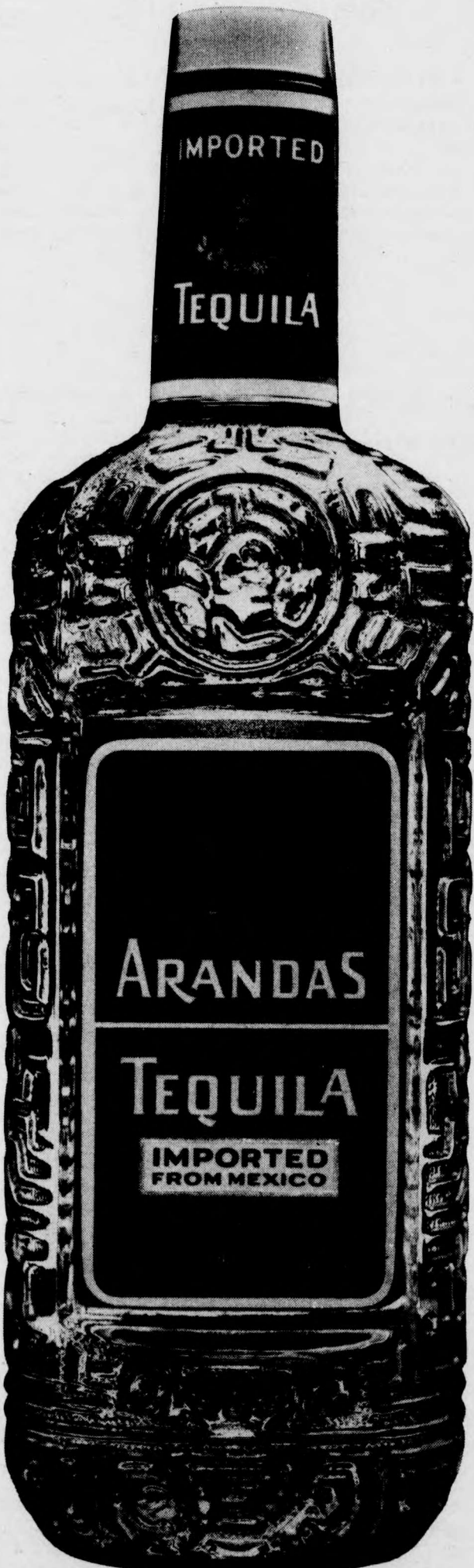
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1 1/2 oz. Arandas Tequila  
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1 cocktail pineapple stick

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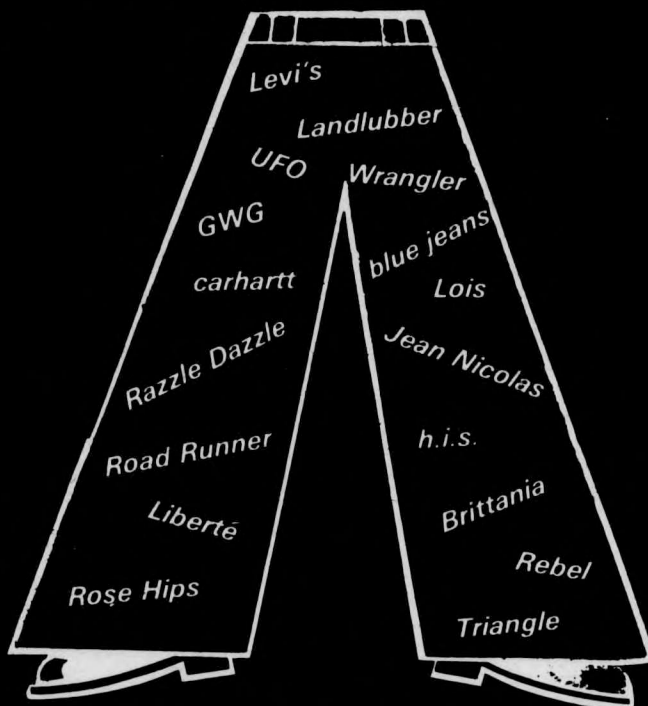
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