

VII. THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE UNDER SOCIALISM

In examining the degeneration of the Soviet Union, the two principal classes of modern society—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat—have two entirely opposite summations. The summation of the bourgeoisie, which it promotes in a thousand ways, is, of course, not based on Marxism and scientific class analysis. The bourgeoisie does not explain what is happening in the Soviet Union today on the basis of capitalism having been restored through a process of acute and complicated class struggle, but instead dishes up its favorite line that socialism is “impractical”, that it is suited only for “backward” countries, that it is not viable once modern industry is established, that sooner or later it ends up the same as capitalism, etc., etc.

According to the bourgeoisie, when people are poor and desperate they may support revolution even if it takes away their “freedom”—by which the bourgeoisie means the “freedom” to be exploited and oppressed! But once people achieve a certain standard of living they become disinterested in revolution and only concerned with consumer goods; they get “tired” of the “same old communist propaganda” and want the culture and politics of capitalism—an “eternal” system, according to the bourgeoisie. Further, when their party is in power revolutionary leaders become conservative, cannot resist the temptation to be big shots, and inevitably become new oppressors lording it over the people. So argue the bourgeoisie and their ideological hacks. They point to the experience of the Soviet Union as proof of all this, and of their “theory of human nature”, which holds, like Christianity with its doctrine of original sin, that human beings are essentially self-centered, and will always act out of their most narrow selfish interests, which must be “arbitrated” through the operation of the capitalist market.

But the proletariat and its Marxist-Leninist leadership draw exactly the opposite conclusion. Far from concluding that mankind will never reach a higher form of society — communism— in which classes, exploitation and oppression, and material want will be relegated to the history books, we examine the profound negative example of the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union in order to better learn *how* to wage the class struggle in all its forms against the

bourgeoisie, in order to progress from the barbaric and outmoded capitalist system to the lofty goal of communism.

And while the experience of the Soviet Union is a negative example from which we must learn, there is also historical experience of the class struggle under socialism which is providing the answer of how to prevent capitalist restoration and continue along the socialist road toward communism. For it is precisely these questions that are at the heart of China's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

The Cultural Revolution was, in essence, a struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie to determine whether China would continue to advance on the socialist road, or be turned back onto the capitalist road—which, under the still relatively backward conditions of China would mean that it would be reduced to a semi-colony of imperialism, in particular Soviet social-imperialism, and semi-feudal relations would re-emerge in China's countryside. The Cultural Revolution was the most profound example in the history of the world communist movement of, in Mao's words, “continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.”

It was a mass struggle of hundreds of millions initiated and led by Mao Tsetung and other revolutionary leaders of the Chinese Communist Party, on the basis of summing up the experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its subversion and destruction in the Soviet Union, and the experience of class struggle in China since liberation in 1949. So much for the bourgeois theory that the masses can't continue to make revolution and that revolutionary leaders *inevitably* become corrupt, conservative overlords.

The theoretical basis for leading the Cultural Revolution came from the application of dialectical materialism, especially the fundamental law of the unity of opposites (contradiction) to the experience of socialist society. A fierce class struggle has raged in China ever since 1949, when the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie came to the fore as the principal contradiction.

Following the country-wide seizure of power, immense tasks faced the Chinese people and the Communist Party in building socialism. The pro-

ductive forces were extremely backward, and China possessed little industry. It proved even more necessary in China than in Russia following the seizure of power to make use of petty bourgeois and even bourgeois elements from the old society. This was further complicated by the fact that the first stage of the Chinese revolution did not immediately aim at socialism, but was directed against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism (the big capitalists who were tied in with the imperialists and used the state apparatus as a means of accumulating capital).

In this struggle the national bourgeoisie, or sections of it—those capitalists not completely tied to the imperialists—sided with the masses of people, because of the objective contradictions they faced with imperialism and feudalism. As soon as power was seized the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie centered around the question of whether China would carry through the revolution to the socialist stage, or would instead pass through an extended period of capitalism. The latter path was advocated by Liu Shao-chi, with his line that "exploitation is a merit."

The revolutionary line of Mao Tsetung, which called for immediately embarking on the socialist revolution, won out, and by 1956 the transition to socialist ownership of the means of production had been essentially completed insofar as the cities and the industrial enterprises were concerned. At that point Liu Shao-chi tried to subvert socialism and disarm the proletariat and the Communist Party by declaring that "in China the question of which wins out, socialism or capitalism, is already solved." In putting forward this revisionist line, Liu was aided by the fact that in the same year Khrushchev came to power and launched his frenzied attack on Marxism-Leninism at the 20th Party Congress in the Soviet Union, stabbing the entire international communist movement in the back and throwing it into great turmoil and confusion.

Only a year later, in 1957, following the basic transformation of the Chinese economy along socialist lines, and under conditions where revisionism occupied a powerful position throughout the international communist movement, Mao Tsetung wrote his famous work, *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People*, in which he argued that classes, class contradiction and class struggle continue to exist under socialism. He pointed out that two types of contradictions exist—those between the people and the enemy (deposed landlords, sections of the capitalists, and counter-revolutionaries), and contradictions among the people—for example, between the workers and peasants, between the leaders and the masses, etc. He stressed that these non-antagonistic contradictions within the ranks of the people can develop into antagonistic contradictions if they are not handled properly.

Even more significantly, Mao wrote that, "The basic contradictions in socialist society are still

those between the relations of production and the productive forces and between the superstructure and the economic base."

"Socialist relations of production have been established and are in harmony with the growth of the productive forces, but they are still far from perfect, and this imperfection stands in contradiction to the growth of the productive forces. Apart from harmony as well as contradiction between the relations of production and the productive forces, there is harmony as well as contradiction between the superstructure and the economic base. The superstructure, consisting of the state system and the laws of the people's democratic dictatorship and the socialist ideology guided by Marxism-Leninism, plays a positive role in facilitating the victory of socialist transformation and the establishment of the socialist organization of labor; it is suited to the socialist economic base, that is, to the socialist relations of production. But survivals of bourgeois ideology, certain bureaucratic ways of doing things in our state organs and defects in certain links in our state institutions are in contradiction with the socialist economic base." (emphasis added)

Later in the same work Mao wrote,

"The class struggle is by no means over. The class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the class struggle between different political forces, and the class struggle in the ideological field between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie will continue to be long and tortuous and at times even become very acute. The proletariat seeks to transform the world according to its own world outlook; and so does the bourgeoisie. In this respect the question of which will win out, socialism or capitalism, is still not really settled." (emphasis added)

Thus, Mao directly refuted the revisionists, and indicated the general course for the transition period of socialism, between capitalism and communism—pointing to the danger of capitalist restoration and the need to continue the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, throughout the socialist period.

The period from 1957 until the Cultural Revolution was marked by sharp class struggle in China, and by many twists and turns in the Chinese Revolution. For example, in 1957 many bourgeois rightists took advantage of Mao's call to "let a hundred flowers blossom, let a hundred schools of thought contend" to launch an all-out attack on the Communist Party, the dictatorship of the proletariat and socialism. They advocated "liberalization"—in other words, a return to capitalism.

1958 and 1959 were the years of the Great Leap Forward when the Chinese people consolidated and expanded the system of collective ownership in the countryside by establishing People's Communes, and also made great strides

in developing industry, including small-scale and diversified enterprises throughout the country. But, like every significant advance of the proletariat in the class struggle, the Great Leap Forward called forth desperate resistance and sabotage by rightists and counter-revolutionaries in the Soviet Union, in China and within the Chinese Communist Party itself.

These reactionaries seized on the fact that the Great Leap Forward, like all truly powerful social movements, inevitably caused certain temporary dislocations in the Chinese economy, which in 1959-61 were combined with a series of natural disasters, including drought and flooding, seriously undermining agricultural output. The revisionists within the Chinese Communist Party jumped on this to slander and attack the Great Leap Forward.

The Khrushchev revisionists in the Soviet Union did their utmost to compound the difficulties and support their counterparts in China by withdrawing all Soviet aid and recalling thousands of technical personnel, who had been assisting in the development of Chinese industry. This was done suddenly, without warning and in one fell swoop. Not only were the technicians recalled, but they took blueprints and plans with them. The Soviet revisionists hoped to use economic blackmail to force the Chinese to submit to the counter-revolutionary line being pushed from Moscow, and to sabotage the general line of the Chinese Party for building socialism, formulated by Mao Tsetung, as "Going all out, aiming high and achieving greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism."

During and after the three difficult years 1959-61, the revisionist forces in the Chinese Communist Party, led by Liu Shao-chi, worked feverishly to drag China onto the capitalist road. Under the guise of developing production, these rightists encouraged and promoted many of the methods and policies endorsed and encouraged by the Soviet revisionists. In the factories the system of bonuses, piece work, etc. became very widespread, reliance was placed on "material incentives", and in many instances control was left almost entirely in the hands of factory directors and technical personnel. Corruption was not unheard of, and corrupt factory officials sought, and often received, protection from higher authorities in Liu's "political machine."

The bourgeois elements paid special attention to worming their way into the critical sphere of the superstructure—the schools, the press, literary and artistic circles—where they would be in a position to hinder the development and dissemination of the proletarian world view and in its place spread bourgeois ideology. Mao often pointed out that any class wanting to seize power first had to "create public opinion", and this is precisely what the capitalist roaders were doing at an ever-increasing rate.

Mao waged sharp criticism of the Ministry of Culture, which was dominated by the revisionists

under the leadership of Liu. Mao said that "If it refuses to change, it should be renamed the Ministry of Emperors, Kings, Generals and Ministers, the Ministry of Talents and Beauties or the Ministry of Foreign Mummies"! He also said that the Ministry of Health should be renamed the "Ministry of Health for Urban Overlords."

The immediate forerunner of the Cultural Revolution was the Socialist Education Movement which began in 1963 under Mao's leadership. During this struggle Liu Shao-chi did his best to suppress the movement of the masses and to actually direct the focus of the struggle against Mao's line and the proletariat. At a meeting of the Central Committee at the end of 1964, which summed up the direction of the Socialist Education Movement, Mao wrote that "The main target of the present movement is those Party persons in power taking the capitalist road." Thus, for the first time, Mao bluntly indicated that the main target was not merely the ex-landlords or old capitalists, but precisely bourgeois forces within the Communist Party and especially in its leadership, who were attempting a capitalist restoration.

It became crystal clear to Mao and the revolutionaries in the Chinese Communist Party that the Chinese Revolution was reaching a critical juncture and that if something wasn't done the capitalist roaders would inevitably seize power. As Mao wrote in 1963, if the Party did not pay attention to class struggle, "then it would not be long, perhaps only several years or a decade, or several decades at most, before a counter-revolutionary restoration on a national scale would inevitably occur . . ."

Of course, the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie had been very sharp in China since Liberation, and in that sense the Cultural Revolution was nothing new. But previous struggles had not been adequate to prevent bourgeois forces in China from gaining increasing positions of power within the Party and state. Essentially, the previous struggles between two lines in the Chinese Communist Party had been resolved by dismissing the capitalist roaders from their posts. Often this had been accompanied by attempts at involving the participation of the masses through mass meetings, demonstrations and the like. But, as in the Soviet Union under Stalin, the suppression of capitalist elements had never been conducted *primarily by the masses themselves*, even though this had been combined with education among the masses and had their support.

As we have seen in earlier chapters dealing with the class struggle under socialism in the Soviet Union, the method of handling the fight against capitalist roaders mainly "from above", failed to temper the working class and the masses of people in the heat of battle and to fully combat one of the main pillars of bourgeois ideology—that the masses cannot take matters into their own hands, but must rely on a few "saviors" and "geniuses" to solve their problems,

and protect their interests.

While struggle "at the top" succeeded in eliminating certain individual counter-revolutionaries who posed an immediate threat to proletarian rule and socialism, it did not thoroughly enable the masses of people to learn through their own experience in struggle—guided by a Marxist-Leninist line and leadership—what the essence of the ideological and political line of these reactionaries was. Also it did not solve the problem of training revolutionary successors for the proletariat, as Mao puts it. So, in the Soviet Union, once a leader of Stalin's stature and prestige died, the capitalist elements were able to seize power through a coup, and then it was they and not the proletarian revolutionaries who were able to use the official apparatus of the Party and state—to suppress revolutionaries.

Early in the course of the Cultural Revolution (February 1967), Mao wrote, "In the past we waged struggles in rural areas, in factories, in the cultural field, and we carried out the socialist education movement. But all this failed to solve the problem because we did not find a form, a method, to arouse the broad masses to expose our dark aspect openly, in an all-around way and from below." The Cultural Revolution was that form and method.

It began in 1966 with a vigorous struggle to transform Peking Opera, symphonic music, and ballet which had changed very little during the period of socialism and still essentially reflected the bourgeois and feudal outlook of the old exploiting classes. On May 16, 1966, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party published a "Circular" drawn up under Mao's personal guidance which set the general line for the Cultural revolution. The Circular called for the unfolding of a vigorous struggle against bourgeois academic authorities, and to repudiate bourgeois ideas in the realm of education, literature and art.

In this Circular Mao points out that "To achieve this it is at the same time necessary to criticize and repudiate those representatives of the bourgeoisie who have sneaked into the party, the government, the army and all spheres of culture Some are still trusted by us and are being trained as successors, persons like Khrushchev, for example, who are still nestling beside us." Thus, the Cultural Revolution was, from the first, not simply a movement to criticize bourgeois ideology and bourgeois representatives in the field of culture, education, etc., but a revolutionary struggle directed at overthrowing people in high places in the Party and state who had actually entrenched themselves in power in many spheres of society—though they had not yet seized control of the whole state apparatus and actually begun restoring capitalism.

In August 1966, a woman student at Peking University put up a big character poster criticizing the director of the school and accusing him of following the capitalist road. Not many days

later the poster came to the attention of Mao, who had it published in the daily press. By the next morning the walls of Peking University were covered with posters criticizing the bourgeois line in education, and struggling out different ideas. In a very short time such posters could be seen all over China, in every school, factory, commune and institution.

In addition to the big character posters, huge debates took place in which the burning questions of the Cultural Revolution were battled out. Officials, some of whom were actually counter-revolutionaries and others of whom were honest but had made serious mistakes and fallen under revisionist influence, were called before mass meetings and forced to answer to the criticisms of the people.

Millions of revolutionary young people came to Peking where they were greeted by Mao himself and encouraged to continue making revolution. "It is right to rebel against reactionaries," Mao told these "Red Guards", and this became a rallying cry of the Cultural Revolution. The Cultural Revolution was not a "clever scheme" by Mao to axe his rivals in Party leadership, as the bourgeois "scholars" slander, but a means of unleashing the power of the masses, of enabling them to strike back at the abuses and reactionary policies of the revisionists that were oppressing them, and to smash the "headquarters" of these renegades who were attempting to restore capitalism.

For a period of time the face of China was marked by tremendous upheaval. Virtually every cadre of the Communist Party, at all levels, came under the closest scrutiny of the masses. Every aspect of society was criticized and struggled over. Formal education came to a standstill, and in many places production was disrupted for certain periods. The agents of the bourgeoisie, once the fire came close to them, attempted to split the masses into hostile organizations and direct the attention of the masses against each other, and in some cases honest revolutionaries were wrongly accused of being counter-revolutionaries.

The revisionists clamored that things were getting out of hand, just as reactionary forces always do when the masses rise up in struggle. But, as Mao had written about the peasant uprising in Hunan Province 40 years earlier,

"Proper limits have to be exceeded in order to right a wrong, or else the wrong cannot be righted. Those who talk about the peasants 'going too far' seem at first to be different from those who say 'it's terrible!' as mentioned earlier, but in essence they proceed from the same standpoint and likewise voice a landlord theory that upholds the interests of the privileged classes."

Even some honest but misguided people were temporarily sucked into the line that "it's terrible!", that the Cultural revolution was "going too far." In the midst of all this turmoil, however, Mao and

the proletarian headquarters in the Party summed up that the situation in China had never before been so excellent! The fierce struggle, the twists and turns of the movement, became one of the greatest schools of Marxism-Leninism the world has ever seen.

In January, 1967, the struggle reached a new stage when revolutionaries in Shanghai built an alliance of revolutionary mass organizations, the People's Liberation Army, and the revolutionary cadres of the Party to seize power from the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee which had been dominated by capitalist roaders. For the first time in the history of the socialist system, the masses of people had overthrown part of the state apparatus which no longer served socialism, by direct action and from below! Mao and the Central Committee summed up the experience of the January Uprising in Shanghai and called on revolutionaries to unite to seize power throughout China and regain control of all institutions usurped by the capitalist roaders.

Following the seizure of power by the masses in those institutions in which the proletariat had lost power, and developing concurrently with the movement to seize power, was the process the Chinese refer to as "struggle, criticism, transformation"—the process of further revolutionizing the relations of production to more fully correspond to the forces of production and transforming the superstructure to more fully reflect the socialist economic base. This process is still going on in China and will continue in different forms through many different struggles. Many of the questions of how to wage class struggle under socialism and prevent capitalist restoration are still unanswered by the Chinese experience, or answered only tentatively. Nevertheless, it is possible to see the tremendous changes which have taken place in China as a result of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

1. Education

The process of educating the youth plays a crucial role in any society. In bourgeois society education serves essentially to inculcate young people with the ideology of the bourgeoisie and to train them with the necessary skills and knowledge to serve the capitalists (though the kind of practical training differs according to the kind of "service"—in other words, it is different for different classes). Under the socialist system education must help train successors to the proletarian revolution as well as impart the knowledge and skills necessary to further develop the socialist economy and the productive forces.

When the country was liberated in 1949, China inherited its educational system from the old society. Until the Cultural Revolution, education, especially higher education, remained much the same as it had been before Liberation and in many ways was similar to education in Western capitalist society. Entrance to the universities was

determined by exams, a practice which, as in our country, effectively eliminated the vast majority of the sons and daughters of working people.

The universities themselves were dominated by bourgeois "authorities" who did their best to make schooling more complicated than it needed to be, stressed bourgeois ideas of trying to make a "career" for oneself, and generally separated theory from practice—that is separated science from production, and social science from class struggle. Professors who had rarely, if ever, seen the inside of a steel plant, and who certainly had never labored there, lectured on the process of making steel. Teachers lectured on agriculture who (as it later turned out when they went to do work in the fields as a result of the Cultural Revolution) didn't know how to plant crops right side up.

In general, the faculty of the schools, despite the fact that many if not most sincerely supported the socialist system, carried on in the traditional bourgeois way. The system of education was completely out of whack with the new socialist order.

Students and young people generally played a crucial role in the Cultural Revolution as pathbreakers, daring to challenge reactionary bourgeois authorities. But the students, limited by their relationship to production and weaknesses in their ideological stand flowing from their position in society, were not able to complete the transformation of the educational system by themselves. And, in the final analysis, the revisionist line in education could be defeated only by mass struggle throughout society to rout the bourgeois headquarters.

At a certain point in the Cultural Revolution, Mao called on the workers, peasants and fighters in the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to take command of the schools. This was a key part of safeguarding and strengthening the dictatorship of the proletariat, and was a direct expression of the policy formulated by Mao in the call that "The working class must exercise leadership in everything."

One of the first tasks of the workers, peasants and PLA fighters in exercising leadership in the schools was to assist the students and revolutionary sections of the faculty in forging a revolutionary alliance and to put an end to the fierce battles going on within the ranks of the student rebels in many places (some of these battles, including ones that involved heavy physical combat, were later proven to have been instigated by counter-revolutionaries). Thirty thousand workers were rallied behind Mao's call to take control of the campus of Tsinghua University, a technical school near Peking, and to put an end to the state of warfare that existed there.

A number of workers were killed and many others wounded by students misled by counter-revolutionaries into fanatical factionalism. But the workers did not retaliate. Instead they won the students over, convincing them to put down their

arms and go over to the method of ideological struggle, by using this method themselves while actually ducking bullets and other weapons at times. This was a tremendously inspiring example of putting politics in command and a powerful demonstration of why the working class must exercise leadership in everything!

Once the working class had taken control at Tsinghua and other educational institutions, Mao called on representatives of the workers to stay permanently in the schools and help further revolutionize them. Since that time profound changes have taken place in China's educational system.

The old system of exams has been tossed out the window. Today, after completing middle school (high school), *all* young people in China go to work in the factories, on the communes, or in the army for a minimum of two years. Admission to universities is then based largely on the recommendation of one's fellow workers, who look at the applicant's attitude toward manual labor, his or her class stand and enthusiasm in building socialism as key standards to judge whether he or she will make a good choice for a university student. Students recommended and finally selected are those who their fellow workers and the Party feel will use their education to advance socialist revolution and not to build their individual careers.

The content of studies in the schools has also changed dramatically. The period of schooling has been shortened and the course matter simplified. Today the universities concentrate on science, engineering and technology, as well as the study of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, closely linked with practical struggle. Such things as philosophy, literature and art are also taught, but these subjects are no longer the private property of "educated" people alone. They have become the property of the entire Chinese people. The guiding principle of education is to link theory with practice, and to make further strides in overcoming the contradiction between mental and manual labor, while training skilled personnel to contribute to socialist construction and successors of the working class to continue making socialist revolution.

Now when students learn the science of fertilizing crops, for example, they learn by doing as well as studying. They do everything from the gathering of manure to working in chemical fertilizer plants. Thus, the knowledge they gain is all-sided and is directly linked with the needs and experiences of the workers and peasants in building socialism.

Not only are students for the universities now chosen from among the workers, peasants and soldiers, but other workers play a very important role in the class room. They are frequently invited to talk from their own experience on the scientific and technical subjects being studied, but even more than that to help revolutionize the thinking of the students by speaking to them about the class struggle, about the old society,

and by helping the students to grasp the fundamental principles and profound significance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought.

The relationship between students and teachers has also been radically changed. No longer are teachers the unquestioned rulers of the class room. Criticism and struggle among teachers and students has replaced blind obedience. This, too, is a product and reflection of the exercise of leadership by the working class in education and all spheres of society, of the breaking down, under this leadership, of the bourgeois structure of "authority", and reliance, in its place, on ideological and political line.

These great changes in education represent a decisive defeat for the bourgeoisie, and a great advance for the proletariat, in the class struggle, in the sphere of the superstructure, and in the relations of production—in dealing with the contradiction between mental and manual labor in particular. This in turn has pushed forward the development of the forces of production, spurring production and scientific experimentation. But these are only beginning steps and only an initial advance in the long and complicated class struggle to completely transform society and eventually wipe out the class contradictions resulting from capitalism.

2. The Relationship Between Town and Country

The division between the cities and the countryside is one of the major contradictions that has to be resolved in making the transition to communism. The cities in China today, as in the Soviet Union under Lenin and Stalin, are characterized by a more advanced mode of production and relations of production. The dominant form of socialist ownership in the cities is state ownership of industry, while in China's countryside socialist ownership is at a lower stage, collective ownership by the people's communes, which each own a part of the land and sell their products to the state—a form of commodity exchange.

Agriculture in China is still characterized by relatively backward forces of production; there is still little mechanization, though it is beginning to develop on a broader scale. To make the transition to full state ownership will require a long period of difficult struggle, to develop the productive forces in agriculture, build industry in the countryside, and strengthen the proletarian consciousness of the masses of peasants.

This can be done only in planned harmony with the development of industry in the cities and the raising of the class consciousness of the workers through the course of class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experimentation. As we noted earlier, the complete transition to communism can only be carried through on the basis of overcoming the contradiction between the workers and peasants, as well as between town and country (and between mental and manual labor) so that everyone in society will

have become conscious communist-workers, and the basis of class division in society will have been eliminated.

The Cultural Revolution has provided a powerful impetus for further revolutionizing China's countryside for strengthening the worker-peasant alliance, and for making greater strides toward the eventual elimination of distinction between cities and the rural areas. An important part of this has been the policy of sending large numbers of young people in the cities to the countryside after they complete their middle school education. This has had at least three important effects.

First, it integrates these young people with the great masses of the Chinese people—approximately 80% of whom are still peasants—and links them closely with agricultural production, which is the *basis* of the economy (while industry is the leading factor)—agriculture provides raw materials and markets for industry, while industry supplies agriculture with the means of mechanization (all of this regulated by socialist planning, *not a capitalist market*).

Second, the influx of educated young people helps provide the countryside with people with basic technical training and therefore aids in mechanizing agriculture and building up industry in the countryside. And third, this policy helps to reverse the movement of population from the countryside to the cities, a characteristic of capitalism that will "spontaneously" persist under socialism unless consciously combatted with socialist planning and principles. In fact, until the Cultural Revolution this pattern did persist in China, but now the cities of China have a stable population, and in some cases have decreased in population, while population is growing at a planned rate in the countryside and the border regions.

Encouraging the development of small-scale industry on the people's communes had been a policy of the Communist Party since the period of the Great Leap Forward. But under the liberating influence of the Cultural Revolution, the process of building industry by relying on local initiative and utilizing local resources took great strides. Large numbers of factories have been set up in the rural areas, primarily to aid agriculture (fertilizer and pump factories, etc.), and to serve the needs of the peasants (for example, small textile plants).

The tremendous changes that have taken place in Chinese medicine, which never cease to amaze foreign visitors, have also had profound effects on China's countryside, and contribute to eventually overcoming the contradiction between town and country and between mental and manual labor. In addition to full scale doctors, huge numbers of what the Chinese call "barefoot doctors" have been trained to handle most of the health needs of the Chinese peasants, curing common illnesses, setting broken bones, disseminating birth control information, etc. And the

hospitals and clinics are more geared to meeting the needs of the peasants. At the same time, the university-trained doctors take part in production together with the peasants. In this way the bourgeois "division of labor" is attacked "from two sides"—peasants are trained as doctors, while doctors work in the fields and learn from the peasants.

3) Literature and Art

As pointed out earlier, one of the first targets of the Cultural Revolution was the field of literature and art. Many fields of art were virtually unchanged since before Liberation, including Peking Opera, symphonic music, the ballet, etc. Ancient themes and foreign bourgeois works and characters from the old exploiting classes dominated the stage. The counter-revolutionaries who had wormed into the Communist Party did their best to prevent the revolutionization of literature and art and used their monopoly of the stage and the print shops to try to create public opinion for the restoration of capitalism. Thinly veiled attacks on socialism, the Party and Mao appeared in the form of historical writings and plays.

In addition to the counter-revolutionaries who tried to exercise dictatorship over literature and art, there were large numbers of writers and artists who, while sincerely supporting the socialist state, nevertheless had not yet broken ideologically with the old society. The revisionists discouraged the remolding of writers and artists and hoped to use them as a social base for capitalist restoration.

The struggle in the sphere of literature and art was one of the key battles in the Cultural Revolution and through this struggle great advances have been made in creating new works of literature and art that truly serve the interests of the workers and peasants in making revolution and building socialism. Such operas as "Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy" and "The Red Lantern", and revolutionary ballets like "The Red Detachment of Women" have transformed art according to the outlook of the proletariat, replacing the old "heroes" on the stage—emperors, landlords, beauties and ghosts—with truly heroic images of workers, peasants, and soldiers of the People's Army. Landlords, capitalists and counter-revolutionaries still appear in these models of proletarian art, but they do not occupy "center stage." They are presented as objects of the contempt and hatred of the masses—struck down by the revolutionary struggle of the people.

The changes in literature and art have also been seen in the further integration of the arts with the life of the people. Now symphonies, gymnastic teams, drama troops, and other cultural workers actively seek out the people, performing in the factories, communes, parks, etc. And cultural workers take part in production and learn from the working people in the process.

At the same time, new writers and artists have come forward from the ranks of the workers and peasants, and throughout China art and cultural groups are flourishing among the working people, alongside the regular art and cultural workers. This, too, is a further step in breaking down the division between "professional" artists and the masses of people.

But the class struggle in the sphere of literature, art and culture generally is still very sharp, and in one form or other, the bourgeoisie attempts to re-assert its influence in this sphere and drive the proletariat off the stage. The class struggle here is particularly acute, because art and culture are tremendous weapons in the hands of any class in putting forward its world outlook and creating public opinion. The bourgeoisie can use literature and art to put forward its reactionary outlook and policies, spreading in subtle ways reactionary ideas that it cannot overtly propagate.

The proletariat cannot rule and transform society according to its outlook if it does not have hegemony in literature and art, because as Mao Tsetung explained, more than 30 years ago in his talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art

"Although man's social life is the only source of literature and art and is incomparably livelier and richer in content, the people are not satisfied with life alone and demand literature and art as well. Why? Because, while both are beautiful, life as reflected in works of literature and art can and ought to be on a higher plane, more intense, more concentrated, more typical, nearer the ideal and therefore more universal than actual everyday life. Revolutionary literature and art should create a variety of characters out of real life and help the masses propel history forward. . . . In the world today all culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines. There is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake, art that stands above classes, art that is detached from or independent of politics . . . Politics, whether revolutionary or counter-revolutionary, is the struggle of class against class, not the activity of a few individuals. The revolutionary struggle on the ideological and artistic fronts must be subordinate to the political struggle because only through politics can the needs of the class and the masses find expression in concentrated form."

All this is why the class struggle in the sphere of culture is still very sharp in China today, and will continue to be one of the key arenas of struggle between Marxism and revisionism, between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, until classes and class struggle have disappeared.

4) "Grasp Revolution, Promote Production"—The Further Revolutionizing of the Mode of Production

One of the main theoretical weapons of the revisionists in the Soviet Union and elsewhere is

the argument that once the working class has seized control of the means of production, the contradiction between the productive forces and the relations of production completely ceases to exist. As we saw in earlier chapters, this argument was repeatedly raised by the capitalist roaders in the Soviet Union, both before and after Stalin's death.

Stalin argued forcefully against this line in *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR*, published just one year before his death. In answering the revisionist economist Yaroshenko, Stalin wrote that:

"Our present relations of production . . . fully conform to the growth of the productive forces and help them to advance at seven-league strides. But it would be wrong to rest easy at that and to think that there are no contradictions between our productive forces and the relations of production."

What Stalin says here is essentially what Mao wrote in *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions*—that under socialism there is both harmony and contradiction between the forces and relations of production.

And Stalin warns that failing to grasp this would lead to a situation where the "relations of production might become a serious brake on the further development of the productive forces." But Stalin only implies and does not fully draw the conclusion that Mao draws—that classes and class struggle continue to exist throughout the socialist period. (Mao, of course, draws on the experience of the Soviet Union as well as the experience of building socialism in China.)

In China it is the fact that the relations of production are, in the main, in harmony with the forces of production that accounts for the tremendous growth in production since Liberation. But the relations of production still continue to lag behind the development of the productive forces. Contradictions between mental and manual labor, the persistence of wages differing among different workers according to the socialist principle of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work" (skilled workers higher paid than less skilled, workers in heavy industry higher paid than workers in light industry, etc.), the contradiction between workers and peasants—these and other distinctions between people in the productive process are survivals of the capitalist era and continue to hold back the development of the productive forces.

The revisionists try to blur over these contradictions, and deny the fact that class struggle still exists under socialism, is, in fact, what propels society forward and—where the proletariat has the upper hand and is in control of society—leads to the further development of the productive forces. Instead, the revisionists argue that once ownership of the means of production has been socialized, then the only task of the working class is to "develop the productive forces"—

to produce, in effect, for production's sake. But as we showed in Chapter III, socialism can only be built and communism reached on the basis of the ever-expanding consciousness of the working people of the aims and plans of production, and their increasing control over the productive process on this basis. Without this, production as an end in itself only serves and reflects the interests of the bourgeoisie and capitalism.

In China the revisionist line on production was vigorously promoted by Liu Shiao-chi and was revived, after Liu's downfall, by Lin Piao and Chen Po-ta, who tried to say that the main contradiction in China was not that between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, but "between the advanced socialist system and the backward economic base." This is nothing but the bourgeois method of mechanical materialism and its "theory of productive forces", which is upheld by the revisionists, Trotskyites and other agents of the bourgeoisie in the revolutionary ranks.

This "theory" says that a high level of development of the productive forces automatically leads to socialism and communism and, conversely, where the productive forces are still on a relatively low level of development, it is impossible to build socialism. This negates the experience of socialist revolution and socialist construction in Russia and China, and because it liquidates the dynamic and revolutionary factor of the people themselves, and hence eliminates the need for class struggle and revolution.

The Cultural Revolution struck a powerful body blow at this bourgeois line. The Cultural Revolution unleashed a torrent of mass criticism and struggle against such things as reliance on material incentives and one-man management in the plants. This struggle was, in the final analysis, directed against the capitalist roaders who were undermining control of production by the working class.

Criticism is a form of destruction, and as Mao has stressed, "without destruction there can be no construction." With the dethronement of capitalist roaders and mass repudiation of their bourgeois methods, the working class was faced with the crucial task of further revolutionizing the relations of production—of developing new methods of running the enterprises and the whole of China's economic life in a way which more fully corresponds to socialist ownership of the means of production and the development of modern industry and agriculture. The process of developing these forms and methods through continuing class struggle has not yet been completed, and cannot be completed as long as the class contradictions remain, but many of the changes that have already been made get at the essence of what the Cultural Revolution was all about.

Today in China, administrative and technical personnel are required to participate in collective labor. This takes the form of working a few days a week, or a few months a year, on the assembly line, or in the countryside. The workers and

peasants are encouraged and led by the Party to criticize mistakes of the administrators and leaders, either by talking with them individually, at public meetings, and through posting written criticisms. Workers in a plant will discuss production quotas and make criticisms or suggest modifications.

The system of bonuses to disguise piece work, etc., has been eliminated. The salary gap between administrative and technical personnel and the rank and file workers is being progressively narrowed. Forms of more collective management, for example the revolutionary committees or workers' management teams, have been developed, and their members are chosen through the joint consultation of the workers and the Party committee. The system of work rules has been revamped and many unnecessary bureaucratic restrictions and "red tape" have been scraped.

All of these revolutionary changes have had the effect of liberating the productive forces. Since the Cultural Revolution the rate of development of industry in China has greatly increased and both the quantity and quality of goods has improved. Once the working people firmly regained the initiative they succeeded in making many technical innovations and improvements. Story after story is reported in Chinese literature of how workers invented new machinery and manufactured it from scrap materials, how whole new products have been created out of what was formerly "waste."

In addition to the workers coming forward daily in the course of their work to bring up suggestions for producing things more quickly and efficiently, teams have been set up which combine technical personnel with revolutionary cadres and veteran workers to develop new processes. Once certain bourgeois ideas were overcome, like "this is impossible because it has never been done before", or "they don't do it this way in the 'advanced' countries", the workers accomplished things that all of the bourgeois "experts" claimed were impossible—like building a 10,000-ton ship in 39 days on a dry dock equipped only for 5,000-ton ships.

All these and many other advances are living proof of the correctness of the socialist principle of putting "politics in command", as formulated by Mao Tsetung. It is a big defeat for the bourgeoisie and its revisionist hacks who claim that nothing can get done unless profit is put in command, as the revisionists have done in the Soviet Union in restoring capitalism.

We have seen in previous chapters that under socialism, it is still necessary to take into account the profitability of various enterprises. But this is a necessity that the working class strives to constantly limit and finally eliminate in the advance toward communism. And while in socialist society it is necessary, *in general*, for enterprises to make a profit so the state can accumulate more funds for the development of production, it is just as true that the question of profit can and

must be subordinated to the needs of the people and the long term tasks of socialist construction. For example, it may be necessary for industry producing agricultural machinery—tractors and the like—to function at a loss for an extended period of time to further the mechanization of agriculture and solidify the worker-peasant alliance.

This is possible under socialism, where the working class, through its state power, collectively controls the surplus of society and assigns it to the different branches of the economy and particular enterprises on the basis of an all-around socialist plan. But it is impossible by putting profits, instead of the revolutionary politics of the working class, in command. This can lead to capitalism and therefore to constant dislocations in the economy and anarchy of production.

The Cultural Revolution also affected the relationship between different industrial enterprises and between industry and the people as a whole. Once the concept of putting profits in command was smashed, the factories were able to produce what the needs of socialist construction required, even if in certain instances it was "unprofitable." Workers from one factory now visit another that, say, buys machinery from the first factory. They examine how the machines they produced are working out, ask the workers in the other plant for criticism and go back to hold discussions in their own plant on how to further improve the equipment.

Factories producing consumer goods solicit opinions directly from the masses on what new products are needed, what criticisms people have of the existing goods, and so on. One example which illustrates this was a factory that produced rain coats. Workers from the plant visited a commune where the peasants were planting rice and observed that the ends of the coats dragged in the water. As a result, they returned to the plant and put in another set of buttons that could be used to keep the coat out of the mud. And all of this is carried out within the overall socialist plan, by relying on the masses, putting politics in command and breaking through the separation of working people from each other in the process of producing so that they can increasingly produce consciously to contribute to socialist revolution.

It would be possible to fill up volumes dealing with the near miracles that the Chinese working class has been able to accomplish, just since the Cultural Revolution began. The point is that it is revolution—that is, criticizing the old ideas and habits, seizing back that part of power usurped by the capitalist roaders, further transforming the relations of production and carrying forward the struggle in the superstructure—that has unleashed the creative power of the masses to further liberate and develop the productive forces.

The tremendous advance in developing production in the wake of the Cultural Revolution is living proof that the slogan, "grasp revolution,

promote production", correctly expresses the relationship between the relations of production and the productive forces and is a powerful refutation of the revisionist "theory of the productive forces." If the working class has state power it will be able to transform the face of society and develop the economy rapidly, even if it starts out without a single steel mill. If the working class loses state power all the advanced productive facilities will simply be transformed into the capital of a new bourgeoisie to exploit the working class. Karl Marx wrote that "the greatest productive power is the revolutionary class itself." The Cultural Revolution in China is living proof of this.

SUMMARY

The main lessons of the Cultural Revolution can be summarized as follows:

1. The Cultural Revolution demonstrated that the method for preventing capitalist restoration and for regaining power in those institutions where the bourgeoisie has usurped control is the method of mass revolutionary struggle and seizure of power from below.

2. The Cultural Revolution was a tremendous struggle to rectify the Communist Party. By arousing the masses and encouraging their criticism, Mao and the proletarian headquarters in the Party were able to isolate and defeat the bourgeois headquarters, weed out counter-revolutionaries and degenerate elements, bring fresh blood into the Party, and strengthen the ideological and political unity of the Party.

3. The Cultural Revolution demonstrated the necessity for the working class to exercise dictatorship in all fields, including all aspects of the superstructure—education, literature and art, etc.

4. The Cultural Revolution provided powerful proof of the Marxist-Leninist principle that socialist construction must be carried out by relying on the masses, and putting proletarian politics in command, as expressed in the slogan, "grasp revolution, promote production," summarizing the correct relationship between the relations of production and the forces of production.

5. The Cultural Revolution was a great exercise in proletarian democracy in which the masses themselves struggled out what was right and wrong, criticized everything they felt was not in their interests, and exercised supervision over the Party and state.

6. The Cultural Revolution was a profound education for the masses of Chinese people who deepened their grasp of Marxism-Leninism in the course of fierce and complicated mass struggle. And this was a great school of class warfare for training successors to the revolution.

This last point is crucial. Without strengthening their ability to determine genuine from sham Marxism, the masses of Chinese people could not have identified the bourgeois headquarters and smashed it, they could not, in the final analysis, have prevented capitalist restoration and seized back power from below.

Through the many twists and turns of the Cultural Revolution, everyone, revolutionary and counter-revolutionary alike, spoke in the name of Mao Tsetung. But the problem was to figure out what line represented Mao Tsetung *Thought*—the outlook and interests of the proletariat—and which represented the bourgeoisie and revisionism, disguising itself as Mao Tsetung Thought.

And this has been proven to be all the more crucial, since Lin Piao, Chen Po-ta and others used the struggle against Liu Shao-chi as a cover to build up their own bourgeois headquarters. After Liu was overthrown, and the Cultural Revolution was consolidated on a certain level at the Ninth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 1969, the struggle against Lin Piao and his clique became very acute. Lin Piao even went so far as attempting to assassinate Mao.

But Lin failed, was exposed and died in a plane crash in September 1971 while fleeing China. In the three years since then, the struggle against revisionism, and the mass movement to carry forward and build on the lessons of the Cultural Revolution, has continued in new forms, now concentrating in the campaign to Criticize Lin Piao and Confucius.

And the key lesson that was emphasized at the Tenth Party Congress in 1973, summing up the two-line struggles in the Chinese revolution (the struggle between the bourgeois and proletarian lines, between Marxism and revisionism, within the Communist Party) was, in the words of Mao Tsetung, "the correctness or incorrectness of the ideological and political line decides everything."

As the example of Lin Piao shows, the Cultural Revolution did not and could not prevent the

restoration of capitalism once and for all, or rout the revisionists for all time. As Mao emphasized repeatedly during the Cultural Revolution, there will be a need for many such revolutions in the future, because, as he had already summed up in 1962, socialist society covers a considerably long historical period. In the historical

"period of socialism, there are still classes, class contradictions, and class struggle, there is the struggle between the socialist road, the capitalist road, and there is the danger of capitalist restoration. We must recognize the protracted and complex nature of this struggle. We must heighten our vigilance. We must correctly understand and handle class contradictions and class struggle, distinguish the contradictions between ourselves and the enemy from those among the people and handle them correctly. Otherwise a socialist country like ours will turn into its opposite and degenerate, and a capitalist restoration will take place. From now on we must remind ourselves of this every year, every month, and every day so that we can retain a rather sober understanding of this problem and have a Marxist-Leninist line."

The negative experience of the Soviet Union is clear proof of this. But, even more importantly, the tremendously positive experience of the Cultural Revolution and the continuing mass struggle against capitalist roaders and the bourgeoisie in every sphere in China shows that the working class not only can conquer power and begin the process of socialist transformation, but can continue to make revolution, advance along the socialist road and lead mankind throughout the world in reaching communism.