



LETTERS

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On China's Cultural Revolution

Dear Friends,

Your commentary on the Cultural Revolution in the March 28, 1980, issue of *UNITY* is aggravating to say the least

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To state flatly that the "Cultural Revolution damaged and did not advance China's socialist cause" is doublethink of the worst kind. Who explained to the world for *twelve* years (1966-1978) why the Cultural Revolution was significant? It was the Communist Party of China, China's press, China's people and China's friends.

If the CPC was unable to figure out what was happening all those years, why then should it be considered fit to govern? If, as China's press has currently been say-

ing, the "gang of four" controlled the press from 1966 to 1976 and that untruths were being printed day after day, what are our guarantees that we can trust China's press today. During a 1971 visit to China, I heard only strong and detailed praises of the Cultural Revolution from everyone. Were all those people lying? . . .

R.P.

Boston, Massachusetts

UNITY reply:

No revolutionary movement is infallible. The CPC has stated that the Cultural Revolution was a serious mistake, aggravated by the counterrevolutionary activities of the "gang of four." The CPC made a self-criticism for the upheaval and some of the policies that were held over the past decade. This is not "doublethink," but frankly assessing their experiences.

We have tried to seriously study the situation. Based upon our own investiga-

tions, which included restudying documents from the Cultural Revolution and speaking with people who went through the upheaval, we concluded that the CPC's evaluation of the Cultural Revolution is valid.

Socialism is a relatively young system in China. Feudalism existed there for some 2,000 years. The Chinese people have a difficult task of modernizing the country, and are advancing into uncharted grounds. It is only natural that there are evaluations, summarizations of experiences, trials and errors.

The Cultural Revolution fostered the illusion that socialism is perfect. But this certainly is not the case, as the damage done to China during the last ten years testifies. Socialism is an advance over capitalism, but there are still difficulties that must be overcome. We should take an attitude of learning from the experiences and advances. We think this is what the CPC is trying to do, and we should learn from this approach as well.