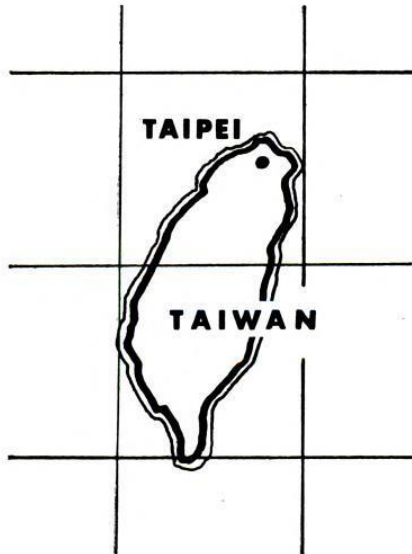


New Ways for Old



Photos: International Cooperation Administration

In a Taipei store, the poster assures customers that prices are the same for everyone.



THE idea of selling an article for a fixed price, one that can't be "beat down" by haggling, is comparatively new in the marts of trade. Until midway in the 19th Century, even the simplest retail purchase often became a contest between buyer and seller. It still is today in many parts of the world, though legions of goodwill-conscious businessmen are trying hard to change it. On the island of Taiwan, which is the bastion of Free China, a Rotary-sponsored move of this kind is under way.

There, on this mountainous 240-mile strip of land long called Formosa, the two Rotary Clubs in the capital city, Taipei and Taipei West, are leading an island-wide campaign for shops and stores to become one-price places of business. To accomplish this, a revolutionary change in the traditional retailing methods of the Far East, Taipei Rotarians are focusing attention on the advantages of the one-price shop to both buyers and sellers. Haggling, they point out, wastes time, frays nerves, injects hostility into the buyer-seller relationship, and unfairly allows one person to buy an article for less than someone else.

In Taipei alone, the campaign has won the support of 36 shop owners, each of whom has on display a poster announcing that his is a "One-Price Shop." One art store liked the idea so much that it placed an advertisement about it in every Chinese newspaper in Taipei.

"On this island of 10 million people are thousands of shops and stores to reach," says George Wu, President of the Rotary Club of Taipei for 1956-57. "We don't expect to do it overnight; it's a gradual process. But if we get the younger generation to realize that the price asked is the price to pay, then haggling will be on its way out. When that happens, stores all over the island will fall into line."