

On Exercising All-Round Dictatorship Over the Bourgeoisie

By Chang Chun-chiao

“Why did Lenin speak of exercising dictatorship over the bourgeoisie? It is essential to get this question clear. Lack of clarity on this question will lead to revisionism. This should be made known to the whole nation.”

“Our country at present practices a commodity system, the wage system is unequal, too, as in the eight-grade wage scale, and so forth. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat such things can only be restricted. Therefore, if people like Lin Piao come to power, it will be quite easy for them to rig up the capitalist system. That is why we should do more reading of Marxist-Leninist works.”

“Lenin said that ‘small production engenders capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale.’ They are also engendered among a part of the working class and of the Party membership. Both within the ranks of the proletariat and among the personnel of state and other organs there are people who take to the bourgeois style of life.”

— Quotations from Chairman Mao

The question of the dictatorship of the proletariat has long been the focus of the struggle between Marxism and revisionism. Lenin said, “Only he is a Marxist who *extends* the recognition of the class struggle to the recognition of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*.” And it is precisely to enable us to go by Marxism and not revisionism in both theory and practice that Chairman Mao calls on the whole nation to get clear on the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Our country is in an important period of its historical development. As a result of more than two decades of socialist revolution and socialist construction, and particularly of the liquidation of the bourgeois headquarters of Liu Shao-chi and of Lin Piao in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, our proletarian dictatorship is more consolidated than ever, and our socialist cause is thriving. Full of militancy, all our people are determined to build China into a powerful socialist country before the end of the century. In the course of this effort and in the entire historical period of socialism, whether we can persevere all the way in the dictatorship of the proletariat is a cardinal issue for China’s future development. Current class struggles, too, require that we should get clear on the question of the dictatorship of the proletar-

iat. Chairman Mao says, "Lack of clarity on this question will lead to revisionism." It won't do if only a few people grasp the point; it must "be made known to the whole nation". The present and long-range importance of success in this study cannot be overestimated.

As early as 1920, Lenin, basing himself on practical experience in leading the Great October Socialist Revolution and directing the first state of proletarian dictatorship, pointed out sharply, "The dictatorship of the proletariat is a most determined and most ruthless war waged by the new class against a *more powerful* enemy, the bourgeoisie, whose resistance is increased *tenfold* by its overthrow (even if only in one country), and whose power lies not only in the strength of international capital, in the strength and durability of the international connections of the bourgeoisie, but also in the *force of habit*, in the strength of small production. For, unfortunately, small production is still very, very widespread in the world, and small production *engenders* capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale. For all these reasons the dictatorship of the proletariat is essential." Lenin pointed out that the dictatorship of the proletariat is a persistent struggle — bloody and bloodless, violent and peaceful, military and economic, educational and administrative — against the forces and traditions of the old society, that it means all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie. Lenin stressed time and again that it is impossible to triumph over the bourgeoisie without exercising a protracted, all-round dictatorship over it. These words of Lenin's, especially those he underscored, have been confirmed by practice in subsequent years. Sure enough, new bourgeois elements have been engendered batch after batch, and it is precisely the Khrushchev-Brezhnev renegade clique that is their representative. These people generally have a good class background; almost all of them were brought up under the red flag; they have joined the Communist Party organisationally, received college training and become so-called red experts. However, they are new poisonous weeds engendered by the old soil of capitalism. They have betrayed their own class, usurped Party and state power, restored capitalism, become chieftains of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat, and accomplished what Hitler had tried to do but failed. Never should we forget this experience of history in which "the satellites went up to the sky while the red flag fell to the ground," especially not at this time when we are determined to build a powerful country.

We must be soberly aware that there is still a danger of China turning revisionist. This is not only because imperialism and social-imperialism will never give up aggression and subversion against us, not only because China's old landlords and capitalists are still around and unreconciled to their defeat, but also because new bourgeois elements are being engendered daily and hourly, as Lenin put it. Some comrades argue that Lenin was referring to the situation before collectivisation. This is obviously incorrect. Lenin's remarks are not out of date at all. These comrades may look up Chairman Mao's *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People* published in 1957. There Chairman Mao shows by concrete analysis that after the basic victory in the socialist transformation of the system of ownership, which includes the achievement of agricultural cooperation, there still exist in China classes, class contradictions and class struggle, and there still exist both harmony and contradiction between the relations of production and the productive forces and between the superstructure and the economic base. Having summed up the new experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat after Lenin, Chairman Mao gave systematic an-

swers to various questions arising after the change in the system of ownership, set forth the tasks and policies of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and laid the theoretical basis for the Party's basic line and for continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Practice in the past 18 years, particularly in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, has proved that the theory, line and policies advanced by Chairman Mao are entirely correct.

Chairman Mao pointed out recently, "In a word, China is a socialist country. Before liberation she was much the same as a capitalist country. Even now she practices an eight-grade wage system, distribution according to work and exchange through money, and in all this differs very little from the old society. What is different is that the system of ownership has been changed." In order to gain a deeper understanding of Chairman Mao's instruction, let us look at the changes in the system of ownership in China and the proportions of the various economic sectors in China's industry, agriculture and commerce in 1973.

First, industry. Industry under ownership by the whole people covered 97 percent of the fixed assets of industry as a whole, 63 percent of the people engaged in industry, and 86 percent of the value of total industrial output. Industry under collective ownership covered 3 percent of the fixed assets, 36.2 percent of the people engaged in industry, and 14 percent of the total output value. Besides these, individual handicraftsmen made up 0.8 percent of the people engaged in industry.

Next, agriculture. Among the agricultural means of production, about 90 percent of the farmland and of the irrigation-drainage machinery and about 80 percent of the tractors and draught animals were under collective ownership. Here ownership by the whole people made up a very small proportion. Hence, over 90 percent of the nation's grain and various industrial crops came from the collective economy. The state farms accounted for only a small proportion. Apart from these, there still remained the small plots farmed by commune members for their personal needs, and a limited amount of household sideline production.

Then commerce. State commerce accounted for 92.5 percent of the total volume of retail sales, collectively owned commercial enterprises for 7.3 percent, and individual peddlers for 0.2 percent. Apart from these, there still remained the sizable amount of trade conducted at rural fairs.

The above figures show that socialist ownership by the whole people and socialist collective ownership by working people have indeed won a great victory in China. The dominant position of ownership by the whole people has been greatly enhanced and there have also been some changes in the economy of the people's communes as regards the proportion of ownership at the three levels — commune, production brigade and production team. On Shanghai's outskirts, for example, income at the commune level in proportion to total income rose from 28.1 percent in 1973 to 30.5 percent in 1974, that of the brigades rose from 15.2 percent to 17.2 percent, while the proportion going to the teams dropped from 56.7 percent to 52.3 percent. The people's commune has demonstrated ever more clearly its superiority, consisting in its larger size and higher degree of public ownership. In so far as we have, step by step in the past 25 years, eliminated ownership by imperialism, bureaucrat-capitalism and feudalism, transformed ownership by national capitalism and by individual labourers and replaced these five kinds of private ownership with the two kinds of socialist public ownership, we can proudly declare that the system of ownership in China has changed, that the proletariat and other working people in

China have in the main freed themselves from the shackles of private ownership, and that China's socialist economic base has been gradually consolidated and developed. The Constitution adopted by the Fourth National People's Congress specifically records these great victories of ours.

However, we must see that with respect to the system of ownership the issue is not yet fully settled. We often say that the issue of ownership "has in the main been settled"; this means that it has not been settled entirely, and also that bourgeois right has not been totally abolished in this realm. The statistics cited above show that private ownership still exists partially in industry, agriculture and commerce, that socialist public ownership does not consist entirely of ownership by the whole people but includes two kinds of ownership, and that ownership by the whole people is still rather weak in agriculture, which is the foundation of the national economy. The disappearance of bourgeois right in the realm of the system of ownership in a socialist society, as conceived by Marx and Lenin, implies the conversion of all the means of production into the common property of the whole of society. Clearly we have not yet reached that stage. Neither in theory nor in practice should we overlook the very arduous tasks that lie ahead for the dictatorship of the proletariat in this respect.

Moreover, we must see that both ownership by the whole people and collective ownership involve the question of leadership, that is, the question of which class holds the ownership in fact and not just in name.

Speaking at the First Plenary Session of the Ninth Central Committee of the Party on April 28, 1969, Chairman Mao said, "Apparently, we couldn't do without the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, for our base was not solid. From my observations, I am afraid that in a fairly large majority of factories — I don't mean all or the overwhelming majority — leadership was not in the hands of real Marxists and the masses of workers. Not that there were no good people in the leadership of the factories. There were. There were good people among the secretaries, deputy secretaries and members of Party committees and among the Party branch secretaries. But they followed that line of Liu Shao-chi's, just resorting to material incentive, putting profit in command, and instead of promoting proletarian politics, handing out bonuses, and so forth." "But there are indeed bad people in the factories." "This shows that the revolution is still unfinished." Chairman Mao's remarks not only explain the necessity of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution but also help us be more aware that in the problem of the system of ownership, as in all others, we should pay attention not only to its form but also to its actual content. It is perfectly correct for people to give full weight to the decisive role of the system of ownership in the relations of production. But it is incorrect to give no weight to whether the issue of ownership has been resolved merely in form or in actual fact, to the reaction upon the system of ownership exerted by the two other aspects of the relations of production — the relations among people and the form of distribution — and to the reaction upon the economic base exerted by the superstructure; these two aspects and the superstructure may play a decisive role under given conditions. Politics is the concentrated expression of economics. Whether the ideological and political line is correct or incorrect, and which class holds the leadership, decides which class owns those factories in actual fact. Comrades may recall how we turned any enterprise owned by bureaucrat capital or national capital into a socialist enterprise. Didn't we do the job by sending a military-control repre-

sentative or a state representative there to transform it according to the Party's line and policies? Historically, every major change in the system of ownership, be it the replacement of slavery by the feudal system or of feudalism by capitalism, was invariably preceded by the seizure of political power, which was then used to effect large-scale change in the system of ownership and consolidate and develop the new system. Even more is this the case with socialist public ownership which cannot be born under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Bureaucrat capital, which controlled 80 percent of the industry in old China, could be transformed and placed under ownership by the whole people only after the People's Liberation Army had defeated Chiang Kai-shek. Similarly, a capitalist restoration is inevitably preceded by the seizure of leadership and a change in the lines and policies of the Party. Wasn't this the way Khrushchev and Brezhnev changed the system of ownership in the Soviet Union? Wasn't this the way Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao changed the nature of a number of our factories and other enterprises to varying degrees?

Also, we must see that what we are practising today is a commodity system. Chairman Mao says, "Our country at present practices a commodity system, the wage system is unequal, too, as in the eight-grade wage scale, and so forth. Under the dictatorship of the proletariat such things can only be restricted. Therefore, if people like Lin Piao come to power, it will be quite easy for them to rig up the capitalist system." This state of affairs which Chairman Mao pinpointed cannot be changed in a short period. For instance in the rural people's communes on the outskirts of Shanghai where the economy at the commune and production brigade levels has developed at a rather fast pace, commune ownership accounts for 34.2 percent of the fixed assets owned at all three levels, and brigade ownership accounts for only 15.1 percent, while ownership by the production teams still occupies 50.7 percent of the whole. Therefore, even if we take economic conditions in the communes alone, it will require a fairly long time to effect the transition from the team as the basic accounting unit to the brigade and then to the commune. Moreover, even when the commune becomes the basic accounting unit, the ownership will still be collective. Thus, in the short term, there will be no basic change in the situation in which ownership by the whole people and collective ownership co-exist. So long as we still have these two kinds of ownership, commodity production, exchange through money and distribution according to work are inevitable. And since "under the dictatorship of the proletariat such things can only be restricted," the growth of capitalist factors in town and country and the emergence of new bourgeois elements are likewise inevitable. If such things are not restricted, capitalism and the bourgeoisie will grow more rapidly. Therefore, on no account should we relax our vigilance just because we have won a great victory in the transformation of the system of ownership and carried out one Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. We must realize that our economic base is not yet solid, that bourgeois right has not yet been abolished entirely in the system of ownership, and that it still exists to a serious extent in the relations among people and holds a dominant position in distribution. In the various spheres of the superstructure, some areas are in fact still controlled by the bourgeoisie which has the upper hand there; some are being transformed but the results are not yet consolidated, and old ideas and the old force of habit are still stubbornly obstructing the growth of socialist new things. New bourgeois elements are engendered, batch after batch, in the wake of the development of capitalist factors in town and country. The class struggle between the

proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the class struggle between the 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 will even become very acute. Even when all the landlords and capitalists of the old generation have died, such class struggles will by no means come to a stop, and a bourgeois restoration may still occur if people like Lin Piao come to power. In his speech *The Situation and Our Policy After the Victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan*, Chairman Mao described how in 1936, near the site of the Party Central Committee in Pao-an, there was a fortified village held by a handful of armed counter-revolutionaries who obstinately refused to surrender until the Red Army stormed into it to settle the problem. This story has a universal significance, for it tells us: "Everything reactionary is the same; if you don't hit it, it won't fall. It is like sweeping the floor; where the broom doesn't reach, the dust never vanishes of itself." Today there are still many "fortified villages" held by the bourgeoisie; when one is destroyed, another will spring up, and even if all have been destroyed except one, it will not vanish of itself if the iron broom of the dictatorship of the proletariat does not reach it. Lenin was entirely correct in saying, "For all these reasons the dictatorship of the proletariat is essential."

Historical experience shows us that whether the proletariat can triumph over the bourgeoisie and whether China will turn revisionist hinges on whether we can persevere in exercising all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie in all spheres and at all stages of development of the revolution. What is all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie? The most succinct generalisation is found in a passage from a letter Marx wrote in 1852 to J. Weydemeyer, which we are all studying. Marx said, "... no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society, nor yet the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this struggle of the classes, and bourgeois economists the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did that was new was to prove: 1) that the *existence of classes* is only bound up with *particular historical phases in the development of production*; 2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the *dictatorship of the proletariat*; 3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the *abolition of all classes* and to a *classless society*." In this splendid observation, Lenin said, Marx succeeded in expressing with striking clarity the chief and radical difference between his theory on the state and that of the bourgeoisie, and the essence of his teaching on the state. Here it should be noted that Marx divided the sentence on the dictatorship of the proletariat into three points, which are interrelated and cannot be cut apart. It is impermissible to accept only one of the three points while rejecting the other two. For the sentence gives complete expression to the entire process of the inception, development and withering away of the dictatorship of the proletariat and covers the whole task of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its actual content. In *The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850*, Marx deals in more specific terms with this dictatorship of the proletariat as the necessary transit point to the abolition of class distinctions generally, to the abolition of all the relations of production on which they rest, to the abolition of all the social relations that correspond to these relations of production, and to the revolutionising of all the ideas that result from these social relations. In all the four cases, Marx means *all*. Not a part, a greater part, or even the greatest part, but all! This is nothing surprising, for only by emancipating all mankind can the proletariat achieve its own final emancipa-

tion. The only way to attain this goal is to exercise all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie and carry the continued revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat through to the end, until the above-mentioned four ills are banished from the earth so that it will be impossible for the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes to exist or for new ones to arise; we definitely must not call a halt along the path of the transition. In our view, only those who understand the matter in this way can be deemed to have grasped the essence of Marx's teaching on the state. Comrades, please think it over: If the matter is not understood in this way, if Marxism is limited, curtailed and distorted in theory and practice, if the dictatorship of the proletariat is turned into an empty phrase, or all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie is crippled by amputation and exercised only in some spheres but not in all, or only at a certain stage (for instance, before the transformation of the system of ownership) but not at all stages, or in other words, if not all of the "fortified villages" of the bourgeoisie are destroyed but some are left, allowing the bourgeoisie to expand again, doesn't this mean preparing the conditions for bourgeois restoration? Doesn't it mean turning the dictatorship of the proletariat into a thing that protects the bourgeoisie, particularly the newly engendered bourgeoisie? All workers, all poor and lower-middle peasants and other working people who refuse to be plunged back into suffering and woe, all Communists who have dedicated their lives to the struggle for communism, and all comrades who do not want China to turn revisionist, must firmly bear in mind this basic principle of Marxism: It is imperative to exercise all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie, and absolutely impermissible to give it up half-way. There are undeniably some comrades among us who have joined the Communist Party organisationally but not ideologically. In their world outlook they have not yet over-stepped the bounds of small production and of the bourgeoisie. They do approve of the dictatorship of the proletariat at a certain stage and within a certain sphere and are pleased with certain victories of the proletariat, because they will bring them some gains; once they have secured their gains, they feel it's time to settle down and feather their cosy nests. As for exercising all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie, as for going on after the first step on the 10,000-li long march, sorry, let others do the job; here is my stop and I must get off the bus. We would like to offer a piece of advice to these comrades: It's dangerous to stop half-way! The bourgeoisie is beckoning to you. Catch up with the ranks and continue to advance!

Historical experience also teaches us that, as the dictatorship of the proletariat wins one victory after another, the bourgeoisie may pretend on the surface to accept this dictatorship while in reality it continues to work to restore the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. This is exactly what Khrushchev and Brezhnev have done. They changed neither the name "Soviet", nor the name of the party of Lenin, nor the name "socialist republics". But, accepting their names and using them as a cover, they have gutted the dictatorship of the proletariat of its actual content and turned it into a dictatorship of the monopoly capitalist class that is anti-Soviet, opposed to the party of Lenin and opposed to the socialist republics. They put forward the revisionist programme of "the state of the whole people" and "party of the entire people", which is an open betrayal of Marxism. But when the Soviet people stand up against their fascist dictatorship, they hoist the flag of the dictatorship of the proletariat in order to suppress the masses. Similar things have happened in China. Liu Shao-chi and Lin Piao did not limit themselves to spreading the theory of the dying out of class strug-

gle; they, too, flaunted the flag of the dictatorship of the proletariat while suppressing the revolution. Didn't Lin Piao preach his four "never forgets"? One of them was "never forget the dictatorship of the proletariat". Indeed that was something he "never forgot", only the words "to overthrow" need inserting to make it into "never forget to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat", or as confessed by his own gang, "wave Chairman Mao's banner to strike at Chairman Mao's forces". At times they trimmed their sails to the proletariat and even pretended to be more revolutionary than anyone else, raising "Left" slogans to create confusion and carry out sabotage, but they were usually waging a direct counter-struggle against the proletariat. You wanted to carry out socialist transformation? They said the new democratic order had to be consolidated. You wanted to organise cooperatives and communes? They said it was too early to do that. When you said literature and art had to be revolutionised, they said it would do no harm to stage a few plays about ghosts. You wanted to restrict bourgeois right? They said it was an excellent thing indeed and should be extended. They are a bunch of past masters at defending old things and, like a swarm of flies, buzz all day long over the "birth marks" and "defects" of the old society referred to by Marx. They are particularly keen on taking advantage of the inexperience of our young people to boost material incentives to them, saying that like strong bean-curd cheese, it stinks but tastes fine. And they invariably wave the banner of socialism while carrying on their dirty tricks. Aren't there some scoundrels who, engaging in speculation, graft and theft, say that they are promoting socialist cooperation? Don't some instigators of crime who poison the minds of young people hoist the banner of "care and love for the successors to the cause of communism"? We must study their tactics and sum up our experience so as to exercise all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie more effectively.

"Are you out to stir up a wind of 'communisation'?" To fabricate rumours by posing such a question is a tactic which some persons have resorted to recently. We can give a definite answer: The wind of "communisation" as stirred up by Liu Shao-chi and Chen Po-ta shall never be allowed to blow again. We have always held that, instead of having too much in the way of commodities, our country has not yet a sufficient abundance of them. So long as the communes cannot yet offer much to be "communised" along with what the production brigades and teams would bring in, and enterprises under ownership by the whole people cannot offer a great abundance of products for distribution to each according to his needs among our 800 million people, we will have to continue practising commodity production, exchange through money and distribution according to work. We have taken and will continue to take proper measures to curb the harm caused by these things. The dictatorship of the proletariat is dictatorship by the masses. We are confident that under the leadership of the Party, the broad masses have the strength and the ability to fight against the bourgeoisie and finally vanquish it. Old China was a vast sea of small production. Conducting socialist education among several hundred million peasants is a serious question at all times and requires the endeavour of several generations. But among the several hundred million peasants, the poor and lower-middle peasants form a majority, and they know from practice that the only path to the bright future for them is to follow the Communist Party and keep on along the socialist road. Our Party has relied upon them to forge unity with the middle peasants for the step-by-step advance from mutual-aid teams to the elementary and advanced agricultural producers' cooperatives and

then to the people's communes, and we can surely lead them in further advance.

We would rather call the attention of comrades to the fact that it is another kind of wind that is now blowing — the “bourgeois wind”. This is the bourgeois style of life Chairman Mao has pointed to, an evil wind stirred up by those “parts” of the people who have degenerated into bourgeois elements. The “bourgeois wind” blowing from among those Communists, particularly leading cadres, who belong to these “parts”, does us the greatest of harm. Poisoned by this evil wind, some people have got their heads full of bourgeois ideas; they scramble for position and gain and feel proud of this, instead of being ashamed. Some have sunk to the point of looking at everything as a commodity, themselves included. They join the Communist Party and go to work for the proletariat merely for the sake of upgrading themselves as commodities and asking the proletariat for a higher price. Those who are Communists in name but new bourgeois elements in reality exhibit the features of the decadent and moribund bourgeoisie as a whole. Historically, when the slave-owning, landlord and capitalist classes were in the ascendancy, they did some things of benefit to mankind. But today's new bourgeois elements are heading in the opposite direction to their forefathers. They are nothing but a heap of “new” garbage that can only harm mankind. Among the rumour-mongers about a wind of “communisation” being stirred up, some are new bourgeois elements who have taken public property into their private possession and fear that the people will “communise” it again; others want to use the chance to grab something for themselves. These people have a better nose than many of our comrades. Some of our comrades say that study is an “elastic” task that can yield precedence to others, whereas these people have sensed by instinct that the present study is an “inelastic” matter gravely confronting both classes, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Indeed they themselves may deliberately stir up some wind of “communisation”, or take over one of our own slogans in order to confuse the two different types of contradictions and play some unexpected trick. This is worth watching.

Under the leadership of the Party Central Committee headed by Chairman Mao, the mighty army of the proletarian revolution formed by China's masses in their hundreds of millions is striding vigorously forward. We have 25 years of practical experience in exercising the dictatorship of the proletariat, as well as all the international experience since the Paris Commune, and so long as the few hundred members of our Party Central Committee and the several thousand senior cadres take the lead and join the vast numbers of other cadres and the masses in reading and studying assiduously, carrying on investigation and analysis and summing up experience, we can certainly translate Chairman Mao's call into reality, gain clarity on the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and ensure our country's triumphant advance along the course charted by Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. “The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.” This infinitely bright prospect will surely continue to inspire growing numbers of awakened workers and other working people and their vanguard, the Communists, to keep to the Party's basic line, persevere in exercising all-round dictatorship over the bourgeoisie and carry the continued revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat through to the end! The extinction of the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes and the victory of communism are inevitable, certain and independent of man's will. □