

THE SOCIALIST EXPERIENCE

# THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

\$1



international socialists No.3

IN A SERIES OF EDUCATIONAL REPRINTS DESIGNED TO BRING TO TODAY'S SOCIALISTS THE LESSONS OF THE PAST

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b> . . . . .	1
by Jack Trautman	
<b>The Peasants' War in China</b> . . . . .	9
by Harold Isaacs	
Source: <i>New International</i> , January, 1935	
<b>The End of the Chinese Soviets</b> . . . . .	12
by Li Fu-Jen	
Source: <i>New International</i> , January, 1938	
<b>After the Fall of Hankow</b> . . . . .	16
by Li Fu-Jen	
Source: <i>New International</i> , January, 1939	
<b>The War in China and Japan</b> . . . . .	20
by X	
Source: <i>New International</i> , June, 1939	
<b>The China of Chiang Kai-Shek</b> . . . . .	23
by Ria Stone	
Source: <i>New International</i> , March, 1944	
<b>China Under the Stalinists</b> . . . . .	29
by Ria Stone	
Source: <i>New International</i> , April, 1944	
<b>Mao and the Peasantry: Historical Retrospect</b> . . . . .	32
by Ygael Gluckstein	
Source: Ygael Gluckstein, <i>Mao's China</i> , Chap. 9, 1957	
<b>Regimentation of the Working Class</b> . . . . .	37
by Ygael Gluckstein	
Source: <i>Mao's China</i> , Chap. 11, 1957	
<b>The Stalinist State in China</b> . . . . .	45
by M. Y. Wang	
Source: <i>New International</i> , March-April, 1951	
<b>Mao Tse-Tung and Stalinism</b> . . . . .	51
by Tony Cliff	
Source: <i>Socialist Review</i> , April, 1957	
[forerunner to British journal, <i>International Socialism</i> ]	

Cover design by David Shoemaker

# INTRODUCTION

The articles in this collection were written at various points during the Chinese Revolutionary War and shortly following the victory of the People's Liberation Army. They chronicle various stages of development and attempt to analyze the situations and events occurring at that time. In that sense they provide an indispensable background to understanding the current regime in China.

The Chinese Revolution was one of the two most significant revolutionary upheavals in the twentieth century, the other being its predecessor, the Russian Revolution. It is critical for revolutionaries to learn the lessons of these movements. As a beginning, it is useful to compare the two revolutions.

**The Russian Revolution began a whole epoch of working class revolutionary activity that led to the formation of revolutionary workers' parties around the world. It increased the power, self-confidence and consciousness of the working class everywhere.**

Following the Russian Revolution there were three revolutions in Germany and revolution in Hungary and Austria. In response to the seizure of power by the Russian working class, the British miners came out of the mines weeping that the workers had finally taken power. There was a revolution in China in 1925. In Seattle in 1919 there was a general strike and for two weeks the Seattle labor council virtually ran the city; this experience was repeated in several other cities in the Pacific Northwest. The 1919 steel strike may have been the most significant labor struggle in the United States up to that time. There was a general strike in Britain in 1926; a government predominantly composed of workers' organizations was swept to power in France in 1934 because of the strength of the working class movement. 1936 saw revolution in Spain.

All of this, including the whole anti-colonial revolt that continues to this day, was significantly affected by the Russian Revolution -- the first successful seizure of power by the working class.

The Russian Revolution had that impact because the working class had clearly come to power in Russia. It was running the economy and the state and producing tangible benefits for the working class, with real differences in state policies -- an end to war, an end to imperialist aggression and secret treaties. The regime sided clearly against all exploiters; it encouraged workers around the world to rise in revolt to seize control of their lives and their conditions.

In a country like Russia, which was predominantly peasant, the relationship of the working class to the peasantry was very important. The working class had been able to conclude an alliance with the peasantry and the workers' party, the Bolsheviks, called upon the peasantry to seize the land and throw out their landlord oppressors. In this way a union of the exploited, toiling masses was able to seize power in Russia under the leadership of the working class which, though small, occupied the strategic points in the economy. And, because it was concentrated in the cities, the working class was able to strike at the political nerve centers of the society.

The success of the working class was the result of the lead-

ership of the Bolshevik Party, which insisted against the urgings of the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionary Party that there could be no alliance with the bourgeoisie, that the interests of workers and the bourgeoisie and of the poor peasants and the bourgeoisie were necessarily counterposed, and that the bourgeoisie could only play a reactionary role toward both workers and peasants. The Bolsheviks argued that to attempt to reconcile these classes necessarily meant subordinating the working class to the bourgeoisie.

**The Chinese Revolution, on the other hand, did not help stimulate world revolution. Nor did it help counter the tendency toward reaction, conservatism and apathy on the part of the working class of the world. (At the time that the Chinese Revolution was completed, 1949, the period of reaction occasioned by the Cold War, McCarthyism and a newly-found capitalist prosperity was just setting in. The working class was still militant and the trend might have been reversed by a new workers' regime coming to power.) Instead, the Chinese Revolution ended the period of working class revolution and helped to create the worldwide period of reaction from which we are only now emerging.**

The question we must answer is why? Why the difference?

## Development of the Chinese Economy

China was an ancient society whose development had fallen way behind the dynamic capitalist countries. While there was some tendency toward normal bourgeois development in China in the mid-nineteenth century, that tendency was soon stifled by imperialism.

For example, Marx demonstrated that up to about 1830 China's trade with India and the West provided a favorable balance of trade for China. Within ten years, however, there was a swift reversal of this trend, caused by the deliberate mass importation into China of opium by the British. Here was a fine example of the viciousness of the imperialist system. The backwardness of the Chinese economy was also furthered by the importation of finished goods of the more advanced British industries (such as cottons, woblens, etc.), which helped to destroy the fledgling Chinese industries.<sup>1</sup>

Nor were these the only ways that imperialism stifled development in China. The imperialists linked up with the most backward elements of Chinese society and helped bolster their power. They became the protectors of the Chinese rulers against the wrath of the people and thus helped to maintain backwardness and underdevelopment. They joined in propping up the landlords, merchants and officials who kept the mass of peasants in bondage, and for decades they prevented industrialization. They created a class of compradores -- brokers for foreign capitalism on the Chinese market. This class of native Chinese had interests that coincided with those of the foreign imperialists.

**The result was that China was made into a backward colony. Its bourgeoisie was too tied to imperialism to be able to lead a movement for national independence. Later, as a native bourgeoisie did begin to develop, it could not lead such a movement either: it was too terrified to mobilize a working class and a peasantry which might sweep away not only the hated for-**

**eign dominators but all the exploiting classes.**

In the early twentieth century industrial growth began and was especially stimulated by World War I. Thus, imports of industrial machinery were up from 1915 to 1921 by almost thirteen times. The number of cotton mills tripled between 1916 and 1923. Four cigarette factories in 1915 grew to 182 by 1927. Taking 1913 as a base of 100, by 1923 coal production equalled 183.5, iron production 180.6, silk 152.3, bean oil 432.5 and the number of cotton spindles 403.9.<sup>2</sup>

These figures meant a huge increase in the size of the working class. By 1927 there were one and one half million factory workers, one and three-quarters million other industrial workers, and eleven million shopworkers and handicraftsmen.<sup>3</sup> They were a small class in Chinese society but they were strategically situated vis-a-vis the country's economy and political life, and they had no interests that bound them to the imperialists or to the exploiters. If they could link up with the oppressed peasantry -- as the Russian working class had linked up with its peasantry -- they could create a revolutionary upheaval which the exploiters would be unable to withstand.

### **Development of the Movement**

Stimulated by the Russian Revolution, working class political action developed rapidly. The first unions were formed in 1918; by 1919 they were conducting political strikes. In 1918 there were 25 strikes involving ten thousand workers. By 1922 there were ninety-one strikes involving one hundred fifty thousand workers. In 1925 one million Chinese workers participated in strikes, including in political strikes. By 1927 Chinese unions had three million members; in Shanghai they carried out an insurrection which placed political power within their grasp.<sup>4</sup>

But this gets us ahead of ourselves.

On May 4, 1919, there were huge student demonstrations against Japanese imperialism. Students were arrested in Peking, but workers' strikes in Shanghai and elsewhere forced their release. In 1920 the Chinese Communist Party was formed.

Even as the Chinese movement grew events were occurring in the world that were to have a profound effect on the coming revolution. In 1923, the third German revolution was defeated. This defeat led to a turning inward of the revolutionary regime in Russia and the beginnings of reaction. The more conservative section of the regime, the bureaucracy, was looking for a way to weaken its main enemy, British imperialism. The defeat of the revolution in Germany, and with it the revolutionary movement in the West, led them to look for something other than world revolution, which up to then had been the shared perspective. They wanted an alliance with China against Britain, and they began to look to the Kuomintang (KMT) to get it. The Chinese Communist Party was ordered to work with the KMT.

The KMT was a nationalist bourgeois party. One of its spokesmen stated, "The difference between the Chinese workers and foreign workers lies in the fact that the latter are oppressed only by their own capitalists and not by those of other countries. The Chinese workers are as yet not oppressed by Chinese capitalists. They are oppressed by foreign capitalists."<sup>5</sup>

**What was involved with the decision to work with the KMT was a decision to work with the Chinese bourgeoisie. It was the beginning of an alliance with the bourgeoisie that would soon be arranged and that would mean disaster for the workers'**

**movement. It was a carrying out in China of the policy the Mensheviks had proposed in Russia.**

The tragedy was that these developments occurred at a time when the Chinese revolutionary movement was growing. One hundred thousand workers demonstrated in Shanghai on May Day. In Canton the number was two hundred thousand. Red flags were flown in Wachang, Hanyang and Kanchow despite the fact that these cities were under martial law. In the meantime there was a growing peasant rebellion as the peasants refused to pay rents to the landlords.

On May Day in 1925 the worker and peasants marched together for the first time in Canton. There was a series of strikes in Shanghai in early 1925. The strikers were shot and there followed a protest parade into which the British soldiers also shot, killing twelve people. The response of the Chinese working class was a boycott of British goods and a general strike that quickly spread throughout Western China to Canton, Hong Kong, Peking and Hankow. Hong Kong was completely shut down as one hundred thousand workers left the city for Canton.

In Canton the workers cleaned out the gambling and opium dens and converted them into strikers' kitchens and dormitories. They established a strikers' delegates conference (a workers' council) and took over the police functions of the city. The first Chinese Revolution had begun; it was following the pattern of the Russian Revolution. Obviously, the struggle was between labor and capital and not simply between China and imperialism.

The revolution came at a time when reaction was setting in in Russia. Lenin had recently died and the bureaucracy was on the rise and moving away from the Bolshevik commitment to world revolution toward a perspective of "socialism in one country."

**The idea of "socialism in one country" had never before been heard. It was the ideology of a newly emerging ruling class, which used it to justify intense exploitation of the working class and peasantry in Russia -- that was to come later! -- and subordination of the interests of the workers and peasants of the world to the needs of the Russian bureaucracy. It was a policy that was only emerging. An intense faction fight was going on over it and the Chinese Revolution became a part of the faction fight.**

In the Chinese revolutionary upheaval the Moscow line was that it was not yet time for a workers' revolution in China. Pessimistic about the chances for a working class seizure of power, the Communist International (CI) turned to the Chinese bourgeoisie, which it called "the progressive national bourgeoisie."

The KMT got upgraded. It had been the party of the liberal bourgeoisie with whom they were in temporary alliance. Now it became a party of workers and peasants. Stalin praised it, saying that in colonial or semi-colonial countries the opposition "could assume the form of a single party of workers and peasants, like the Kuomintang."

Stalin and the Russian Communist Party stated in January, 1926: "To our party has fallen the proud and historical role of leading the first victorious proletarian revolution in the world . . . We are convinced that the KMT will succeed in playing the same role in the East and thereby destroy the foundation of the rule of the imperialists in Asia . . ."<sup>6</sup>

The CI called for unity with the KMT, which meant unity with the bourgeoisie. For the KMT the economic and social program had to be kept within the bounds of bourgeois economy.

Thus, there could be no radical agrarian reforms, for example. It was to be the task of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to sell this policy to the workers and peasants. This policy meant that as the workers and peasant movement developed it would have no leadership that expressed its interests. It was bound to be defeated. Worse still, Chiang Kai-Shek and the KMT were given the endorsement of the CI as revolutionaries, which made it easier for the workers and peasants to be betrayed by them.

### The Defeat of the First Revolution

Chiang himself was careful to choose only non-CP'ers for government posts, but Communists did all of the basic work of the KMT. They formed its infra-structure.

On March 20, 1926, Chiang arrested all the CP'ers assigned to his command. He raided the Canton-Hongkong strike headquarters, put all the Soviet advisors under house arrest, and demanded a list of CP members in the KMT, *which he was given*. All Communists were then banned from serving as party or government heads. He insisted that all instructions issued by the Central Committee of the CCP to party members should first go to a special joint committee of the two parties for approval, a demand which he was also granted. This, of course, meant abolishing the independent existence of the Communist Party. To cap it off, Chiang placed Canton under military dictatorship.

The CI responded by ignoring the coup and denying that anything out of the ordinary had taken place. It continued to call for the CCP to cooperate with the KMT.

**Some Communist Party members wanted to withdraw from the KMT. This proposal was in fact advanced by the Central Committee of the CCP. However, the CI condemned and rejected the proposal, as it did a proposal to form a left wing within the KMT. According to the CI, the CCP was not even able to organize a caucus within the KMT. With continued CI endorsement, with no organized Communist opposition, Chiang was able to continue to appear revolutionary.**

On July 29 came a complete crackdown. Martial law was proclaimed in Canton. All labor disturbances were forbidden -- compulsory arbitration was substituted for strikes, and there were armed attacks on the workers. Fifty were killed. The Hong Kong strike was crushed and sold out, and a crackdown was instituted in the countryside against the peasantry.

But the revolution was by no means over. There were still mass uprisings in the cities and the countryside. One half million workers were organized in South Central China, as were two million peasants. The village authorities were under peasant control.

On December 3, in the city of Wuhan, the bourgeoisie threatened a general strike of capital unless the workers were restrained. The CP and the KMT acted to restrain them: arbitration was introduced to recognize "reasonable" wage increases, to "follow the traditions in fixing working hours" -- the traditions included fourteen-hour days! -- and "to leave the power of employing and dismissing laborers entirely in the hands of the employers."<sup>7</sup> The Communist Party not only agreed with this policy, but instituted it themselves. Their approach to the peasants was quite similar.

The CP was unwilling to speak out, to agitate, to organize the working class and the peasantry and army independently. Therefore they were dependent on the other class. That is what the bloc of four classes meant in a revolutionary situation: terrible defeats.

For example, the land: they could only call for seizing that of "reactionary militarists." KMT officers did not fall in that category. What that policy meant in reality was that they protected the landlords' land. And, piling one mess on top of another, the CI instructed the CCP to enter the government in order to give it some credibility in the eyes of the masses.

In the meantime the strike wave was growing and passing out of economic bounds. The workers attacked the British concession in Hankow. The British retreated and offered to get out while the CCP opposed the attack. Chiang was heading for Shanghai, openly maneuvering to crush the workers. The CP gave them not a word of warning.

There had been a huge strike wave in Shanghai. As Chiang's troops were advancing a general strike of 350,000 workers was called on February 19 and shut down the city. On February 21, the soldiers were ordered to attack the strikers. In response the CP called an uprising for February 22. It was brutally defeated, but the defeat was not final.

On March 21, a new general strike was called and led to insurrection. The workers took over the police stations, formed workers' militias, and controlled the city. During this turmoil the CP refused to raise slogans such as "all power to the Soviets" and "down with the capitalist ministers" which had educated the Russian working class and won the workers over to Bolshevism. In China the CP slogan was rather: "Hail Chiang Kai-Shek!"<sup>8</sup>

Chiang did not sit quietly by as the workers organized their new power. He quickly started recruiting gangs to attack the workers. But the government of the city was controlled by and followed by the workers. Chiang had only 3,000 troops, mostly unreliable. As a result, he presented himself as a friend to the Shanghai workers.

**But despite the fact that across the river he was attacking the workers in Hangkow, the CP said nothing to disillusion the workers about Chiang's claim of friendship. Rather, Chiang was hailed as a leader of the revolution, by the workers, by the CCP, by the CI. There was no effort made to warn the workers of the coming catastrophe. Instead, the CP acted to appease him -- at a time when they could have blown him away.**

They offered to give a majority of the posts in the provisional government to the bourgeoisie, including Chiang himself. But Chiang refused to enter the government. The bourgeoisie followed his lead and likewise refused to join. The CP then refused to proceed without them, provided no social program to rally the workers and the peasants, and made no effort to approach the KMT soldiers or to encourage fraternization of the workers with the army. The reason: such acts would have jeopardized the united front. Instead, the CP tried to limit the strike movement, even as employers were hitting back with lock-outs. Pickets were forbidden to make arrests.

At this point came a remarkable incident. The Commander of Chiang's troops met secretly with the Central Committee of the CP and offered to arrest Chiang and put himself at their disposal. They refused the offer because accepting it would have meant waging a decisive class struggle and scrapping their beloved united front. As a result, the commander returned to do loyal service with Chiang.<sup>9</sup>

On April 12, 1927, came the inevitable: Chiang's coup. He unleashed a reign of terror against the Communists and the workers. As a result, the CCP and the CI finally broke with Chiang Kai-Shek and branded him a traitor. But they still had not broken with

the class collaborationist policies that had led them to ally with him in the first place.

At this point the revolutionary movement was growing in the provinces of Hunan and Hupeh. It was still potentially strong enough to defeat Chiang if a decisive revolutionary policy were adopted. But Stalin's decision was that there should be no soviets, which would mean dual power and civil war. Instead, he looked to an alliance with the left KMT, and to get it the CP attacked the workers' "excesses."

Still, the peasant uprisings continued. The workers and peasants, without organized leadership, were moving instinctively to set up a dual power to the government. The CP continued to tell them to remain with the KMT, even when it was becoming clear that the party itself was to be expelled from the KMT. It was at this point that the CP Central Committee adopted the following regulations:

"Communist members of the KMT . . . are participating as members of the KMT and not as members of the CP . . . The workers' and peasants' mass organizations should accept the leadership and control of the KMT . . . armed groups of the workers and peasants should submit to the regulation and training of the government. The labor unions and workers' pickets may not assume judicial or administrative functions, arrest people, try them or patrol the streets without the permission of the local KMT branch or government. The economic demands of the shop employees shall not exceed the economic capacities of the shopkeepers. The unions shall not interfere with the shopkeepers' right to hire and fire. They shall not insult the shopkeepers with arrests, fines, putting on dunce caps, etc."<sup>10</sup>

**Compare, for example, this last regulation with the *Theses on Tactics* adopted by the third Comintern Congress in 1921: ". . . the Communist parties must put forward demands whose fulfillment is an immediate and urgent working class need, and they must fight for these demands in mass struggle, regardless of whether they are compatible with the profit economy of the capitalist class or not."<sup>11</sup> The departure, indeed the contradiction with Bolshevism is clear.**

Inevitably, the slaughter that such a policy would occasion came. There were executions, expulsions and systematic destruction of the trade unions; strikes were banned; there were shootings, beheadings, tortures and mutilations.

This tremendous defeat presented a problem for Stalin. It occurred at a time when the faction fight between him and Trotsky, between the bureaucracy and the workers, was coming to a head. The defeat in China tended to expose the bankruptcy of his policies. The eighth plenum of the Executive Committee of the CI (ECCI), the highest policy making body of the CI, was preparing to meet and Stalin badly needed some bolstering of his position. His first step was to refuse to allow Trotsky to circulate his position, thereby insulating himself from criticisms.

But Stalin went much further. Now he ordered the formation of soviets, of civil war and workers' revolution. After the terrible defeats the workers had already suffered such an order could only mean they were being set up for a slaughter. That didn't matter, however, so long as Stalin could proclaim to the ECCI that his policy had been vindicated: workers' revolution was taking place in China at the very time they were meeting. It was a brutal and graphic example of what socialism in one country meant: the complete subordination of the workers and peasants of the world to the interests of the emerging Russian

bureaucracy.

In obedient response Chinese Communists led an uprising in Canton, known as the Canton Commune, and a series of peasant upheavals, known as the Autumn Harvest Uprisings. The result was terrible defeat. As one commentator put it, "Blood seemed to be running in rivers."

The result of this debacle was that the masses dropped out of politics. Workers left the CP in droves. In April of 1927 the CP had 60,000 members, 53.8% of which were workers. Within a year that number fell by four-fifths and the party had no healthy nucleus among industrial workers. At least 25,000 CP members were killed in the first month of terror.<sup>12</sup>

**The defeat in 1927 and the later disastrous policies of the CCP meant that the Chinese working class had no major independent activity in China for forty years, until it began acting independently again during the Chinese Cultural Revolution -- to the horror of both opponent sides in that struggle.**

In Russia the defeat ended finally any hopes of the regime being rescued from outside. The bureaucratic tendencies consolidated their control: Stalin was victorious.

### Regroupment After Defeat

Following the defeat of the revolution, various survivors began coalescing in the countryside to form armed bands. These individuals and groups were made up of some dispersed peasant bands, a few workers who had fled the cities, some intellectuals, rebels from the army and two bandit chiefs. They were thoroughly divorced from the working class.

In 1929 this group defeated a division of troops in Kiangsi province and won a base for themselves. They drove out the landlords and destroyed deeds. As a result their ranks soon swelled.

Their perspective was still that the working class would be the chief agency for socialist revolution. They saw this new army as a catalyst to stimulate a revolutionary explosion. With this idea in mind the army was ordered to attack the city of Changsha. But already their practice belied their theory and it was clear that a transformation was taking place.

The attack was successful. The attackers called a public meeting to which only 3,000 came. They attempted to organize no proletarian power in the city. Instead they taxed the chamber of commerce \$400,000, which was collected from the workers and the petty-bourgeoisie. The invading army had virtually no mass support, so when Chiang counter-attacked the CP army withdrew, taking with it 3,000 of the most advanced workers and thereby further robbing the working class of conscious leadership. In the aftermath Chiang slaughtered 5,000 more victims. A few other similar attacks with similar results ended this attempt. The CP army gave up on the cities -- and with them the working class -- and retreated to the countryside.<sup>13</sup>

In 1930, following some Moscow-initiated purges that gave Stalin more control over the party, the CP managed to establish a relatively secure base for themselves in Kiangsi province, which they called the Chinese Soviet Republic. This enclave was "soviet" in name only, and bore no relation to the Russian Soviet Republics which had been based on workers' councils.

**To gain support they dispossessed the landlords, but they were forced to rely upon the rich peasants whose contact with the external market was necessary for the maintenance of the Soviet areas. They sought to ally with these rich peasants, which meant moderating the demands of the poor peasantry. This was a peren-**

nial problem without the aid of the cities which they had abandoned. And since there was no independent working class revolutionary leadership in the cities, Chiang was free to press his attacks without fear of a threat to his rear.

In the next four years the CP suffered a series of attacks by the KMT army. They heroically fought against overwhelming odds and defeated the KMT four times; although they were almost beaten the last time. But they managed to break through the KMT blockade and in 1934 they headed North for the year-long Long March.

Their successful evasion of the KMT army cost them heavily: it meant destruction of the Chinese Soviet Republic, and it meant a further divorce from the cities and from the working class. They ended up in the most remote area in China. From then on all talk of the revolution being waged "under the leadership of the proletariat" really meant under the leadership of the CP.

### Popular Front

In December, 1933, Wang Ming, the Chinese representative to the CI, stated the following policy:

"... our party is succeeding step by step in converting its slogans that 'the overthrow of the KMT regime is a condition of the successful prosecution of the national-revolutionary war against Japanese and other imperialisms and that the soviet government and the Red Army of China are the only consistent fighters of the national-revolutionary war' from party slogans into slogans of the masses."<sup>14</sup>

That policy was in line with the Third Period analysis that characterized the CI at that time. The disastrous policies of the Third Period were designed to protect the Russian bureaucracy from its own working class and peasantry and from the international capitalist class. They were instituted as the bureaucracy began its first five year plan, which enormously intensified the exploitation of the working class, and as it began to forcibly appropriate and collectivize the peasantry. These acts created tremendous social turmoil and resistance inside Russia. This turmoil was an internal threat to the rule of the bureaucracy. Moreover, because it weakened the solidity of the Russian state, it made Russia potentially vulnerable to capitalist attack from without.

The Third Period policy was designed to protect the bureaucracy and to justify its internal policies. The First Period was said to have been a period of world revolution, begun by the Russian Revolution. The Second was a period of capitalist consolidation and temporary stability.

**The Third Period was claimed to be a new period of revolutionary upheavals. What was the change? It had nothing to do with the consciousness or activity of the working class. It was designed purely to meet the needs of the Russian bureaucracy as it set about to destroy the peasantry as an independent class and to brutally increase the rate of exploitation of the working class.**

The policy stated that all tendencies other than the Communist Parties were fascist. The other working class party, the Social Democratic Party, was called the main enemy, "social fascists," because they maintained reformist illusions about capitalism among the workers. But this policy disarmed the working class against real fascism and made it impossible for revolutionary workers to unite with reformist workers against the fas-

cist threat. As a result, the Nazis were able to come to power in Germany with no real working class resistance.

However, this policy had been more appropriate to Chinese conditions. The line taken by the CCP (quoted above) described correctly the tasks for revolutionaries: revolution against the KMT was the only viable way to prosecute the struggle for national independence against Japan and indeed against all imperialisms.

But as a result of the failures of the Third Period line and the consequent Nazi victory, the Russian bureaucracy went scrambling for allies among the capitalist governments as protection against Hitler. In order to secure these alliances they made guarantees that the working class would be restrained . . . by the CPs.

In China this new policy translated into a line that saw the petty-bourgeoisie and the Chinese bourgeoisie as potential allies; even landlords were placed in this category. It was a line that, in effect, renounced revolution. The CP called for the creation of a single government of national defense. Wang Ming stated:

"We Chinese Communists openly declare that we support the KMT and the Nanking Government (Chiang's government -- JT) and will fight shoulder to shoulder with them against Japanese imperialism."<sup>15</sup>

Mao Tse-Tung drew out the consequences for the policy:

"We have already adopted a decision not to confiscate the land of the rich peasantry, and if they come to us to fight against Japan, not to refuse to unite with them. We are not confiscating the property and the factories of the big and small Chinese merchants and capitalists. We protect their enterprises and help them to expand so that the material supply in the Soviet districts so necessary for the anti-Japanese campaign may be augmented in this way."<sup>16</sup>

This self-conscious retreat from the class struggle did not prevent Chiang from attacking the Chinese CP. In fact, he did this even to the point of ignoring the Japanese imperialist invasion. He consistently followed this policy, retreating from the Japanese and sacking the population as he fell back.

**Meanwhile, the Chinese CP (under the leadership of Mao and Stalin) went sucking after Chiang, trying to conclude an alliance. In order to do so they consistently subordinated the needs, interests and demands of the working class and the peasantry to the Chinese bourgeoisie and landlord class. In fact, the basic reason for the ultimate victory of the Chinese CP over the KMT was not its social revolutionary policies, but its leadership in the battle against Japanese imperialism.**

In 1936, for example, Chinese troops in Manchuria rebelled at Chiang's policies. They refused orders to fire at the CP and instead demanded the right to turn their guns on the Japanese. Chiang flew to Sian in December to enforce his commands, but the soldiers still refused to knuckle under. They kidnapped him and presented their demand to him on pain of his life.

However, Chiang found a new champion in the person of . . . Chou-en-lai. Chou headed a group of CP emissaries who journeyed to Sian and persuaded the soldiers to release the man who had been attempting to wipe them out for over ten years. Chou offered to cooperate and work with Chiang, a proven butcher, if he would join the CP in opposition to Japan. Chiang agreed in return for the following concessions from the Communist Party:

1. Abolition of the Red Army and its incorporation into the armies of the Nanking government.
2. Unification of state power in the hands of the Nanking government and the dissolution of the so-called Chinese Soviet

Republic and other organizations detrimental to governmental unity.

3. Cessation of all Communist propaganda.
4. Stoppage of the class struggle.<sup>17</sup>

These demands were suspiciously like those that Chiang had made on the CP ten years earlier during the revolutionary upsurge. To accept them meant to expose Communists and the peasants who followed them to Chiang's renewed treachery. But, in keeping with the popular front, the CP agreed to the demands. Mao even praised Chiang and called for the "bloc from within" the KMT which had existed in 1924-27. The Party gave a complete list of CP members within the KMT just as they had previously done, and they agreed not to recruit KMT members into the CP'

Once again, it must be noted that this tactic had nothing to do with the method of Bolshevism, whose aim as Lenin put it was to inspire the masses to demand to rule and to raise the working class to be the ruling class. The most important requirement for that task was to raise the consciousness and organization of the working class. Refusing to tell the truth about Chiang Kai-Shek as they did and tying their hands so as to make propaganda impossible made such a task impossible to carry out.

But it is no surprise that this is the course of action they should choose. Their aim was not that of the Bolsheviks. Mao explained why choose their course of action: "The Communists absolutely do not tie their viewpoint to the interests of a single class at a single time."<sup>18</sup>

This is a far cry from Lenin, or from Marx' simple statement in the *Communist Manifesto*: "[The Communists] . . . have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole." Or again: "The immediate aim of the communists is the same as that of all the other proletarian parties: formation of the proletariat into a class, overthrow of the bourgeois supremacy, conquest of political power by the proletariat."<sup>19</sup>

Mao stated that *the CP represented no class*. His statement was a correct one. Rather, the CP attempted to balance the classes off, making attacks on the bourgeoisie, but moderating the demands of the workers, attacking the landlords, but moderating the peasants. And shifting their emphasis from time to time, depending on what were the requirements at a given time.

This was a far cry from the Leninist perspective of organizing a self-conscious proletariat that could rule itself. It meant that when the CP came to power they were dependent on no single class and tied to no class; they came representing their own independent class. A new ruling class that followed the example of the Russian bureaucracy in establishing itself as a new exploiting class.

This partly explains why they didn't consistently press for an all-out attack on the bourgeoisie and the landlords and their government, led by Chiang Kai-Shek. They were riding the class movement to power. Their danger was that if it became too self-conscious that it would become independent, and they were thus forced to continually check-rein it.

But despite the concessions which the CP made, when the Japanese attack came the KMT fell back and surrendered most of the cities attacked without a fight. In the process the KMT still further alienated an already disgusted population at the same time that the CP was developing a reputation for honest, efficient government (among all classes). But the CP continued to support the KMT. They called on the masses to obey the

government and refrain from divisive efforts to improve their lot and sacrifice their lives for the government when called upon. For its part, the government the CP was supporting outlawed strikes and instituted the death penalty for strikers.

In 1941, Chiang brought the period of "cooperation" to an end by attacking part of the CP army (which still followed the KMT leadership) and annihilating it.

### The March to Power

When the war ended the CP still looked to collaboration with Chiang. Mao and Chiang met to negotiate in 1945 and spent 43 days together. Mao dropped the demand for a coalition government and simply demanded "democratization" of the existing government under Chiang. He agreed to abandon some "liberated" areas and reduce his armed forces if Chiang would do the same.

But, Chiang's continued treachery made continued cooperation impossible once again. And, his sacking of the population made it possible to defeat him without having to worry about mobilizing forces which would be independent of the CP and might thus be able to challenge its hegemony.

In fact, the CP specifically urged workers not to rebel, but rather to obey authority. Thus, as Gluckstein points out in the selection included here: "In fact, the Communist leaders did their best to prevent any workers' uprisings in the towns on the eve of their being taken. Thus, before the fall of Tientsin and Peking, the commander of the front, General Lin Piao, issued a proclamation saying: 'The people are asked to maintain order and continue in their present occupations. Kuomintang officials or police personnel of provincial, city, county or other levels of government institution; district, town village of pao chia personnel . . . are enjoined to remain at their posts.'<sup>20</sup>

The CP and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) set itself up as rulers, "emancipators," arbiters. They didn't call on the workers to free themselves. Instead, they dispensed "freedom." This had nothing to do with Marx' idea that "the task of the working class is its own emancipation." Marx recognized that no one could free the working class. It must free itself, for whoever dispenses freedom can take it away. Which, of course, is what happened in China where a totalitarian regime was instituted.

This account answers the question why the Chinese Revolution got a response so different from the working class than did the Russian Revolution. The Chinese Revolution occurred before the Cold War had been consolidated, while there was still a mass, militant workers' movement, before Korea took place. A workers' revolution could have reversed the tendency toward cynicism and apathy, and helped to create a new workers movement. Instead, it consolidated it. Why?

Because workers looked at the new Chinese regime and they were confirmed in their impressions from Russia: socialism meant totalitarianism. The only alternative to rotten capitalism was bureaucratic Communism. The result was a deep apathy, cynicism and despair, rather than a new kindling of hope.

Further, it meant that a conservatized working class in the industrialized West was further consolidated in its support for the bourgeois governments. (Of course, this reaction was not accomplished by the political response to the Chinese Revolution alone, but more fundamentally by capitalist prosperity.) This political situation in its turn meant that the bourgeois regimes, especially the United States, were free to pursue their aggressive policies toward China thereby making conditions worse for the



Chinese workers and peasants.

What is striking about the history of the Chinese revolutionary movement -- particularly following the first revolution -- is the vacillation of the CCP. Rather than taking a clear revolutionary approach and attempting to win the working class and the oppressed masses to it, they continually changed their course of action. These changes were thoroughly different from the "tacking and veering" that Lenin pursued in his years of struggle against Czarism in Russia.

Although Lenin was quite flexible and frequently changed tactics to suit the needs of the situation, he always did so to advance the class struggle and to advance toward the revolution . . . and he openly proclaimed that that was what he was doing. He did so to bring the working class with him because he was acting as its agent and because only by doing so could he develop an informed working class capable of ruling itself.

But Mao and the CCP were doing something quite different. *They were trying to ride a movement to power.* They were able to propose and make all sorts of deals with the KMT because that was one possible route to power. They were forced always to keep one eye behind them for possible threat of the mass movement developing independently of them.

In this matter they resembled nothing so much as the bourgeoisie one hundred years before them when it was attempting to come to power against the feudal aristocracy. To do so it had to mobilize a mass movement; but it also had to beware that that movement might attack it as well. Marx described that bourgeoisie. His description is applicable to the CCP also.

"... inclined from the very beginning to betray the people and compromise with the crowned representative of the old society; representing not the interests of a new society against an old but renewed interests within a superannuated society; at the steering wheel not because the people stood behind it but because the people prodded it on before it; in the van not because it represented the initiative of a new but only the rancour of an old social epoch . . ."21

The CCP came to power in an era of reaction, when fascism and Stalinist rule came to power *instead* of the rule of the working class. The revolution replaced a rotten, corrupt system of exploitation with an honest, efficient system of exploitation. The latter was preferable in some ways, as liberalism is preferable to fascism. But both liberalism and fascism are reactionary, and so is the bureaucratic collectivist regime in China. Today, when socialism is possible on a worldwide basis, China's regime, like every other in the world, stands as a barrier to its realization. And as we enter a new era of working class revolutions that regime will inevitably be swept away with the rest of the exploiters.

- <sup>1</sup>Marx, "Revolution in China and in Europe," in Marx and Engels, *On Colonialism*, New York: 1972, pp. 19-26.
- <sup>2</sup>Harold Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*, Stanford: 1971, pp. 21-22.
- <sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 32-3; also Jean Chesneaux, *The Chinese Labor Movement*, Stanford: 1968, pp. 24-47.
- <sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, Isaacs, pp. 53-73.
- <sup>5</sup>quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 66
- <sup>6</sup>quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 85
- <sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 113
- <sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 133
- <sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 169-71
- <sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 262-63.
- <sup>11</sup>"Theses on Tactics" (adopted by the Third Comintern Congress), Jane Degras, *The Communist International, 1919-1943, Documents*, Vol. 1, pp. 248-49.
- <sup>12</sup>Isaacs, *op. cit.*, p. 273
- <sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 331-33.
- <sup>14</sup>quoted in the *New Internationalist*, January, 1938, Li Fu-Jen, "The End of the Chinese Soviets" (included in this collection)
- <sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*
- <sup>17</sup>*Ibid.* Stuart Schram, who is known as being favorable to Mao, cites a slightly different list of four conditions. The content, however, is pretty much the same as Li Fu-Jen's:
1. Abandonment of the policy of armed insurrection to overthrow the National Government.
  2. Reorganization of the soviet regime in Shensi as the government of a "Special Region" of the Republic of China, and rebaptism of the Red Army as a unit of the national army under the direction of the Nanking Government and its Military Council respectively.
  3. Establishing in the "Special Region" a democratic system based on universal suffrage.
  4. A stop to the confiscation of landlords' land.
- (*Mao Tse-Tung*, Stuart Schram, Penguin edition, p. 200)
- <sup>18</sup>Schram, *Ibid.*, p. 201
- <sup>19</sup>Marx and Engels, "The Communist Manifesto," in Feuer, Ed., *Marx and Engels, Basic Writings in Politics and Philosophy*, p. 20
- <sup>20</sup>Ygael Gluckstein, *Mao's China*, London: 1957, p. 212 (selection included in this collection)
- <sup>21</sup>Marx, "The Bourgeoisie and the Counter-Revolution," Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 68.

# The Peasants' War in China

WHAT PRECISELY is the situation today as regards the Red armies and the peasant war in China? What is the perspective for the peasant war and what does it mean for the Chinese revolution? Correct answers to these questions are vitally necessary before we can take a single step forward in formulating a revolutionary program for China consonant with the existing relationship of forces. It is not enough to look back over the long list of Stalinist crimes in the Chinese revolution, from the subordination of the workers and peasants to the bourgeois Kuo Min Tang in 1924-27 to the transposition of emphasis from city to village in the present day. This leads all too easily to a negative rejection of the enormous progressive significance of the peasant war in China. This we must first understand and from all available facts draw every possible positive conclusion favorable to an effective revival of the revolutionary movement in the cities.

The peasant Soviet districts in Kiangsi have suffered a series of crushing defeats in Chiang Kai-shek's sixth campaign. For this campaign Chiang marshalled a formidable war machine, an army of 350,000 men, a fleet of more than 100 planes, nearly 20,000 impressed laborers for building roads and fortifications, and a vast corps of political and missionary scavengers engaged in tearing from the peasants in the "recovered areas" the fruits of their five years of struggle against the Kuo Min Tang. The campaign has been conducted with the utmost ferocity. Villages and towns have been obliterated by unceasing air raids. Incendiary bombs have been used to lay waste hundreds of miles of forests and fields. [Chiang's slogan has been "Exterminate the Reds!" This means—"exterminate the poor peasant population!"—and this has been literally carried out in an ever-increasing area.]

Formerly long Kuo Min Tang columns would penetrate deeply into the Red territory only to be cut off and destroyed or disarmed by the mobile peasant bands. They marched into a countryside whose whole population threw its weight against them. The Kuo Min Tang armies broke and faltered under the counter-attack of the Red armies. The invaders were helpless against propaganda and intelligence corps which comprised virtually every man, woman and child of the poor peasantry of Southern Kiangsi. Through five successive Kuo Min Tang campaigns in four years the Reds fought their way successfully and emerged strengthened in arms, numbers, and morale.

During this last campaign, however, Chiang's tactics have undergone radical changes. The government army is advancing approximately abreast along a line which stretches from the Hunan border to Northern Fukien. This steam-roller advances slowly, confining its major activities to mopping up after the air raids have done their work. Advances are made only a few miles at a time. Stockades are punctuated by blockhouses, and small forts erected within rifle range of each other are set up across hills and down valleys. The most rigorous imaginable blockade is maintained to free passage of people, news and supplies into the Red areas. This is accomplished by a series of passes and a network

of phone wires connecting all the military posts through which the movements of every traveller are rigidly controlled.

In former campaigns the driving of a Kuo Min Tang spearhead into Red territory was always followed by the seemingly miraculous rise of peasant armies from the hills on all sides, the defeat of the invaders and the almost immediate recovery of lost territory. In this campaign to date the Kuo Min Tang has not lost a single mile once recovered. And the territorial losses of the Reds have been great. At its height the "Chinese Soviet Republic" in Kiangsi could legitimately claim control of more than 60 of the province's 80 *hsien* (counties), not including the so-called "pink fringe" in which the population was under Red influence. Today the Reds have been pressed back into an area certainly not exceeding six *hsien*, some reports stating three, others five. The government troops, according to the most recent and apparently accurate reports, have reoccupied Jui-chin, the Soviet "capital".

Within this narrowing domain, the sufferings and sacrifices of the peasant armies—which in their best days never exceeded 70-80,000 men (excluding auxiliary forces)—are paralleled only by their magnificent heroism. Disease and hunger, lack of salt, oil and military supplies, cut off by the blockade which seems to be almost 100% effective, have not failed to take their toll. Communist publications in the Soviet districts themselves reveal the degree of demoralization which all these defeats have brought in their wake. They tell their own story of desertions, food rationing, shortage of ammunition and other difficulties. Several leading Red army commanders, like Kung Ho-chung and Chang Yi, have capitulated to Chiang Kai-shek. The hardships and privations are shared alike by the Red soldiers and the peasants who fight by their side. For it is clear that the overwhelming majority of the village poor are fleeing with the Red armies before the air raids and the Kuo Min Tang advance. Chiang's armies, according to a pro-Kuo Min Tang eyewitness, march into devastated village in which sometimes the only living things are the wracked bodies of wounded peasants who have not been able to escape from under the raining bombs. The highly-heralded program of "rural rehabilitation" with which the campaign is supposedly being accompanied, is mainly for the benefit of those refugees from the Reds who return in the wake of the government troops, in other words, the returning landlords and upper middle peasants.

Nevertheless, the Kuo Min Tang victory is by no means complete. Not even the iron lines of soldiery guarding the boundaries of the recovered areas can prevent bands of peasants from swooping down in black of night and destroying bridges which have been built over gulleys, ravines and small streams. It was Chiang's primary purpose to surround and extirpate the Red armies and in this purpose he has failed. The loss of territory, the toll in lives, the disease and sufferings resulting from the blockade, the destruction of the Soviet administrations and the virtual liquidation of the "Soviet Republic" in Kiangsi all constitute a stunning blow to the peasant cause. Of this there can be

no question. But the main bodies of the Red armies are still intact, although somewhat reduced. Only a few weeks ago Chiang Kai-shek himself admitted that there were still 60,000 "Red remnants." Nearly half a million men, armed with the latest accoutrements of warfare, the last word in American, British, Japanese and Italian armaments, instructed by German, Italian and American strategists and aviators, have not been able to close in around a miserable, ragged handful. They have won no easy victories and the final victory is not yet theirs. They have not been able to prevent the fleeing Reds from breaking through the lines and shifting the theatre of warfare to Southern Hunan. Government leaders at Nanking and the government-controlled press are by no means disposed to crow over the outcome of the campaign. There is still an anxious edge to their tone.

The reason for this uncertainty in the ranks of the bourgeoisie is not far to seek. They know perfectly well that a temporary success in Kiangsi is certain to be—indeed already is—paralleled by a certain growth of the peasant movement elsewhere. The Kuo Min Tang is incapable of solving a single one of the problems which give rise to the peasant war. Of this they are perfectly aware. "You are fighting Red bandits at the front and creating Red bandits in the rear," complains the *Ta Kung-pao*, a leading bourgeois daily. This process is already clearly taking form in the newly-recovered areas. In these districts a grandiose program of "rural rehabilitation" is launched in the wake of the armies. Attempts are made to coax the peasants to return by offers of loans at low rates of interest, offers of seed and tools. The expenses for this are being carried by the provincial administration which has to drain and squeeze all the more heavily the peasants in the northern part of the province who have never been under Red influence. A system of rural credit is being established but according to one pro-Kuo Min Tang observer, the provincial machine is only temporarily bearing the charges on this money which will in the long run cost the people of Kiangsi more than they have had to pay the usurers in the past when rates up to 40 and 50% have been common.

But the basic problem in Kiangsi as in all of South China is the problem of land tenure. The landlord-tenant relationship overwhelmingly predominates in these regions. In Kiangsi before the days of the Reds it was estimated that more than 70% of the land was held by less than 30% of the population. Wherever the Reds held sway the landlords were driven out, land deeds and leases burned and land boundaries destroyed. Returning now into these areas, Chiang Kai-shek can offer no more to placate the peasantry than a purely temporary lightening of the miscellaneous tax burden and the suspension of rent collections for one year. A special decree issued by Chiang's Nanchang headquarters on September 12 proclaimed that from one year of the date of recovery of any district, all owners of land could resume the collection of rent. The Chinese bourgeoisie is itself inextricably compounded with the landlords. Capitalist and feudal forms alike are used in the exploitation of the peasantry. The Kuo Min Tang is the gov-

ernment of the bourgeoisie. It dare not penalize its class to any greater extent than a single year's rent. To the poor peasant this is as one drop of rain where he needs a veritable cloudburst. He has less than ever to lose. He will more than ever continue to struggle.

So while Chiang's hordes are "recovering" Kiangsi, they are not only not destroying the Red armies but they are not and cannot think of destroying the system of exploitation whose continued existence is a warrant for the rise of dozens and scores of Red armies in a dozen other places in the future. Nor are the Red armies of Kiangsi eliminated for they have succeeded in breaking through the iron rim around Kiangsi at several places. The main body of the fleeing Reds is now in Southern Hunan. Last August an army of no less than 10,000 marched into Northern Fukien, took Shui-kow and came within attacking distance of Foochow. Imperialist gunboats rushed to the scene and Chiang poured in reinforcements until there were no less than 21 divisions of central government troops in the province. Foochow army headquarters wired to Nanking that "it is like a fierce tiger jumping on a lamb". Yet the tiger, while it was able to drive the lamb from the Foochow area, recover Shui-kow and eventually, weeks later, re-occupy the former Red stronghold at Changting, was unable to dislodge it from the mountain district in Northwestern Fukien.

On the other side of the line in Western Kiangsi later the same month, Hsiao Keh, a Red commander, managed to bring his force of 4,000 men to the border, break through the lines and cross over into Hunan. Confounding the troops of Ho Chien, the Hunan militarist, he was able to make a spectacular march across the southern part of the province, swell his forces to nearly 10,000, swing in a broad arc northward along the Kweichow border and effect a junction with the peasant army of Ho Lung which recently established itself in Northeastern Kweichow. Within the last few weeks the rest of the main body of the Kiangsi Red army, its total number now uncertain, has followed the same trail and despite the most strenuous efforts of the government troops, has succeeded in making its way into Hunan, with the probable objective of an eventual march to Szechwan. The reluctance of provincial militarists to face the Reds and their willingness to live and let live as long as the Red objective is merely a passage through their provinces favor the possibility that the Kiangsi forces will succeed in reaching Szechwan. The impotence of the provincial forces is reflected in the frantic telegrams from the gentry in the affected areas demanding Central Government aid. Typical of such appeals was the wire of a group of Kweichow landlords (published in the press September 18) who complained: "The Kweichow armies certainly cannot suppress Ho Lung . . . there is no hope in asking them to do so. When Ho Lung came . . . he had only 3-4,000 men, many of them sick and wounded . . . he relieved the poor, abolished harsh requisitions. . . . Within two months his army expanded to 10,000 men."

In Szechwan peasant armies operating in the northeastern part of the province in recent months inflicted such heavy defeats on the provincial forces that Liu Hsiang, the chief warlord, withdrew entirely and retired southward to Chungking. The un-

believable lengths to which oppression of the peasantry has been carried, the collection of land taxes eighty years in advance, the forced cultivation of the opium poppy on a vast scale, the divisions and jealousies among the province's many militarists, the disaffection in their swollen armies, all obviously favor the further extension of the agrarian movement in Szechwan. That great western province, where misery under militarist rule has been of the blackest, offers the possibility for a recrudescence of the peasant war on a larger scale than it ever achieved in Kiangsi. Its remoteness behind mountain fastnesses, its natural wealth, its salt mines and its fertile valleys all indicate that a possible new "Central Soviet district" in Szechwan would be far more impregnable and self-sufficient than Kiangsi could ever hope to be. This is a factor to be reckoned with although its realization can not be looked for in the immediate future. But the Szechwanese gentry can look ahead. "If the Reds do eventually occupy Chungking and Wanhsien . . ." they recently wired Nanking, "then a Red Szechwan could not be averted. The Szechwan mountains are steep and it would take long years to recover the province. . . ."

These larger movements are duplicated on a much smaller scale in hundreds of villages throughout the country—right up to the gates of Nanking and on the outskirts of Shanghai itself—where peasants offer armed resistance to tax collectors, where they raid landlords' stores for rice and attack local officials who oppress them.

The cumulative effect of all this evidence indicates that despite the heavy defeat in Kiangsi, the peasant war in China can and will continue for a long time to come. Militarist divisions and jealousies, conflicts within the Kuo Min Tang simultaneously favor the development of the peasant war and are exacerbated by it. The deepening bankruptcy of Chinese rural economy, the inability of the Kuo Min Tang to deal with the smallest of the problems which have impoverished China's peasantry, the vastness of the country and the great remote areas in which peasant armies can operate, all mean that the peasant war will continue, in smaller or larger degree, in this region or that, to be a characteristic feature of the Chinese scene under Kuo Min Tang militarist rule.

But whether it continues in scattered, guerrilla forms (as it probably will during the next lengthy period) or whether it succeeds in establishing a new, more or less permanent base for itself, the peasant war can have no prospect of successful, revolutionary issue so long as the Chinese working class in the industrial centers remains, as it is today, prostrate. So long as the Kuo Min Tang, with the support of native and foreign exploiters, can continue to control the main arteries of the country's economic life, so long can it pit its strength against the peasantry. Only the resuscitation of the working class movement can break through this impasse and strike a new balance of forces in favor of the revolution. The Stalinist hope for the capture of cities by the Red armies is not excluded. But even in such an eventuality, there is no reason to suppose that the inevitable differentiation within the peasantry will not drive its leaders into the laps of the bourgeoisie unless—again—there is a powerful, organized, labor movement and a working class party capable of utilizing such a

situation in the interests of the proletarian revolution. Lacking this, the prospect can only be one of mutual exhaustion, deeper economic collapse, death, destruction, chaos, in which imperialist intervention would be certain to play its part.

For it is precisely because the working class has been throttled that the Kuo Min Tang could hurl army after army against the peasants without fear of a mortal revolutionary thrust within its own strongholds. The lack of a working class movement is the fundamental cause for today's defeats of the peasant armies. This the Stalinists have either never understood or else cynically ignored. With the same criminal lightmindedness which has characterized their whole catastrophic course in China, the Stalinists assign to the peasantry not only an independent rôle in the revolution but the *leading* rôle. This is not only implicit in the disaster-ridden theory of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" but is explicit in the course of action which they pursue. At the feet of this policy and this course of action must be laid major responsibility for the heavy blows and heavy sacrifices which the peasant armies are today being forced to make.

But a correct evaluation of the rôle and significance of the peasant war is a necessary condition to an effective Bolshevik-Leninist program. The reaction against the Stalinist swing from the proletariat to the peasantry has created in the minds of many comrades a psychological reaction which expresses itself in passivity toward the peasant armies. In peasant defeats they often have the tendency to see not a blow against the revolution but a confirmation of their anti-Stalinist views. The peasant Red armies have actually been slandered as "bandits" by some of these comrades. Such a view can have nothing in common with that of any Marxist revolutionary. It must be decisively repudiated if the banner of Leninism is to be raised again in China.

In the peasant armies the working class and its vanguard must recognize revolutionary allies. But these armies cannot be cloaked in a proletarian garb. On the other hand, the great progressive significance of the peasant war must be fully understood. The slogans of the agrarian revolution and at least their partial application are being carried under revolutionary banners over wide areas. Of all political movements today operating in China it alone is progressive. It alone is an ever-present threat to the rapacious militarists. True, the mere dangling of the episodic victories of the peasant armies before the working classes cannot be substituted, as it has been by the Stalinists, for an independent working class program. But the persistence of the peasant war, in so far as it continues to force Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuo Min Tang to expend most of their resources to suppress it, is a factor of vital importance to the working class. Every peasant advance, every peasant success improves the opportunities which still exist in the cities for the revival of the working class movement. Similarly, every peasant defeat, every Kuo Min Tang victory, reduces those opportunities.

Existing conditions make the fate of the peasant war a matter of the greatest moment to all Bolshevik-Leninists. But this does not mean that they can passively await its outcome. All the more imperative and pressing today is the need for building a

new, independent working class party with an independent working class program which corresponds concretely to the needs of the proletariat. Thus armed, and only

thus armed, will the proletariat be able to join and lead a united front of the revolutionary layers of the peasantry and the

petty bourgeoisie and ensure the victory of the Third Chinese Revolution.

Harold R. ISAACS,  
PEKING, *November 15, 1934*

# The End of the Chinese Soviets

THE HISTORIAN who undertakes to trace and explain the abrupt about-face which projected the Communist International and its sections from the "Third Period" of adventurism and irresponsible phrasemongering into the "Fourth Period" of Popular Frontism, class collaboration and social-patriotic betrayal of the international proletariat, will encounter in his study of the Chinese political scene a record of what is probably the most crassly cynical treason ever to disgrace the pages of revolutionary history.

In the so-called democratic countries, the Stalinist about-face was marked by the abandonment of the dominant "theory of social-fascism" which led to the tragic defeat of the German and Austrian proletariat, in favor of diametrically opposite theories supporting the line of the Popular Front, organic fusion with the social democracy, and support of the bourgeois-democratic governments. But in China, the only country in the Far East where Stalinism has exerted any real influence during the past decade, the switch has been even more startling. Here the "new line" has involved, as an integral part of the act of theoretical and political self-repudiation, the voluntary abandonment of an armed struggle against the Kuomintang régime of Chiang Kai-shek which raged across the face of China for nearly ten years, a struggle which was declared by the Stalinists to be part and parcel of the struggle against imperialism.

Those who have made a practise of following the Stalinist press will not easily forget the extravagant language in which an expectant world was informed that a Soviet revolution, assuming the state form of a "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry", had been victorious on a considerable portion of the territory of China. At the Thirteenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in December 1933, Wang Ming, Chinese representative, told his auditors that "the total area of the Chinese Soviet Republic is 1,348,180 square kilometers, while the area of the stable districts takes in 681,255 square kilometers". To emphasize the magnitude of this Soviet republic, the speaker declared that it was "vaster than any of the big capitalist countries of Western Europe". With such a head start, it was not surprising to find Wang Ming stating that the main political task of the Chinese Communist Party was the extension of the Soviet revolution to the rest of the country. Said he:

... we, of the C.P.C., consider the following to be our basic task: A struggle for the decisive victory of the Soviet revolution in all China, or in other words, in the words of Comrade Molotov, "the complete defeat of the enemy and the victory of the Red Army".

So that we may have clearly fixed in our minds who the enemy really was, let us listen to him further:

... our party is succeeding step by step in converting its slogans that "the overthrow of the Kuomintang régime is a condition of the successful prosecution of the national-revolutionary war against Japanese and other imperialisms" and that "the Soviet government and the Red Army of China are the only consistent fighters of the national-revolutionary war", from party slogans into slogans of the masses.

In making this declaration, Wang Ming reaffirmed what was written in the colonial thesis adopted by the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International in 1928, which states that "the party must explain to the masses the impossibility of a radical improvement in their position, the impossibility of the overthrow of imperialist domination and solution of the tasks of the agrarian revolution, without the overthrow from power of the Kuomintang and militarists and the creation of the rule of Soviets". This line was conceived, too, as having a great international significance, for at that same Thirteenth Plenum Wang Ming declared: "Therefore it is quite clear that one must realize that the question of defending the Chinese Soviets is the question of defending the world proletarian revolution. . . ."

That, however, was in December 1933. Without pausing to dwell on the vain Stalinist notion that elemental peasant uprisings and land seizures in a period of revolutionary ebb constituted a "Soviet revolution", let us note that today "Soviet China" and the "Red Army" have disappeared totally from the scene. Soviet China has become a "Special Administrative District" under the jurisdiction of the Kuomintang government at Nanking, and the Red Army is now the "Eighth Route Army" subordinated to the high command of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. No longer is it asserted that the overthrow of the Kuomintang régime is the condition of a successful national-revolutionary war. Indeed, anyone who ventures to state this elementary truism is branded as an "enemy of the Chinese people" and an "agent of Japanese imperialism". The policies of the class struggle and the agrarian revolution have been publicly jettisoned. Today, the keynote of the Stalinist position is the "People's Anti-Japanese United Front" embracing "all parties and groups" (which in practise means the C.P. and the Kuomintang), leading to the establishment of an "All-Chinese Government of National Defense".

The naïve, who still retain a measure of faith in Stalinist political probity, may ask: But does not the call for an "All-Chinese Government of National Defense" imply the overthrow of the Kuomintang régime, even if only as a distant aim? Perish the thought! Spokesman Wang Ming declares (*Communist International*, Vol. 14, No. 10, Oct. 1937) any such suggestion to be "an absolutely false and unfounded legend spread by pro-Japanese elements. . . . It is slander, provocation!" And to make the Stalinist position thoroughly clear, he adds: "We, Chinese Communists, openly declare that we support the Kuomintang and the Nanking Government, and will fight shoulder to shoulder with them against Japanese imperialism." Only practical, military support in the war against Japan? There is no hint of it. *Critical* support, perhaps? But what foundation can there be for revolutionary criticism when the Stalinists have furled the revolutionary banner and embraced Sun Yat-senism, which is the Kuomintang's own political doctrine?

Before proceeding to study the real factors which have made for the startling about-face of the Chinese Stalinists, let us examine the official motivations for the new line. It is not unusual to discover that Stalinist turns in the realm of policy are put over on a stifled party under the pretext of correcting "errors" in the carrying out of the "general line", and this regardless of the fact that, a little while previously, tribute may have been paid to the correct and unimpeachable carrying out of the line by the Communist party concerned. Thus Wang Ming, referring to the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. to the "Bolshevization" of the Chinese Communist Party, declared under the heading of "*The Unquestionable Loyalty to the Leninist General Line of the Communist International*", as follows:

This further Bolshevization finds expression, first, in the fact that the C.P.C. headed by its C.C. firmly and undeviatingly carried out its general line, which had been worked out and defined by the Fourth Plenum of the C.C. held on January 7, 1931, under the leadership of the E.C.C.I., and that it does not fear any difficulties or complications that may arise in its path. What is the content of our general political line at the present stage of the Chinese Revolution? The struggle for every possible timely combination of the revolutionary mass movement in Soviet and non-Soviet China under the uniform leadership of the proletariat to overthrow the rule of the imperialists and their lackeys, the Kuomintang, and establish the power of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry in the form of Soviets throughout all China.

Yet less than two years later the redoubtable Wang Ming was to discover that the Chinese Communist Party, far from carrying out the general line "firmly and undeviatingly", had for quite some time been committing very serious political errors. Addressing

the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International on August 7, 1935, he said:

Now it is clear to everyone that if the Communist Party had applied the tactics of the anti-imperialist united front in a really serious, consistent and correct manner . . . the political situation in China would have shaped itself even more favorably for the development of the revolutionary struggle of the broadest masses of the people against imperialism and its agents.

But had not the overthrow of the Kuomintang régime and the "struggle for the decisive victory of the Soviet revolution in all China" been the "basic task" of the party, from which flowed its entire strategy and tactics? Was it not precisely *that* struggle which was to insure the success of the national-revolutionary war against imperialism? What need was there for any kind of "united front" when the forces of the "Soviet revolution" were deemed ample to carry that struggle to fruition?

As a matter of fact, despite all their ballyhoo concerning "Soviet China", the Stalinists were far from feeling that its forces were ample for anything. That is why, during 1932-1933, the Chinese Communist Party, as Wang Ming stated at the Seventh World Congress, "repeatedly addressed itself to all the military units of Kuomintang China with offers of concluding a fighting alliance for a joint struggle against imperialism, stipulating only the following elementary, strictly business-like conditions: the cessation of the offensive against the Soviet districts, the extension of democratic rights to the people (freedom of the press and of speech, the right to have unions, the right to organize, to hold demonstrations, to strike, etc.) and the right to organize and arm volunteer anti-Japanese detachments". Appeals of this kind were clearly designed, not to pave the way for any surrender agreement with the Kuomintang, but, and quite properly, to tear the supports from under the Kuomintang, thereby relieving the pressure on the Soviet districts, promoting the anti-imperialist struggle, and preparing the vanquishment of Chiang Kai-shek's régime.

This was the sense of party policy at that time, a fact which Wang Ming himself confirmed at the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., when, referring to the anti-imperialist struggle, he emphasized the need for a vigorous class struggle policy having as its aim the overthrow of the Kuomintang régime, "especially today when on the one hand Chiang Kai-shek and the whole Kuomintang have completely unmasked themselves in word and deed as the open carriers of national betrayal and when on the other hand the further advance of the Japanese and other imperialists continues without a halt for the purpose of partitioning China". Interpretation of the united front tactics to mean, not practical agreements with anti-Kuomintang elements, but an unprincipled political deal with the Kuomintang itself, was to come later. The theoretical groundwork for the deal was prepared at the Seventh World Congress, at which, in accord with established rule, the Chinese Stalinists were discovered to have been in error. And their error was "first of all a consequence of the fact that many of our comrades did not understand and do not understand [They have, of course, been properly instructed since—LFJ.] the new situation which has arisen in China in recent years. They do not understand how to advance the subject of the anti-imperialist front in a *new manner*" (Emphasis is by Wang Ming—LFJ).

What was the "new situation" which the Chinese Stalinists "did not understand"? According to Wang Ming it consisted, first, in the "universal indignation of the people" evoked by the "unprecedented national crisis" which, in its turn, was caused by "the Japanese expansion and the treachery of the Kuomintang". The whole Chinese population, it seems, was turning to the idea of "a national-defensive war . . . against imperialism". Wang also claimed that "a considerable section of the national bourgeoisie . . . are freeing themselves more and more from the illusions they held concerning the Kuomintang and are turning for a way out to the toiling masses who are carrying on the struggle against Japanese imperialism and its agents" (*Communist International*, Vol. 13, Special No., Feb. 1936).

Secondly, the Red Army had grown into "a mighty military factor throughout China" and therefore could not but be considered by "all the anti-Japanese and anti-Chiang Kai-shek political and military groupings . . . as the greatest factor in the armed struggle against Japan and against Chiang Kai-shek" who, incidentally, was referred to as "this arch-traitor to the Chinese people". Thirdly, "for the organization and the successful carrying out of the national-revolutionary war of the armed people against the Japanese imperialists, the participation in this war not only of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, not only of all revolutionary-minded, class-conscious toilers, but also of the various political and military forces, who are temporary, unstable and vacillating allies, is necessary and unavoidable".

The student of Stalinist metaphysics will be pardoned if he fails to discern in this mass of verbiage any real evidence of a "new situation". Public manifestations of popular indignation against Chiang Kai-shek's policy of non-resistance to Japan were at their all-time high in 1931-1932 when Japan seized Manchuria. Could Wang Ming have failed to remember this at the 1933 Plenum? And was not the Red Army a much mightier military factor at the time of that Plenum than it was at the time of the Seventh World Congress, when it had already been driven from its stronghold in Kiangsi province and was wandering in the far interior without any fixed base? As for the national bourgeoisie, what "illusions" have they *ever* had concerning the Kuomintang? The Kuomintang is *their own* government and they learned in 1925-1927 that the only alternative to that government is a government of proletarian dictatorship. They have maintained it, despite the damage to their interests caused by sell-outs to Japan, because they know that whereas to imperialism they lose only a *part* of their wealth and privilege, to the proletariat they would have to surrender the *whole*. Illusions? Where?

In any event, the "new situation", mythical as it turns out to be, called for new tactics. How was the Chinese Communist Party to advance the anti-imperialist front (shortly due to be rebaptized as the "People's Anti-Japanese United Front") in a new manner? Let us page Wang Ming again. Said he at the Seventh World Congress:

In my opinion and in the opinion of the entire Central Committee of the Communist Party of China our tactics should consist in a joint appeal with the Soviet Government of China to all the people, to all parties, groups, troops, mass organizations and to all prominent political and social leaders to organize together with us an All-Chinese United People's Government of National Defense and an All-Chinese United Anti-Japanese National Defense Army.

"All parties . . . all prominent political and social leaders"—thus was the way prepared for surrender to the Kuomintang and to the "arch-traitor Chiang Kai-shek".

There was, as a matter of fact, a "new situation", although it bore no resemblance whatever to the one conjured up by Wang Ming. And this new situation had arisen precisely in the interval between the Thirteenth Plenum and the Seventh World Congress. It consisted in the expulsion of the Chinese Red Army from Kiangsi, the virtual extinction of the Chinese Soviet Republic which had its seat there, and—on the international arena—the growing isolation of the Soviet Union in a sea of fascist and military states. These were the real factors which precipitated the Chinese Communist Party into the "Fourth Period" of decline and degeneration.

What was the "Chinese Soviet Republic"? Shorn of the trimmings in which its true character was obscured by Stalinist propagandists, it was simply a peasant power erected on the foundations of what was essentially an agrarian revolution led by the Communist Party. It arose as a belated echo of the great revolution of 1925-1927, which Chiang Kai-shek and Stalin succeeded in strangling through the policy of the "bloc of four classes", earlier version of the "anti-imperialist united front".

In the remote, inaccessible interior of China the peasants rose,

seized the land, and banded themselves together into military formations for the purpose of defending and extending their conquests. Red armies emerged as the spearhead of the peasant revolt over wide areas of South and Central China, but the "Soviet districts" which they created suffered from the beginning from all the limitations of a peasant movement. Rising in the period of ebb following upon a crushing revolutionary defeat, they were cut off from the working class in the cities and remained confined within isolated, economically poor areas. The inaccessibility of these districts afforded a certain military advantage and enabled the Red armies, with a large measure of support from the peasant population, who formed themselves into auxiliary bands of partisans, to resist successfully over a period of years the repeated offensives of the Kuomintang. But this same isolation and inaccessibility created for them economic difficulties which they were powerless to overcome.

By enforcing a blockade, the Kuomintang was able in the end to cut them off almost entirely from certain vital supplies, to say nothing of military equipment, for which they were dependent upon what they could seize from their enemies. Within the Soviet districts, moreover, class contradictions were fuel for constant struggles and difficulties against which the Communist Party, whose own land policies reflected these conflicts, was powerless. The land of the landlords was confiscated and divided. The crushing burden of taxation was lifted and eased. But the chief advantage fell with relentless inevitability to the rich peasants (independent small landholders with a small surplus) whose land was left untouched, who continued to exploit agricultural laborers and poor peasants, and who managed to secure a dominant hold in the Soviet administrative organs themselves.

Lacking the indispensable aid and unifying leadership of a powerful labor movement in the cities, the peasant armies and Soviet districts were doomed to continued isolation and ultimate defeat, or, what amounts to the same thing, political degeneration. It proved only a matter of time before the Kuomintang, unchallenged by the proletariat, whose wounds were still unhealed, with an inexhaustible source of military supplies from the foreign powers, with the more effective use of aviation and the application of shrewder military tactics, was able to drive the hard-fighting, hard-pressed peasant armies from their embattled territories. In November 1934 the Red armies were finally expelled from Kiangsi, and the "Central Soviet District", their main stronghold, was liquidated. The retreating Red forces marched and fought their way thousands of miles through the heart of China. Those who were left after this gruelling trek finally established themselves in northern Shensi, where they are located today. But what still remained of "Soviet China" was shortly to be liquidated in the Comintern policies of the "Fourth Period".

In the style so well beloved by the "beloved leader", the exit of the Red armies from Kiangsi, far from being acknowledged a defeat, was heralded as a great victory by the Stalinists. For them, it was a grand move of pre-arranged strategy designed to remove "Soviet China" to a safer place and there prepare the "complete victory". Facts, however, are stubborn things which even the Moscow strategists have occasionally to recognize. At the Thirteenth Plenum in December 1933 Wang Ming could still speak boldly of an extension of the Soviet revolution to all China. But the indubitable defeat of "Soviet China" less than a year later had to lead to a change in policy. In which direction—towards a policy of revolutionary realism based on principle, or towards opportunist degeneration? The general direction of Stalinist policy on a world scale had inevitably to exert a decisive pull on the Chinese Communist Party as well. Thus the united front against Japanese imperialism which the Chinese Stalinists tried but were unable to carry out on a principled basis in 1932-1933, in the heyday of their "Soviets", was realized after the "Soviets" had been wiped out—but then in the horribly distorted shape of abject political surrender to the Kuomintang.

As we have seen, the new policy of the Chinese Communist Party, as outlined by Wang Ming at the Seventh World Congress, called for a united front of "all parties" against Japanese imperialism. In accordance with this directive, the Chinese Stalinists started on a hunt for political allies. But under the military dictatorship of Chiang Kai-shek, as under the fascist dictatorships of Mussolini and Hitler and the totalitarian régime of Stalin, there existed only *one* party—the Kuomintang. True, there was the small underground organization of the "counter-revolutionary" Trotskyists, but with them a united front was simply unthinkable. Then there was the insignificant "Third Party", a small underground Populist grouping, and the various petty bourgeois "patriotic" societies. These, however, were of little account. What was left? Only the Kuomintang. "Soviet China" was now little more than a legend. Moscow's problem was to prevent bourgeois China from allying itself with imperialist Japan against the Soviet Union, and if possible to get China to fight Japan, so that Japan would be unable to make war on the Soviet Union. A new Communist-Kuomintang "alliance" was placed squarely on the order of the day.

Mao Tse-tung, chairman of the "Soviet Government" of China, and Chu Teh, commander-in-chief of the Red armies, made the first formal overtures in an appeal addressed to the Nanking government and the Military Affairs Commission (of which Chiang Kai-shek is chairman) on May 5, 1936. This appeal called for the cessation of hostilities between the Red Army and the Nanking troops and the summoning of a "peace conference in order to realize our common aim of resisting the Japanese". Chiang, having driven the Red Army out of Kiangsi into the relatively inconsequential region of barren Shensi, received these overtures coldly. He felt he had nothing to gain from discussing terms with a vanquished adversary. Moreover, despite the subtle suggestion that he held in common with the Stalinists the aim of "resisting the Japanese", Chiang in fact had no stomach for any such resistance. Had he not proved it by allowing Japan to take all Manchuria, Jehol and northern Chahar without lifting a finger to defend those territories? The Chinese Stalinists would have to do a lot more belly-crawling before they could get near enough to shake Chiang's bloodstained hand. This was not long in coming, for Moscow's insistence on Chinese "unity" grew with each passing day.

A few short weeks later, in a communication to the All-China National Salvation Association, a petty bourgeois "patriotic" body with headquarters at Shanghai, Mao Tse-tung announced:

We have already adopted a decision not to confiscate the land of the rich peasants, and, if they come to us to fight against Japan, not to refuse to unite with them. We are not confiscating the property and the factories of the big and small Chinese merchants and capitalists. We protect their enterprises and help them to expand so that the material supply in the Soviet districts, so necessary for the anti-Japanese campaign, may be augmented in this way.

To cap this, Mao added the assurance that the scattered Red Army guerilla bands who, not having heard of the new party line, might still be confiscating landlords' land, would soon be brought to heel.

In the language of revolutionary politics this declaration, obviously intended to reach Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang, was nothing less than an open renunciation of the class struggle and abject surrender of all that the Communist Party had ever stood for. Wang Ming, quite unconsciously, gave a fairly adequate advance characterization of this ignominious capitulation when, at the Seventh World Congress, less than a year previously, he criticized the "opportunist leadership" of the Chinese Communist Party in 1927. His criticism, however, should have been directed against the Stalin-Bukharin leadership of the Comintern which furnished the opportunist directives followed at that time by the Chinese Communists. Said Wang Ming:

We know from the history of the struggle of the Communist Party of China that when the opportunists in its leadership, headed by Chen Tu-shiu, counterposed the tactics of the united national front to the task of the class struggle at the critical moment of the revolutionary movement in 1927, when for the sake of retaining a united national front with a part of the national



bourgeoisie these opportunists renounced the revolutionary struggle of the working class in defense of their interests, renounced the agrarian revolution of the peasantry, renounced the struggle for winning over national revolutionary armies and for arming the workers and peasants and, finally, when these opportunists rejected an independent policy in regard to our temporary allies . . . they brought the 1927 revolution to defeat.

This accusatory passage is a deadly commentary on the current Stalinist line in China. It condemns the Stalinists out of their own mouths.

Consummation of the Stalinist "united front" with the Kuomintang was accelerated in December 1936 when Chiang Kai-shek was taken prisoner in Sian as the result of a plot by young officers in the ranks of the *Tungpei* (Manchurian) armies which had been driven into China proper by the Japanese invaders in 1931-1932. The first reaction which the Stalinist press (including the *Daily Worker*) manifested to this incident was to hail it as a sign of rising anti-imperialist sentiment in China. Then the Moscow wires started to hum and the seizure of Chiang was denounced as a Japanese plot. Today, Harry Gannes, "foreign expert" of the *Daily Worker*, in his newly-published book (*When China Unites*) is able to boast that the Chinese Red Army used "all of its great influence with the *Tungpei* to preserve Chiang and send him back as national leader to Nanking".

How were the "Reds" rewarded for this touching display of magnanimity towards Chiang? Gannes tells us Chiang promised "to modify his policies to conform to the program of national salvation by complete unification and anti-Japanese resistance".

Be that as it may, the Generalissimo, on his return to Nanking, remained decidedly cold to the Stalinist overtures. Nanking was bombarded with Stalinist telegrams. Political toadying could scarcely reach any lower depths. Says Gannes: "The Chinese Communists offered to support Chiang as leader of the Central Government in order to complete the united national front against Japan". But even this abject bootlicking brought no encouraging response. It was repeated at the plenum of the C.E.C. of the Kuomintang early this year.

The main resolution of the Kuomintang plenum, however, seemed like a veritable slap in the face for the kowtowing Stalinists. It affirmed that the government had done all in its power to resist the Japanese invasion and that there would be no change of policy in this respect. Referring to the "Red Army" and the "Chinese Soviet Government", it declared "the cardinal policy of the Central authorities must be to root out such elements". Nanking was still, we observe, a little skeptical of Moscow's intentions.

Nevertheless, negotiations between Nanking and the Stalinists were initiated. And why not? Had not the Stalinists themselves already done the "rooting out" which the Kuomintang demanded, by throwing their entire program overboard? In any case, Nanking calculated, the Stalinists were too weak to carry through any hostile maneuvers. Moreover, the legions of Imperial Japan were marching again, this time in Suiyuan. Perhaps Nanking would be unable to avoid fighting Japan. A deal with the Chinese Stalinists might, in that case, bring military aid from Moscow. As the price of "unity" Nanking laid down four conditions:

1. Abolition of the Red Army and its incorporation into the armies of the Nanking government.
2. Unification of state power in the hands of the Nanking government and the dissolution of the so-called Chinese Soviet Republic and other organizations detrimental to government unity.
3. Cessation of all Communist propaganda.
4. Stoppage of the class struggle.

The Stalinists hesitated only a short time before accepting these terms which involved the adding of their organizational surrender to the already-announced political surrender. The "deal" was made public in an Associated Press dispatch from Nanking on September 22 of this year, as follows:

The "Government of the Soviet Republic of China" dissolved itself today and ordered its armies, large forces that have disturbed China's internal affairs for ten years, to serve Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek of the Nanking Central Government.

In a manifesto the Central Executive Committee of the Chinese Communist Party announced support of and unity with the present Chinese administration. Reorganization of the Communist army as a Nationalist revolutionary army under General Chiang's Military Affairs Commission was announced.

"The Chinese Communist Party, realizing that the principles of Sun Yat-sen are indispensable to the reconstruction of China, has decided to abandon all measures aimed at the overthrow of the Kuomintang government by force, propagation of Communist doctrines and the forcible expropriation of the land," the committee's manifesto declared. (*N. Y. Times*, Sept. 22, 1937.)

And what of the grandiose perspective of a Soviet China, to which, through so many years, the Stalinists clung? Was it, perhaps, all a joke or—a "comic misunderstanding"? According to Harry Gannes it could scarcely have been anything else. In his book, he writes:

Kuomintang-Communist unity was first achieved during 1925-27. After reaching an unprecedented high point in effective anti-imperialist battles, unity was violently ruptured, but not without the foundation being laid for its reestablishment on an entirely different plane and for a more specific objective. The beginning of the destruction of the original national collaboration was already discernible in 1926, at the very first stages of preparation for the military campaign for national unification. And yet the seeds of a newer, stronger understanding were undoubtedly sown in the very split which concluded the first stage of Kuomintang-Communist unity in the latter part of 1927.

Thus the sanguinary undoing of the Chinese revolution in 1927, the countless battles of the heroic Chinese peasants to regain the land and consolidate their rights under a new social order, battles which cost many thousands of peasant lives and untold suffering and misery—all this was merely part of a pre-ordained plan which was to enable the Stalinist chieftains to grasp once again the hand of executioner Chiang Kai-shek!! And the ponderous Plenum speeches of Wang Ming, heavy with vainglory—what were they? Just grist for gullible followers to chew upon?

But is not Chiang Kai-shek nevertheless fighting against Japanese imperialism? Is not that war a progressive one which it is the bounden duty of all revolutionists to support? Are not the Stalinists right, then, in making a united front with Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang? These questions demand an answer. Chiang is fighting against Japanese imperialism and, regardless of his motives for so doing, the war, being that of an oppressed semi-colonial country against an imperialist oppressor, possesses an unquestionably progressive character. The progressive character of the war is modified not one whit by the fact that the struggle is led and directed by Chiang Kai-shek, hangman of the Chinese revolution. Marxists, however, having studied the lessons of history (particularly those afforded by the recent history of China), do not believe that China can win true national independence under Chiang's leadership. The Chinese bourgeoisie and its government are quite incapable, principally because of their ties with imperialism and their fear of the masses, of carrying the war to a successful conclusion. They will compromise with Japan, or, what will amount to the same thing from the point of view of China's independence, make a deal with Japan's imperialist rivals.

It is the duty of revolutionists to support China's struggle by all means possible, including agreements of a strictly practical nature with Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang—but by no means to abandon their own program, to dissolve themselves in a "People's Front", to relinquish the right of criticizing and condemning the Kuomintang's conduct of the war. The Stalinists, spurning the Leninist united front tactic, have done just this latter. Thereby they are aiding and becoming parties to the betrayal of China's struggle, which Chiang Kai-shek is already preparing through "friendly" powers. The Bolsheviks under Lenin's leadership "supported" Kerensky against Kornilov, while at the same time preparing to overthrow Kerensky and establish workers' power. The Chinese Stalinists, however, accord Chiang Kai-shek unconditional political support (without quotes) thereby betraying the revolution and the national struggle which is indissolubly bound up with it.

Just as in 1925-1927 Kuomintang-Communist "unity" (which meant the political subordination of the Communist Party to the Kuomintang and the workers to the bourgeoisie) led to the strangling of the Chinese revolution and the slaughter of the revolutionists, so today it is directed—this time quite consciously—against the infant beginnings of the new revolution. We have Wang Ming's assurance for that. Writing in the *Communist International*, Vol. 14, No. 10, Oct. 1937) he declares:

The Chinese people and world public opinion will judge of the degree of determination and readiness of the Kuomintang and Nanking government, and also of the local military and political authorities, to undertake the

armed struggle against the Japanese aggressors, by their attitude to all Japanese agents and national traitors and, in particular, to these Japano-Trotskyist fascist agents. The government and peoples of the U.S.S.R. are setting us an example of how to fight against foreign secret services and to purge the state, military and party apparatus of these vipers, thereby strengthening its defensive power and safeguarding the rear in the event of an attack by foreign aggressors.

Ominous words! Already there is evidence that the G.P.U. is operating with frame-up methods against the Bolshevik-Leninists in China, as it has done and is doing in the Soviet Union and in Spain. Let every revolutionist stand on guard!

Li FU-JEN

## After the Fall of Wuhan

“CHINA NEEDS GENERALISSIMO Chiang Kai-shek's leadership more urgently than ever today when the national crisis has reached a life and death stage. His remaining in office and his valuable services to the Chinese nation are essential and imperative in the struggle leading to final victory. The Chinese Communist party has placed unquestioning confidence in Chiang Kai-shek's fixed policy of conducting a war of resistance. No one else can lead this war except Generalissimo Chiang.”

The above statement, made November 8 to a staff correspondent of United Press in Chungking, provisional capital of the Kuomintang régime, by Chin Po-ku, Communist party representative on the so-called People's Political Council, appears in print less than two weeks after Wuhan fell unresistingly before the invading armies of Japanese imperialism. One military débacle has succeeded another since the commencement of the Sino-Japanese war. Peiping, Shanghai, Nanking, Canton and now Wuhan have been captured by the invaders in little more than a year. China's important seaports, with the solitary exception of Foochow (which can be taken at any time) are in the hands of Japan. The entire railway system of the country, but for segments of the Canton-Hankow and Peiping-Hankow lines and the narrow-gauge line running into Yunnan from French Indo-China, together with most of the key cities through which or to which they run, are controlled by the Nipponese imperialists. Chiang Kai-shek's régime has been effectively ousted from a good fifth of all Chinese territory south of the Great Wall. It is estimated that approximately 175,000,000 Chinese are already living behind the Japanese lines. East of the north-south line described by the Canton-Hankow and Peiping-Hankow Railways there remain only scattered detachments of the regular Chinese forces. As Japan succeeds in closing the gaps on these two trunk lines, some of these troops will doubtless retreat westward. Organized Chinese resistance to Japan under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek will virtually have ended, unless Japan decides to push the campaign farther west. Considered from the military point of view, a Chinese counter-attack on any sizeable scale, under Chiang's leadership, is inconceivable. Political considerations make it all the more improbable.

One cannot help wondering what kind of enthusiasm for Chiang Kai-shek's leadership Mr. Chin Po-ku would have been able to exhibit had the doughty Generalissimo been able to place to his credit a few victories instead of a series of humiliating defeats. Mr. Chin's enthusiasm for Chiang's leadership, needless to

Victory in the war of the Chinese people against the Japanese invaders requires the broadest united national front of military struggle, and the international aid of the workers and oppressed races and nationalities throughout the world. But here, as always, as revolutionists have firmly and constantly insisted, "unity" alone is not enough. United action can, in the end, serve the cause of the defeat of the imperialist enemy only if the working class preserves its own independence, above all its own independent class program. Fighting as the best and most courageous soldiers alongside of Chiang Kai-shek, the Chinese workers and peasants and their organizations subordinate themselves *politically* to Chiang only at the cost of assuring their own ultimate defeat by the Japanese armies—in all probability aided as in 1927 by Chiang himself. Comrade Li Fu-chen's article graphically answers the question: who weakens, yes, sabotages the war against Japan? who are the Chinese defeatists? Once more it demonstrates that military victory in the interests of the toiling masses will be possible only if the united struggle is accompanied by unremitting and uncompromising political struggle *against* the treacherous policies of Chiang and his Stalinist colleagues.—ED.

say, does not reflect the spirit and temper of the Chinese masses, who at present are voiceless. He speaks with the voice of Stalin, who hopes that Chiang, with the aid of a little flattery, will keep on "defending China" against Japan, so that Japan will be too busy to attack the Soviet Union.

Right after the fall of Wuhan the People's Political Council, which Mr. Chin adorns, met in Chungking. This assembly of "representatives of the people", created shortly after the commencement of hostilities last year, was, according to the Stalinists, a "step" toward the establishment of "democracy" in China. Moreover, it was going to help China win a victory over Japan. The Stalinists had demanded the creation of a democratic régime as part price of their political capitulation to Chiang Kai-shek. The People's Political Council, and nothing more, was what Chiang gave them.

### The "Democratic" People's Political Council

Fragmentary official reports of the recent deliberations of this "democratic" body—from which, incidentally, the press was excluded—are now filtering into the press. One seeks in vain for evidence that it did anything else but sing hosannas of praise to the Generalissimo. Its sessions were exactly similar in most respects to a meeting of Stalin's Congresses of the "Soviets". From a truly democratic assembly one would have expected to hear some criticism, not to say condemnation, of government policies which

have produced nothing but military disaster. If any such criticism was voiced—and it is strongly to be doubted—the fact has not been disclosed. The Council apparently said all it had to say on the subject of war policy when it “unanimously” (as in Moscow) passed a resolution “supporting the Government’s policy of continuing armed resistance against Japan”. One wonders whether the assembled “representatives” were aware that Japanese guns, after reducing Wuhan’s outer defenses so that the invading army could enjoy a 10-day unresisted march to Hankow, had pounded Chiang Kai-shek’s régime to the dimensions of a regional government. If they were they gave no evidence of it.

In view of Stalinist claims that the People’s Political Council is a “democratic” institution, it is worth while, in passing, to consider briefly its actual character. According to its secretary-general, Wang Shih-chieh, who has declared it “doubtful whether any electoral system could produce a more representative body”, the Council is composed of “delegates sent by local authorities and endorsed by the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang”. Regarding social composition, the same authoritative source informs that “about half of the members served in provincial governments and other organizations, while the other half possess professional qualifications”. The Council includes three “Communists” and three “National Socialists”, while the remaining members, numbering upwards of 150, are all members or supporters of the Kuomintang. Thus we find that this “step” in the direction of “democracy” is nothing but an assembly hand-picked by the Kuomintang, a democratic fraud, a decorative trapping for Chiang Kai-shek’s dictatorship. It is easy to see why Chiang Kai-shek and his government came in for no criticism.

What are the “powers” enjoyed by this cheap parody on Stalin’s “most democratic” parliament? They consist (1) of the right to “consider” new policies before decisions thereon are taken by the government, emergency military measures, which could include most anything, being excepted; (2) the right to submit proposals to the government; (3) the right to question the government and call for reports. That is all. In other words, this august Council has no powers at all. Could any clearer proof be asked that democratic institutions and rights can never be obtained as the result of an unprincipled political bargain, as a gift from a reactionary régime?

The just-concluded sessions of this democratic fraud have nevertheless been useful for their oblique revelation of what has been happening in China since the war started. For example, a resolution was passed “calling for an improvement in the conscription law, notably the abolition of the exemption tax . . . whereby a man could purchase exemption from military service” (Reuter from Chungking, Nov. 8). The exemption of rich men’s sons from military service has been a crying scandal. Kuomintang conscription officers have amassed fortunes by selling these exemptions. The poor of town and country, on the other hand, have been forced into the army by the most brutal press-gang methods. Uniformed bullies descend on towns and villages and conscript by main force all men capable of any kind of active service. The younger ones go into the army, the older ones are forced into the auxiliary services or compelled to labor behind the lines. There have been numerous reports of men shot for resisting conscription in a war which they cannot see will bring them any benefit.

The Council also passed a resolution “asking for better treatment for the families of soldiers”—an admission that the treatment hitherto has been in full consistency with the general attitude of the bourgeoisie and its government towards the masses. For the poor the war has been an endless chain of untold miseries. Families of conscripts have been left to shift for themselves. Unnumbered thousands have died in the war zones. Hunger and disease and cold have carried off many who escaped the merciless juggernaut of war. Those who succeeded in fleeing before the invaders in most cases lost their meager possessions and their means of livelihood. Millions left behind, if they survived the Japanese military terror, have been plunged into the direst destitution by the de-

struction of war and the rapacity of the conquering armies. Knowing these facts, the best that the People’s Political Council could do was to humbly beg the government for “better treatment” of the masses. The three “Communist” members, judging by the published reports, were as silent as the grave. The cynical Stalinist yes-men, hostages in this assembly of Chiang Kai-shek’s political satellites, are pledged by their party to refrain from stirring up the masses by criticizing the government and its policies. This was the price they paid for the “Anti-Japanese United Front”. As we have stated before, they are concerned, not with the interests of the downtrodden masses, including the soldiers, whose cause they have shown no compunction in betraying, but with maintaining their alleged united front, with keeping Chiang Kai-shek at the job of “resisting” Japan, so that Japan will be unable to attack the Soviet Union and Stalin will be able to continue constructing “socialism”—in other words, their policy is calculated to serve the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy alone.

### A Forgotten “Detail”

But these gentlemen of the Stalinist party overlook one little “detail”: To the extent that the Chinese masses are made to carry the burdens of the war, to the extent that they are kept unorganized and immobilized, deprived of leadership, held back from struggle for their own independent social and economic aims *even while the war goes on*—to that extent it is made easier for the Kuomintang government, with or without Chiang Kai-shek’s acquiescence, to call off the struggle and make peace with Japan. The succession of military defeats has strengthened the capitulationist moods in the ranks of the government and the ruling classes. Mass pressure alone can prevent the translation of these moods into surrender. But the masses can be mobilized to exert this pressure only if given a bold social program which will identify victory against Japan with the satisfaction of their own most pressing needs.

In petty-bourgeois circles one hears repeated criticism of “traitorous workers” who have entered Japanese employ in the occupied areas. Three thousand Chinese workers, for example, are employed now at the Kiangnan Dockyard in Shanghai, repairing Japanese warships. What are these workers to do? Starve? Crushed for more than a decade under the iron heel of Chiang Kai-shek’s dictatorship, their trade unions destroyed, deserted and betrayed by the renegade Communist party, the workers have seen no perspective of social gain opened up for them by the war. With the exception of the small band of Fourth Internationalists, whose voice has been all but drowned out by streams of Stalinist villification, no one has endeavored to link the war with a movement to relieve the masses of their horrible poverty and servitude. The Stalinists enjoin the masses to obey the government, refrain from efforts to improve their lot, and to sacrifice their lives when called upon. The government, for its part, has outlawed strikes and instituted the death penalty for strikers with the full approval of the Stalinists. Weighed down by the sufferings which the war has brought them, the majority of workers are now indifferent as to its immediate outcome. They want the fighting to cease, the factories to be rebuilt or reopened, their jobs restored to them. They hate the Japanese invaders with a deep and abiding hatred, but they see no prospect of victory and therefore no alternative but to work for the invaders whenever jobs are offered. Either that or starvation. Had they been organized and given leadership in the struggle against the Japanese imperialists on a program which would have identified victory with their own liberation from grinding slavery, China’s toilers might now be on the way to repeating the glorious victory of the Russian workers against the imperialist interventionists.

Traitors? This slanderous accusation against China’s toilers, so typical of the petty bourgeois, does not square even superficially with the facts. Who if not the workers and peasants have borne the brunt of the war? Is it not precisely these classes who have been hurled to destruction and death against Japan’s military machine? That all their heroism and self-sacrifice, to which countless

observers have testified, have produced not victory but defeat—is this *their* fault or the fault of the "patriotic" bourgeoisie and its government, not to mention their Stalinist lackeys, who have been "leading" the war?

Traitors? This same patriotic bourgeoisie crowds the night-clubs and cabarets of Shanghai, Hongkong and cities behind the Chinese lines, lives in its accustomed luxury, fattens on graft and war-contracts, while the soldiers, drawn from the most poverty-stricken layers of the population, are laying down their lives on the battlefields. Soldiers' wages have gone unpaid for months. Army paymasters, all good patriots in the camp of the Kuomintang, are known to have held up payment of soldiers' wages in the expectation or hope that the intended recipients would shortly be killed. This blood-money finally finds its way into cabarets and brothels behind the lines.

Traitors? Eminent representatives of the patriotic bourgeoisie and hordes of their petty bourgeois underlings are tripping over themselves in their haste to conclude business deals with, or enter the employ of, the imperialist invaders in the occupied areas. They hope to receive a share, even if only a small one, in the coming exploitation of those same workers and peasants who in the columns of the "patriotic" press are called traitors. This bourgeois scum is certainly under no illusion as to the prospects for a Chinese victory under Chiang Kai-shek's leadership.

Ineptitude, corruption, cowardice and treachery, reaching down from the hierarchy of the Kuomintang into the ranks of the commanding personnel of the army, have spelt out the military debacle which has all but ended China's fight against Japan under Chiang Kai-shek's leadership. The detailed chronicling of even a fraction of the crimes and misdeeds falling under these general headings would fill a large volume. Throughout the war the patriotism of the Kuomintang and its class backers has consisted in a readiness to "defend" China—to the last drop of blood of the Chinese masses. Living forces have been sacrificed with a recklessness almost without parallel in history. The heroism of the fighting soldiers has been invariably cancelled out by the crimes and blunders of their leaders, the magnitude of which constitutes a national scandal.

### Treachery at the Top

Not a war contract has been let but what a handsome percentage has clung to the sticky fingers of Finance Minister H. H. Kung. A similar charge of corruption lies against the Generalissimo's own wife in the purchase of war 'planes. Of outright treachery there is more than abundant evidence. The most outrageous example was the sell-out which led to the military collapse at Shanghai in the early stages of the war. At Chapoo, on Hangchow Bay, a Japanese force landed to execute a flanking move against the Shanghai defenses. Not a single shot was fired at the invaders by the troops assigned to defend that area. On the contrary, the invaders found waiting for them an ample supply of gasoline and lubricants to enable their mechanized forces to drive forward rapidly to the rear of Shanghai's defenses. General Iwane Matsui later boasted to a *New York Times* correspondent that he had bought the free landing at Chapoo for \$80,000 Chinese currency, together with the gasoline supply. Government circles freely admit the sell-out.

There has been similar talk of "silver bullets" being employed by the Japanese to effect their uncontested landing at Bias Bay, in Kwangtung province, last month. From the point of landing they were able to march overland to Canton in ten days, their progress entirely unresisted. There is reason to suspect that the British connived at this piece of treachery in order to spare South China, their most important trade sphere, from devastation.

No charge of cowardice can lie at the door of China's brave soldiers, but records of the most abysmal cowardice in the ranks of the higher command are endless. Chiang Kai-shek fled inland from Nanking last December when the Japanese army was still well over 100 miles from the city. Tang Sheg-chih, one of his

subordinates, famed for his slaughter of unarmed workers and peasants in Hunan in 1927, was left in charge, but fled soon after with the entire commanding staff of the Nanking war area. Soldiers left in the front lines without orders found their ranks pierced. They fell back into the city, seeking headquarters. But headquarters had disappeared. For this cowardly desertion by the commanding staff several thousand Chinese soldiers suffered horrible massacre when the Japanese entered the city. Examples such as these could be multiplied indefinitely.

The abandonment of the Matang forts, 30 miles above Kiu-kiang on the Yangtze River and Wuhan's first strong defense to the east, is another shameful episode. When the Japanese warship, approached the boom the defenders found themselves leaderless and without orders. They fled precipitately. Their commander, instead of being at his post, was spending his time in a brothel in a town several miles away. Abandonment of the Matang Forts, estimated by military observers to have been powerful enough to hold up the Japanese river advance for at least several weeks, helped clear the most important route to Hankow.

Behind the Chinese lines, according to military observers and foreign correspondents, are to be found endless confusion, inefficiency, ineptitude. One report after another of faulty communications, poor transport service, lack of coordination, utter absence of initiative by commanders. Jack Belden, United Press correspondent, who has observed every sector of the war at close quarters, testifies that the Chinese "always make plans for an active defense, but invariably content themselves with the passive form. That is why the Japanese throughout the war have been able to take chances that would be fatal in the face of an alert and resourceful enemy". The treatment, or lack of treatment, for the wounded is another of the great scandals. In the retreat from Hankow, thousands of wounded Chinese soldiers were left behind to crawl as best they could along the highways and across the fields. The advancing Japanese columns incontinently slaughtered all they found. No prisoners are taken.

From the very beginning the Marxists have said that the Chinese bourgeoisie and its government are incapable of conducting any consistent struggle to secure China's independence from imperialism. More than a year of war has proved that they cannot conduct with any success even a purely military-defensive war against a *single* imperialist power. Chiang Kai-shek has proved, not his ability to defend China, but the boundless rottenness of his régime. His satellites, including the Stalinists, whistle in the dark like small boys, to still their own doubts and conceal from others the utter bankruptcy of the policies hitherto pursued. They refer to the great "hinterland" as yet not overrun by the invading armies. Before Wuhan was captured they emphasized the vital importance of its defense. It was to be a second Verdun. Now that it has fallen, they deny with equal emphasis that Wuhan possesses any importance at all. And how fond they are of repeating, *ad nauseum*, the hackneyed statement: "Japan's control does not extend beyond her lines of communications", exaggerating this fact and hiding its real significance. The sum of the wisdom of these people is: Don't question Chiang Kai-shek's leadership and policies (if you do you are an "agent of Japan"!); just sit tight. Japanese imperialism is bound to collapse under the strain of the military campaigns.

The Marxists harbor no illusions about the "invincibility" of the Japanese imperialists. We are firmly convinced that they will never succeed in converting China into a second India. At the same time it is impermissible to blink the facts of the present situation. Japan has put an end to any pretense of Kuomintang authority in most of eastern China which contains most of the vital nerve centers of the country. In this vast area—despite the activities of irregulars and guerillas, which are certain to continue—the Japanese imperialists will be able to duplicate, at least in part, the economic activity which they undertook in Manchuria. The hope for renewed resistance on a large and organized scale lies henceforth with social forces which, thus far in the war, have been noth-

ing but passive victims or spectators of events—the toilers whom the new economic impulses, plus the rapacity of the new exploiters, will set in motion.

### Japan Seeks a Breathing Spell

The war has all but left the front pages of the press. One Japanese column is driving south through Hunan and the fall of the provincial capital, Changsha, is not far distant. Another column is moving north from Canton. Little resistance is being encountered and the junction of these two forces will see the completion of the Japanese occupation of the Canton-Hankow Railway. A Japanese force is also driving hard in Shansi, in the northwest, to clear the still unoccupied portion of the Peiping-Hankow Railway. The former Red Army is bearing the brunt of this assault. When these two trunk lines are fully held by the invaders, will the Japanese imperialists call a halt and confine their activities to "mopping up" operations, or will they extend their campaigning farther west and southwest? This remains to be seen. Signs are not wanting that Japan would like to pause at least for a breathing space, consolidate control of the occupied areas, gain some form of recognition of her conquests from rival powers, and begin extracting some returns on her gigantic military investment.

The Kuomintang government, while proclaiming its intention to "resist to the end", at the same time makes known through Wang Ching-wei its readiness to come to terms with Japan, provided a peace can be arranged which "will not hamper China's national existence", which means concretely—on condition that Japan will permit the Kuomintang to remain "in power". Japan has already set up puppet governments in north and central China. Another is being erected in the south. From these, it is announced, a federal Chinese government is to be created. Into this federal government, says Tokyo, the Kuomintang government will be invited as a constituent, provided it abandons its "anti-Japanese" and "pro-communist" policies. Hoping to improve the final terms, the Kuomintang government, using Sun Fo as a megaphone, declares its love for the Soviet Union—"China's one true friend". Perhaps, too, this will result in some increase in the niggardly "assistance" (cash paid in advance) Stalin has been rendering in the way of airplanes, guns (1916 vintage) and munitions.

Meanwhile the British ambassador has gone to Chungking and Prime Minister Chamberlain has told the world that Britain is ready to act as mediator between China and Japan. British im-

perialism, sorely harassed by its Oriental rival, is not yet ready for war. London's temporary strategy is to engineer a peace between China and Japan, which, while salvaging what can still be salvaged of tangible British interests in China, will at the same time admit Britain to some share in Japan's conquest. The deal, if it comes off, cannot be satisfactory from Britain's point of view, but the British imperialists know full well that all arrangements now entered into will be subject to a drastic reviewing in the coming world war. Japan meanwhile prods the British lion in his most sensitive spots. Tokyo is aware that the chances of a Japanese-dictated peace will be all the greater if Britain can be made to see the wisdom of "persuading" China to come to terms.

Secretary Hull's October 6 note to Japan has injected another element—a contradictory one—into this situation. Released for publication at the time of the fall of Wuhan, it was calculated, first of all, to stiffen the Kuomintang's resistance to pressure for a precipitate "peace" on terms demanded by Japan and backed by Britain. Additionally, by making the record against Japan, it is a deliberate Roosevelt act in preparation for war. The note has already given some encouragement to the Chiang Kai-shek régime. The Chinese bourgeois press, with the Stalinists piping up from the region of the floor, is screeching for "forceful implementation" of the Hull note. It is touching to observe how the "patriotic" bourgeoisie and their Stalinist flunkys have grown concerned for the preservation of America's imperialist position in China.

Dollar imperialism, however, is not yet ready for a slowdown with its Japanese rival, since this must needs be largely a war on the sea. The navy has yet to be built up to real challenging strength and bases are needed nearer to the scene of action. America's armed might, moreover, has to be equal to engaging not only Japan, but if need be—*Japan and Britain combined*. For it is by no means excluded that Britain may combine with Japan in an agreement to loot China to the exclusion of the United States.

But since America in any case is not ready for war, the likelihood seems to be that Japan will be able to force a "peace" on the Kuomintang government with British assistance. Unless—and this represents the third possibility—Britain and America combine to restrain the Oriental robber power. The new Anglo-American trade agreement may conceivably be followed by some sort of agreement for joint or "parallel" action by Britain and America in the Pacific.

SHANGHAI, Nov. 11, 1938

LI FU-JEN

# The War in China and Japan

We reproduce below a private letter written from China at the end of March, which contains invaluable information and viewpoints on the Sino-Japanese war and the general situation in both countries.—ED.

FROM my letter, you will have observed the coincidence in our views on the subject of the agrarian revolution. Every fact in the present situation confirms their correctness. In the agrarian interior where guerrilla forces are in control (i.e., in areas behind the Japanese lines), rural reforms, some of them quite drastic, have had to be introduced as the very condition for survival of the struggle against the Japanese army. Partisan fighters, with greater immediacy than in the case of a regular army, must have the sympathy and active support of the population. Thus we find that in some areas, notably in the Northwest where the 8th Route (former Red) Army operates, and in the Kiangsu-Anhwei-Kiangsi border area where the New Fourth Army (Stalinist-controlled) operates, the land tax has been reduced, land rents cut, and so forth. In some places, administrative power has passed completely into the hands of the guerrilla forces and village councils voice the demands of the peasants.

This is a very interesting phenomenon, for it shows that the Stalinists have been compelled by the very necessities of the anti-Japanese struggle to violate their reactionary program. It is very easy to stop the agrarian struggle on paper, at a "united front" conference table in Yenan or Chung-

king. In the villages, however, they are compelled to change their tune. The reforms are grudging and niggardly in comparison with the objective needs. The Stalinists strive by might and main to prevent the peasants from demanding "too much", for then Chiang Kai-shek will be offended and the "People's Anti-Japanese Front" endangered. Ever since the war began there has been friction between the Stalinists and the Kuomintang. This, in essence, is a reaction at the top of the struggle below. Chiang Kai-shek has good reason to be skeptical of the ability of the Stalinists to scotch the agrarian movement.

The Stalinist-controlled guerrilla forces enjoy great popularity among the peasants because of the reforms they have introduced. The peasant looks at everything in terms of taxation and land rents. We may expect in time that he will insist on going beyond the niggardly "reforms" of the Stalinists, but for that a new leadership is needed if the developing movement is to fructify and not be strangled. Above all, a powerful proletarian movement in the cities is needed to give leadership and courage to the villages. That is now lacking.

Class relationships in the village are extremely interesting in the areas behind the Japanese lines. During the past few months I have talked to many travelers who have spent time in these areas and they all tell the same story. Where the guerrillas are in control of a village, the landlords and

gentry display an extraordinarily conciliatory attitude toward the peasants. In some places they have *voluntarily* reduced land rents—something hitherto unheard-of in China. They are animated by a quite understandable fear of the dark masses who have suddenly acquired a new confidence in themselves. They come forward and offer a 10% reduction. If they didn't do so, the peasant might himself reduce the rent 50%—or, worse still, refuse to pay anything. The Stalinists, of course, always counsel "moderation". They act, not as the representatives of the peasants and their needs, but as social arbitrators between the peasants and the landlords.

The degree of the "conciliatoriness" of the landlords and gentry—here is a most illuminating fact!—is invariably in direct proportion to the nearness (or remoteness) of the Japanese army. When the enemy is near, and it seems likely that the area will be occupied, the landlords grow bolder, more arrogant, and more harsh in their dealings with the peasants. How reminiscent this is of the agrarian revolution in Russia! The landlords are divided from "their own" peasants by the wide gulf of exploitation. Threatened in their age-old property rights, they see in the alien invader their social savior. When a country town or village is occupied by the Japanese army, it is always the landlords and gentry who come out on the streets with Japanese flags to welcome the invaders. It is this

class which composes the "puppet" administrations which the invaders install.

However, in the anti-Japanese struggle, the rôle of the landlords is not by any means one of passive waiting for events. There are many instances in which they have given military information to the invading army concerning the strength, organization, equipment and strategic plans of the guerrilla forces in order to facilitate the task of the enemy. When these traitors are caught they face a firing squad. Nothing less will satisfy the outraged peasants. And then reports filtered in to Chungking that the "communists" are double-dealers; that although they promised to give up their class-struggle policy they are in fact shooting the lords of property in the villages. Chiang Kai-shek demands an accounting. In vain do the Stalinist leaders explain that the people being shot are traitors. The "united front" weakens. In village relationships we see the indissoluble connection between the agrarian revolution and the anti-imperialist struggle. Without the vigorous unfolding of the former, the latter becomes impossible.

Rural impoverishment will force the peasant movement beyond the limits which the Stalinists seek to impose on it. As a first installment, the peasant welcomes land rent and tax reductions and hails the party which gives them a sort of legal sanction. But from this it is but a step in his consciousness to the idea that there should be NO land rents at all, especially when the rent collector, the landlord, turns out to be a traitor to his country. This change in peasant psychology is, in fact, already taking place. In many villages, the peasants have demanded outright confiscation of the land held by traitors. The Stalinist leaders have been compelled to concur or lose their following. But when one landlord, or two, or a dozen in a small village are found to be traitors, the peasant begins to think: "Perhaps all the landlords are *by nature* traitors?" This is the greatest danger for the Stalinists. It is the sure guarantee of a fresh, gigantic upsurge of the agrarian movement. When it unfolds, it is our hope that the ranks of the workers will have been reformed and that a powerful proletarian movement under the leadership of the Fourth International will insure its victory. This is our perspective. It is toward this end that we shall strive.

You will, of course, be interested to learn what the situation is in the areas under the direct rule of the Kuomintang. There nothing has been changed for the peasant except for the worse, since the war began. The destruction of Chiang Kai-shek's armies in the first phase of the fighting in the eastern, seaboard provinces created the necessity for extensive recruitment to fill up the depleted ranks. But in the far west, much more than in the east, the peasant is possessed of little "national consciousness", if any. Wars and armies have been his greatest tribulation through the centuries. Fight against the Japanese? Who are they? The peasant has never seen one. He doesn't read and there are no newspapers anyway. The enemy depicted

to him by the recruiting officer is unreal. He listens to the stories of Japanese atrocities in Nanking, etc. They sound like fairy tales out of history. He picks up his hoe and goes back to his fields. There are no recruits. The peasant knows no enemy but the landlord who takes 50% of his crop, or more.

How to meet this problem? Conscription! Press-gangs whose methods are redolent of the Middle Ages in Europe descend on the villages, round up the able-bodied youths and take them under guard to the nearest training camp. The youths complain. Who will plant the crops; who will harvest them? The older ones left behind echo the same thought. But to no avail. If there is resistance, a few are shot as an example to the others. The others are marched off, roped or chained together like galley slaves. A comrade who travelled to Chungking from Ichang on the Yangtze River told me he saw 80 such "recruits" roped together, lying on the deck of the ship, with armed guards placed over them. In villages where he stayed during his travels, the young men would barricade themselves inside their houses when the recruiting squads came along. In several villages near Chungking there were regular massacres of peasants resisting conscription. These are facts which foreign newspaper correspondents do not cable abroad. Most of these journalists are (as were their confrères in Spain) enthusiasts for the People's Front. If there is something rotten in this state of Denmark, they believe it should be covered up, because to criticize "our side" would be to help Japan. There was one honorable exception: Donald M. Davies, Associated Press correspondent in Chungking, who reported in *The Nation* (New York) scenes of "recruiting" he had witnessed near Chungking, at the same time lifting a corner or two of the curtain enshrouding the inner activities of the Chiang Kai-shek government. He was promptly dismissed: A.P.'s formal pretext was that none of their correspondents is allowed to write for any publication except through A.P. We may be sure, however, that Chungking and the A.P. worked together in this matter.

Chungking's unwritten formula for the war against Japan would read, if written, "Win the support of the masses, but leave the social relationships unchanged." This is why, in reality, an impassible gulf separates the government from the masses. In Spain, the Popular Front "uniting the whole nation" was a political fiction which contradicted the social reality, but it had the appearance of a reality because of the large membership and following which the workers' parties enjoyed. In China, especially when one considers the size of the population, neither the Kuomintang nor the Communist party has any real mass following. The following of the C.P. is confined to the area of Northeastern Shensi, where the 8th Route Army is in control, to the central China area (very small) where the Ne-Fourth Army dominates, a small area in Kwangsi, and apart from this to certain circles of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia.

The Kuomintang rests exclusively on the army and the bureaucracy and is hated by the masses. Hence the "People's Anti-Japanese United Front" is a political fiction, an unprincipled congregation of C.P. and Kuomintang bureaucrats united for defense of the *status quo*. The Kuomintang sits in the seat of power precisely because there is no mass movement, and because its beginnings have been stifled very largely by this "People's Anti-Japanese Front" whose sole accomplishment has been the gratuitous handing of military victories to Japan. When fresh events force the oppressed masses on the road of struggle, the Fourth Internationalists will have their day. We are obliged by all the circumstances to confine ourselves to modest efforts for the present, mainly propaganda and the establishment of points of support among the masses, first of all the workers. I do not doubt that these efforts will bear fine fruit in the not too distant future.

Japan is facing acute difficulties. The Tokyo imperialists have bitten off much more than they can chew. They calculated that by occupying all of eastern China they could force the early capitulation of Chiang Kai-shek. But this has not happened. With help from Britain and the U.S.A., Chiang continues to "resist", that is, continues to refuse to agree to Japan's demands. The fight in China now is not really one between China and Japan, in which China fights for her independence. It is a fight between Japan, on the one hand, and Britain and America on the other, for the enslavement of China. The Anglo-American entente in the Far East, however, is not an entirely happy affair. The aims and ambitions of the two great powers clash at many points and there are audible undertones of hostility between them. That is why Japan can proceed with impunity against the trade interests of both, as she is doing. But still Japan's position is difficult. So far she has found it impossible to construct a central "puppet" government and the "occupied" areas are therefore still under regional administrations. A central puppet government is absolutely essential, both as a foil to Chiang's régime (since it will not submit) and in order that Japan may reap the economic benefits of conquest. The cost of maintaining a huge army of occupation in China is becoming unbearable. It eats up the fruits of conquest. Then, too, Japan's capital resources have been so depleted by the military campaign that there is insufficient capital available for the exploitation of China. Even when it is a question of finding the cash to buy a building from British interests in the Japanese-occupied section of Shanghai, the negotiations bog down for lack of ready money.

To secure funds for the prosecution of the war and for carrying out ambitious economic schemes in China, Japan is trying desperately to expand her foreign exports. This requires heavier imports of raw materials, especially raw cotton and wool. But there is nothing with which to pay for such imports. The specie reserves are nearing vanishing point. This situation recently compelled the government to introduce a

bill in the Diet authorizing the Bank of Japan (government-owned) to issue more notes against diminished reserves. Now it is proposed to devalue the yen by 30% in a desperate attempt to regain some of the lost export markets.

The effects of the war upon the different classes in Japanese society have, of course, varied. Government control of economic life, the war bonds which the banks (finance capitalists) have been compelled to absorb, and the inability of the bourgeoisie generally to cash in on the army conquests, have engendered dissatisfaction with the ruling military clique. Hiranuma replaced Konoye because war needs required further inroads on the big concentrations of wealth, and Konoye was too close to the owners of these sources. Hiranuma is completely the tool of the military. Government regulation of industry and trade had dispossessed large numbers of the shopkeeping bourgeoisie. They have been flocking to China in the hope of recouping themselves, but this ruined country offers no prospects to the petty capitalist or the capitalist who has lost his capital. Many of these people come to Shanghai or other points, dissipate their little remaining money, and then return home to Japan bitterly disillusioned. I have spoken with a few of these people and know their thoughts well. They are turning against the ruling class, for military victories which bring no economic benefits no longer have any luster. The peasants are also hard hit. Curtailment of Japan's imports in order to cut down the adverse trade balance has made fertilizer scarce, for example, little of it being produced in Japan, while the industries making it (chemicals) have been drafted for war purposes. Then, too, horses are being virtually confiscated for the front—this is always a step the peasant rebels against. Agricultural prices have fallen while the cost of manufactured commodities has risen sky high. This creates an impossible situation for the peasant. Meanwhile the villages are being drained of their manhood to keep the front supplied with cannon fodder. The productivity of the land is declining, but government regulation of farm prices prevents the peasant from lessening the gap between the price of his produce and the prices of manufactured articles. A huge army has to be fed. Ruined China cannot entirely feed it. The Japanese peasant must submit to confiscatory prices.

The military coup of Feb. 26, 1936, when a number of young officers slew the heads of the government, was a direct reflection of agrarian dissatisfaction. It may well be that a new crisis is on the way. The 1936 coup led directly to the invasion of China the following year. What is there now to offer to allay the discontent in the countryside? It is indubitable that the Japanese ruling clique is nearly at the end of its tether. A great revolution in China would have toppled it from the throne of power. The army is shot through with discontent. This is clearly revealed in diaries found on killed or captured Japanese soldiers. At least half a million Japanese soldiers have been killed since the war started, and probably twice that num-

ber wounded. The government admits nothing but the smallest figures, but the people have their own way of calculating such things.

Demands for man-power for the army have led to a shortage of industrial labor, and thus far, in essential respects, the Japanese proletariat has benefited from the war. Wages have risen, often more than the cost of living. The Labor Bureau of the Welfare Ministry reported last week that munition workers are earning as much as Yen 10,000 a year—an unheard-of wage. These, of course, are exceptional cases. But average wages have gone up considerably. From a daily wage averaging not more than 50 sen, there has been an increase to Yen 10 and even more. This "prosperity" will not last very long if the military operations continue. The ruling clique will be obliged to attack the workers' living standards. And then the fat will be in the fire. For the present, however, war prosperity has kept the workers quiescent, though there are innumerable grievances on various scores. For all "ordinary" members of the population in Japan, life has become a nightmare of rules, regulations, restrictions, some of an extremely reactionary character, on personal conduct. The life of the individual is being prescribed by the government down to the last detail. It is the middle class

which feels this loss of liberty first. The workers, "accustomed" to being enslaved and ordered about in feudal fashion, will take time to rebel. There is no doubt that the rulers of Japanese society are sitting on top of a volcano. That it has not exploded ere this, is entirely due to the hopelessly bankrupt policies of the "People's Front" in China, which have given the Japanese imperialists a series of quite important military victories, no matter how much the Stalinists may belittle them. That the volcano will explode is, in my opinion, certain. The great danger is a headless revolution, for there is no revolutionary leadership, and thus far the ruling clique has been able to divert mass discontent, to a large extent, into patriotic channels. If, however, a social upheaval in Japan should coincide with a similar upheaval in China, or if the one can precipitate the other, the prospects will be fine. There is, of course, the possibility that a European war may come to the aid of the Japanese rulers, enable them to further their aims in China, give them a breathing spell in which to consolidate what they have won.

I realize that I have drawn a far from complete picture of the situation in China and Japan, but that in any case is impossible within the compass of a letter.

SHANGHAI, Mar. 1939

X.



# The China of Chiang Kai-Shek

## *The Kuomintang Government and the Classes*

[Continued from Last Issue]

From the very first years of imperialist aggression against China in the nineteenth century to the present day, the Chinese ruling class has proved itself incompetent to defend the nation. In 1895 the Manchu government of China fought the Japanese in the Sino-Japanese war. The masses saw no reason to take any interest in the conflict and China rapidly went down to ignominious defeat. Five years later the masses of North China took the initiative in struggling to drive the foreigners out of China. The Powers, comprising eight nations, were forced to take extraordinary measures before they finally defeated the Boxer rebels. The Chinese masses had taken the first steps on the road of proving that they alone could defend the nation.

Between 1915 and 1922, the Powers, with Japan and America in the lead, were proceeding apace with the partitioning of China among the imperialists. The Chinese landlords and bourgeoisie were powerless to prevent the process. In 1925 the proletariat took the initiative in organizing the struggle against the imperialists. When the movement reached the heights of proletarian revolution, the Chinese bourgeoisie allied itself with the imperialists to suppress the masses. In the tradition of the Mings in 1644 and the Manchus in 1860, the Chinese ruling class preferred foreign intervention and occupation to national leadership by the Chinese masses.

From 1931 to the present day, the Japanese, striving for imperialist hegemony in Asia, have occupied one section after another of the Eastern coast of China. The Chinese ruling class has again proved itself unable to resist the invaders. The years since 1937 have proved conclusively that the struggle against imperialism in China can be conducted only through the independent struggle of the Chinese masses. The Chinese ruling class, true to its traditions, can only carry the ball for one or another of the imperialist teams.

**From the National to the Imperialist War**

At the beginning of the war with Japan in 1937, the Chinese bourgeoisie was concentrated in the coastal areas of Eastern China. It was reluctant to risk the property destruction which was entailed in war with Japan and conscious of the hostility of the Chinese proletariat. When resistance was finally forced upon it both by popular pressure and by the imminence of total absorption of Chinese industry by the Japanese, the bourgeoisie continued to hope that the Western Powers would be drawn in without much delay on its side. Within a few months, however, it became apparent that the West was too engrossed in its own pressing problems to give immediate aid. Moreover, the foreign capitalists, loyal to imperialism as a whole, tended to regard the entrance of Japan as a force which could keep law and order in China. The property of the Chinese bourgeoisie was either completely destroyed or absorbed by the Japanese imperialists.

Even then a good section of the bourgeoisie was reluctant to pursue the scorched earth policy and transport capital and machinery to the interior for reconstruction. Instead they flew to the areas under Anglo-American protection with their liquid funds, there to sit out the war in luxury and comfort. However, the more politically-conscious elements among the bourgeoisie realized that if they all fled abroad or to safety in the International Settlement, the interior would be left to the communists to mobilize the masses in a national resistance movement.

The retreat to the interior was gradual and accompanied by frontal resistance to the Japanese. During 1938 the national government was practically located in Hankow. Popular pressure resulted in the formation of a People's Political Council by Chiang Kai-shek and the official recognition of the new Fourth Army in the Yangtze region, composed of various elements under the leadership of communists.

The end of the Hankow period was heralded by the fall of Canton and completed by the loss of Hankow in October, 1938. With the retreat of the National Government to Chungking in Szechuan Province, the differences between Chiang Kai-shek's China in the Southwest and those of the communists in the North and the proletariat in the East were accentuated both geographically and politically. Wang Chin-wei fled to become a Quisling for Japanese-occupied China. Tension between the New Fourth Army and Chiang's forces increased, and the New Fourth was finally officially abolished in January, 1941, after refusing to obey government orders to move North.

Chiang's speech at the inaugural session of the People's Political Council on July 6, 1938, had revealed the pressure exerted on him to "rally the nation's political strength and to mobilize all the people for direct participation in the war." The political consciousness of the people became indispensable to the Chinese government.\* While still in partially industrialized Hankow, Chiang was forced to admit that the period of military rule had given way to that of political tutelage.

By 1939, however, Chiang is again placing his reliance in the Western "democracies." Moreover, he asserts that "judging by present conditions not only has our program for the period of political tutelage received a serious setback but much of the work of the period of military rule has to be done all over again." (Speech of February 2, 1939.) The old story of the Chinese ruling class abandoning the masses for the sake of imperialist alliances was resumed. With Chiang's return to the Anglo-American camp and Wang Chin-wei's flight to the Japanese there was initiated in Asia the pattern which has since marked the European scene. The native bourgeoisie is divided into satellites of the two rival imperialist camps. Like the European bourgeoisie, the Chinese bourgeoisie has its government in exile at Chungking, completely dependent upon the Allied imperialists and psychologically remote from the fighting front.

The war of resistance has been mapped out by Chiang into three stages: retreat, stalemate and counter-offensive. Unable to fight aggressive battles without giving greater concessions to the people, the Generalissimo has been content to withdraw and carry on harrying actions against the Japanese during the stalemate period. The counter-offensive begins when Anglo-American imperialism underwrites it.

In the early years Chiang was forced to appeal to the Japanese masses. On July 7, 1938, he addressed the Japanese people as "My friends. . . . From the very beginning of the conflict, we have regarded as our enemy only your militarists but not the people of Japan, people like ourselves. . . ." A year later, Chiang said: "Our people in the war zones should try by all possible means to make the enemy soldiers who have been deceived by their militarists and forced to come to China understand that aggression is the way to self-destruction and death, while opposition to war is the way to salvation and life."

These appeals to the Japanese masses were dictated by the pressure of the appeasers at home. Chiang urged these to hold out, promising that the Japanese would soon collapse from internal dissension. Today, however, Sun Fo, president of the legislative Yuan, is more confident. Says he: "Whereas the Chinese revolution started as a spontaneous movement of the Chinese people led by the Revolutionary Party as their

vanguard, the proposed Japanese revolution will have to be initiated and introduced by the victorious United Nations after defeating the Japanese military power." (*New York Times*, October 10, 1943.)

Two months after Pearl Harbor, the Generalissimo and Madame Chiang traveled to India to act as Asiatic spokesmen for the Anglo-American imperialists.\* To the Indian masses, determined to fight for independence from Britain, Chiang addressed these insolent words: "The anti-aggression nations now expect that in this new era the people of India will voluntarily bear their full share of responsibility in the present struggle for the survival of that free world in which India must play her part."

American and British imperialism were willing to pay Chiang well for his counter-revolutionary rôle in the Far East. From 1938 to 1940 America had made three loans to the Chungking government, all politically timed to offset Axis moves and economically secured in Chinese tin and tungsten: a loan of \$25,000,000 in 1938 after Wang Chin-wei's capitulation to the Japanese; a loan of \$20,000,000 when Japan decided in 1939 to "recognize" Wang's régime as the national government of China; and a loan of \$25,000,000 in 1940 after Vichy had agreed to Japan's occupation of French Indo-China.

In the summer of 1941, when war between American and Japanese imperialism was only a matter of time, a loan of \$100,000,000 was made. The attack on Pearl Harbor sent Chiang Kai-shek to India, and brought Lieut.-Col. Stilwell and a \$500,000,000 loan from the United States to China. It also meant the loss of Burma and the closing of all doors into China from the South. As a result, this comparatively large credit could not be used for foreign goods. The Chinese government has therefore used it as security for a large internal loan to which the bourgeoisie is forced to subscribe. Thus, an almost direct relationship of interdependence between the Chinese bourgeoisie and the American government has been established. From 1928 to 1937 America was the patron of the Nanking government. Today, the Chungking dollar is linked to and completely dependent on the United States Treasury.

### The Government and the Chinese Bourgeoisie

During the first eighteen months of war the government's main industrial rôle was providing aid for the transportation of private industry from the coast and lending capital to enable it to resume production. By 1939, however, the government had begun to play a more decisive rôle in industrial development. Besides guaranteeing profits to stimulate production, the state found it necessary to establish government enterprises in basic industries. On January 24, 1940, the Ministry of Economic Affairs announced the nationalization of iron and steel. (*China After Five Years of War*, Chinese News Service, 1942, page 94.)

This trend toward a state-controlled capitalism has been partly necessitated by the large capital requirements for basic industry. But government monopoly exists also in salt, sugar, tobacco, matches, tea and wine. The reasons for state intervention in production are political as well as economic. Many members of the bourgeoisie have been reluctant to develop the West, the years from 1925-27 having revealed to them the social and political dangers of breeding a proletariat. Specu-

\*See the "Program for National Assistance and Reconstruction" adopted by the Kuomintang Party Congress, emergency session at Hankow, March 29, 1938, reprinted in *Amerasia*, April 25, 1943, pages 118-120.

\*This is not to gainsay Chiang's desires to create a Chungking-Delhi axis against Western imperialism. He has denied it often enough to show that Britain and America are telling him to abandon the idea—or else. . . .

lation and profiteering bring more immediate gains with less risk.\*

The rôle of the government in economic life was formally recognized in the National General Mobilization Act of 1942.\*\* This act gave the government almost unlimited power in civil and economic life for the duration.

### The State and the Proletariat

Government control of industry has been accompanied by government regulation of the trade union movement. Since 1940 the trade unions of "Free China" have been under the control of the Ministry of Social Welfare in Chungking. All union officials are appointed by the government. Under wartime regulations, all workers must join unions, and strikes are prohibited. The Chinese Association of Labor, the only official federation, claims a grand total of 422,652 workers throughout "Free China." (*Allied Labor News*, April 15, 1943.)

In the spring of 1943 the Chinese executive Yuan passed a set of eighteen regulations to freeze workers in industrial and mining fields. Workers in these industries must register with their respective authorities and are not allowed to leave their occupations unless dismissed by their employers. Employers may not dismiss workers unless the latter have violated specific regulations under the present law. Workers incapable of their jobs may be dismissed; those over fifty are allowed to leave if physically unfit. Factory or mine owners, if forced to suspend business for over a month, may dismiss workers. Workers and employers are treated as individuals not only in their relations with each other but also with the authorities. There is no mention of unions in any of the negotiations. (*Ibidem*, May, 1943.)

Virtually nothing is known about the activity of the proletariat in Chiang Kai-shek's China. According to Freyn, who betrays no sympathy for labor, "in its sixth war year, China can look back on a record free from strikes, lockouts and other signs of unrest which elsewhere accompany a deterioration in the standard of living." (*Op. cit.*, page 130.)\* Mass resentment appears to be directed primarily at the profiteers on the market and at the government for being liberal with these elements.

### The State and the Profiteers

In Chiang Kai-shek's China the landed gentry and the merchants control the retail market. Nowhere in the world have there been such fantastic increases in retail prices. From an index of 100 in 1937, retail price level in Chungking had climbed to 1722.9 in 1941. In March, 1942, the general price index was 3799. Today the increase ranges from 7000 to 10,000, depending on the area.

Appeals for rice donations have been made to the general public. One appeal brought 30,000 piculs from ten Szechuan counties. The average donation was twenty to thirty piculs; the favorite concubine of the former Szechuan governor was credited with hoarding 70,000,000 piculs.

Finally, the government was forced to take increasingly drastic measures against the hoarders. For example, the former Mayor of Chengtu was paraded through the streets of

Chungking and shot in public. The price of rice thereupon dropped from \$180 a picul to \$90. But the landed gentry soon recovered, and a few months later the price per picul was \$160. (Freyn, page 123.) In January, 1943, Chungking put price ceilings on 656 commodities. By spring the prices were rising again and had reached sixty-seven times their pre-war levels. (Freyn, page 130.)

The rise in prices is especially hard on the urban population and the soldiers. The workers, whose labor is essential to production, have been able to force some wage increases despite the forbidding of strikes. After protest parades by government workers of the white collar class, the government was forced to institute a system of partial payment in rice to these workers. The armed forces, with no recourse, continue to suffer.

In some villages, farming and home industry enable the people to maintain a bare subsistence level when crops are good. But in many areas millions face starvation because of general devastation and famine. Toisan, for example, in the South, formerly depended for its rice on Siam, Burma and French Indo-China, all now in Japanese hands. Moreover, it has been hit by famine after occupation and reoccupation by the Japanese. The Toisan peasants are forced to sell their children in neighboring cities.

The white collar workers and petty bourgeois intellectuals, who constitute only three to four per cent of the population, can only plead for political democracy, petty reforms, increased government supervision, and a place in the bureaucracy for themselves.\* Among the masses of the people, the unrest does not take overt form, so far as we know.\*\* But every measure taken by the government against the profiteers, however ineffective, reveals the pressure of the masses. Every failure of these measures points out more clearly the need to overthrow completely the wealthy classes against whom the government is admittedly so "liberal."

### The Peasants in Chiang Kai-shek's China

Throughout Chiang Kai-shek's China the land hunger of the masses and unproductive land ownership by the gentry are the most obvious features of the landscape.\* The average Chinese family farms nineteen mow, or a little over three acres, the smallest acreage in the world except for Japan. Eighty per cent of China's farmers are tenants or part tenants. Tenant farmers tilling one acre must pay as much as fifty per cent of their crop to their landlords. Such high rates makes it much more profitable for landlords to lease their land rather than manage it on a large-scale productive basis. The inevitable result is the prevalence of small farms, lack of technical improvements and a disproportion between industry in the cities and agriculture in the country.\*\*

In Szechuan, seven per cent of the landlords own but do not till seventy per cent of the land. They spend their time in trade, banking, usury and the social and political duties of the gentry—namely, squeezing taxes, rent and interest from the laboring peasants. Funds loaned to the farmers at comparatively low interest by the government, e.g., for coopera-

\*See Amerasia, April 25, 1943, for an analysis of little parties in Kuomintang China.

\*\*The American government maintains a strict censorship on all news emanating from Chungking, and nothing unfavorable to the Chiang Kai-shek regime is permitted to emerge.

†See Agrarian China, "Selected Source Materials from Chinese Authors," published in Chinese periodicals during the 1930's. Compiled and translated by the research staff of the Institute of Pacific Relations, 1938. As in feudal Europe, churches and other "educational institutions" are large land-owners. It took the 1927 revolution to sweep many nuns and monks from their temples. "Change in Land Ownership and the Fate of Permanent Tenancy," *Agrarian China*, page 22.

‡"The Present Land Problem in China," *Agrarian China*, page 60.

\*In September, 1940, Chiang rebuked these profiteers: "Billions of dollars of unproductive capital are available in the interior; but instead of being diverted to regular channels, they are employed for personal gains and such illegitimate transactions as hoarding and manipulation. Some private individuals simply sort away their money." *Free China's New Deal*, by Hubert Freyn, MacMillan, 1943, pages 43f.

\*\*For a copy of this act, see Freyn, pages 250-256. The act empowers the government, whenever necessary, to "restrict the people's freedom of speech, publication, writing, correspondence, assembly and organization."

tives, are funneled through this gentry, and by the time they reach the farmer the customary usurer's rate has been approximated.\*

The war, with its scarcities and fluctuations of currency, has increased the polarizing tendency toward wealthy landowners, on the one hand, and the landless peasantry on the other. The landlords receiving rents in kind and paying taxes in cash,\*\* were able to hoard and take advantage of favorable price rises and currency changes for profiteering. With their profits they bought up new land. The middle peasants, who paid taxes in cash but received no rents in kind, have been almost swept away.

Land that was worth C\$100 in 1931 is now worth more than C\$70,000 in Chungking. This increase is due not only to overcrowding. As the China Information Bulletin puts it: "Land is indestructible. The hoarding of land is therefore highly profitable, thus resulting in the gradual concentration of ownership in the hands of a small portion of the people." (*New York Times*, July 23, 1943.)

This acceleration by the war of the progressive impoverishment of the peasantry had to be checked by the government if it was to be able to demand additional sacrifices for the war. Hence in 1941 the land tax was revised. Provision was made for taxes in kind and for compulsory purchases of foodstuffs by the government. This was aimed to reduce hoarding and force the landlords to accept a larger share of the tax burden.

But laws against the gentry are useless when the administration of the laws remains in the hands of the gentry. In the past, government measures ostensibly aimed to effect rent reduction and resale of land to the tenants have been successfully frustrated by this political power of the landlords. ("The Latest Agrarian Policy of Kuomintang," *Agrarian China*, page 155.)

In China it has always been as difficult to distinguish the rents from the taxes as it has been to distinguish the landlords from the government, both nationally and locally. The bureaucracy is a "communal landlordism" which by its juridical rôle is able to mobilize greater political and military power for the suppression of mass discontent. Rents, taxes and interest are literally forced from the peasants at the point of a gun by special guards. These guards, known as the Min-Tuan or "pacification" forces, are estimated at two million in Free China and are using one million of China's scanty supply of rifles for the protection of property rights. (Edgar Snow, *The Battle for Asia*.)

The agricultural proletariat in China is relatively small compared to that in the advanced countries, not only because of the absence of large-scale farming but also because of the prevalence of feudal relations. Tenants are forced to repay their loans of equipment and grain in labor on the land of the rich peasants. Rich peasant families take in concubines instead of hiring wage-earning laborers. The system of early marriage in China also owes its continuance to the economic reality that it is far more advantageous to acquire a daughter-in-law than to hire a laborer by the year. The poor peasants in turn must marry off their daughters early because it saves food for other mouths. In certain sections of China slaves are maintained for house and field work. ("Agrarian Laborers in Kwangsi," *Agrarian China*, page 80.)

\* "The Experiences of a District Director of Co-operatives," *Agrarian China*, pages 211-216.

\*\* More often than not the landlord's control of the local administration enables him to pass the land taxes on to the peasants directly.

China's whole past history proves that the Chinese peasants do not accept their hardships passively. The recourse to banditry and the kidnapping of the rich is a form of social protest. In some places the wealthy gentry supply these bandits with food rather than undergo the formality of being kidnapped and ransomed. They know that it is useless to kill off the bandits because more will spring up where others are destroyed. (*Changing China*, by G. E. Taylor, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1942.)

Peasant riots and organized refusals to pay rent reached their height during the 1925-27 revolution and the ensuing years of agrarian revolution. The attitude among many peasants is: "If there is no rebellion, how can the poor continue to live?"\*

In 1936, when the government conscripted poor peasants for work on the Szechuan-Hunan highway, the laborers organized many riots, in some cases disarming the local militia, killing their foremen and destroying the local engineering offices. ("Labor Tax in the Building of the Szechuan-Hunan Highway," *Agrarian China*, page 110.)

We do not possess facts and data on the activity of the peasants in Chiang's China today. But we are familiar with their revolutionary temper in the past, and we know that they are being organized by the government itself in labor battalions and in the army. At the end of the war they will be in a position to utilize this training to eradicate the private-property relations in land, the condition which has been for so long the curse of the Chinese peasants. As in the Russian Revolution, the men from the front will introduce "into the business the heavy determination of people accustomed to handle their fellow men with rifles and bayonets."

### China's Peasants in Uniform

The well educated classes, who have always been a vested interest in Chinese society, are exempted from fighting in the Chinese army. The army is a coolie army of nearly ten million men. The only exception to this is the cadre group of 300,000 men (thirty division) who are the "Generalissimo's Own," militarily trained by German army officers. The officers of the regular army are provincial leaders with no professional military training and with the social background of the local gentry.

In his ragged cotton uniform, with hand-made and often mended straw sandals and hat, carrying a rifle, a rice bowl and a pair of chopsticks, the Chinese soldier marches endlessly from one front to another, living in deserted temples and stables. He may have volunteered to get the rice allotment which is the only food provided the soldier by the government. More likely, he was conscripted on the village system, which enables the local gentry to buy off military service for its sons. On his way to the training depot, he was probably roped together with other conscripts to make sure they all got there. His officers force him to perform labor service for the large landowners, for which the commander, and not the men, receives the compensation. In many cases he is locked in at night by his officers. (*Amerasia*, September, 1943, page 276.) His pay check is about one American dollar a month.

Such an army can continue to fight as well as it has only because of its belief that it is fighting for national liberation

\* This remark was made by a group of embittered women to a government field worker. This worker reports that the peasants have no faith in government measures and that their most urgent demand is "not the remeasurement of land for tax consolidation but rather something which would give them a chance to breathe beneath the heavy pressure of their landlords." "Experiences of an Official in the Land Tax Consolidation Bureau," *Agrarian China*, page 153.

and because of the lack of any clear alternative method of struggle. The effectiveness of this army against the Japanese has declined during the years 1937-42. An analysis of casualties inflicted by the regular Chinese army indicates a drop to 32 in 1943 from the 1937 base of 100. (*Ibidem*, July, 1943, page 229.) The causes of this decline are partly the changes in China's foreign supply position. But the change is also rooted in the declining morale of the army. The realization that despite enormous casualties (estimated at five million) their battles "cannot be expected to have a determining effect on the war as a whole" (this was stated by a Chinese government spokesman, *New York Times*, July 24, 1943), must raise serious doubts in the minds of these ragged heroes.

The government of Chiang Kai-shek has too little to offer the peasant millions who make up the regular Chinese army. To the peasants, the Kuomintang promises land reform, but to the landlords it promises compensation for all land redistributed. Few people know better than the Chinese peasant that the landlord is his implacable enemy who must be deprived of all wealth before rural reform can be undertaken.

In most cases the people do not look upon the armed forces as their liberators (*The Chinese Army*, by E. F. Carlson, pages 30-34). Because of the meagerness of supplies to the army from the government, it is necessary for the soldiers to live off the land. As a result it is often difficult to distinguish the regular armed forces from the bandit irregulars who for centuries have lived by military requisitions and looting of the masses.

#### Chiang Kai-shek Plans for the Future\*

Chiang's plans for economic reconstruction after the war provide for a state-controlled capitalism with the aid of foreign capital. This is clearly outlined in the resolution passed by the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang in September, 1943 (*New York Times*, September 26, 1943). State supervision is taken for granted as the general rule and only such "industry which may be entrusted to individuals or industries which will be less suitable for the state to operate shall be privately operated. The government in some cases shall give such industry the encouragement and protection of the law. . . . Industries which assume the nature of a monopoly shall be state-operated. The government shall stipulate specifically what constitutes state-wide industries and what constitutes private industries." According to the Twentieth Century Fund report of 1943, Chinese "industrial development will proceed under state guidance and to a large extent under state ownership and direction. The shortage of private industrial capital in China, the absence of a vigorous industrial class and the large financial problems involved are presumed to necessitate state control."

Within recent months the Chinese bourgeoisie has accompanied its pleas to America for more guns with cordial invitations for investment of capital. Under old Chinese regulations it was required that fifty-one per cent of stock interest in joint capital arrangements must be Chinese, and a majority of the board of directors, as well as the chairman and general manager, must be native. The new resolution passed by the Kuomintang asserts that "hereafter no fixed restriction shall be placed on the ratio of foreign capital investment in joint enterprises. In the organization of a Chinese-foreign joint enterprise, except for the chairman of the board of directors, the general manager need not necessarily be a Chinese."

\*See "Chungking Considers the Future," by Gunther Stein, *Far Eastern Survey*, September 7, 1943.

An American was recently appointed acting inspector-general of the Chinese Maritime Customs Service. In the past the imperialist power controlling China's customs revenue has been able to dictate which clique should rule in China. Before the war Britain was strong in the administration of the Chinese customs service. The United States, Britain and Japan played approximately equal rôles in the foreign trade of China. Japan and Britain did not hesitate to collaborate against America, nor America and Japan against Britain.\* Today, Chiang is completely committed to string along with American imperialism. His participation in the Cairo Conference is ample proof that Chiang Kai-shek's China will never play an independent rôle in the fight against Japan."

The pro-fascist leanings of the Kuomintang government are revealed in Chiang's plans to maintain national government troops in a good number of provinces and employ army officers as local administrators. The demobilization of China's army of eight to ten million men would only reinstate in an aggravated form the situation of latent unemployment that existed in China before the war. Employment must also be sought for the increasing number of army officers. The sharpness of the class struggle will demand even more severe repression than existed before the war. The promises of constitutional government given by the recent Kuomintang plenum are more empty than they have ever been.\*\*

Finally, the reactionary character of Chiang's plans for the future are unmistakably revealed in his Spiritual Mobilization and New Life movements. These movements, loudly acclaimed by Western as wiping out old Chinese habits of spitting and opium smoking, are in reality aimed at perpetuating the old feudal social relations and substituting spiritual food where material food is needed.† On an intimate local scale, Chiang is attempting to reinstate the pao-chia system whereby households are the units of responsibility under government supervision.‡

But the Chinese people have been uprooted by forty years of wars and revolutions. The family system has been broken up by the entry of nearly ten million men into the armed forces. Provincial barriers have been broken down by the mélange of dialects within the army. The national outlook of the Chinese masses has been broadened by the propaganda

\*Britain's dominance in China depended on her alliance with Japan and on the French fleet. America's policy in Manchuria in 1931 won Japan to her side sufficiently to doom the British. The fall of France in 1940 ended Britain's chances for falling back on French support.

†Pearl Buck's incessant pleas for more aid to China betray both her realism and her hypocrisy. Familiar with the Chinese ruling class from long residence in China, she was well aware that they might turn to Japan if American imperialism neglected them. Knowing the hatred of the Chinese for the British imperialists, she is also anxious that America free herself from the suspicion that she is united with the British Empire. What this "friend of China" fears most of all is a strong Asia united against the West. As she herself says: "I shudder to think what the future will be with Russia established, as indeed she already has been, as the world's greatest military force; when China establishes herself, as she will undoubtedly do, as another great military force; when the people of India, freed by their own efforts, as they are determined to be free, will be a great potential power." Invoking the spirit of Thomas Jefferson, Mrs. Buck appeals to the American bourgeoisie not to industrialize Asia, but keep these people what they "have hitherto been, to our great good fortune, peaceful agricultural peoples." *Asia*, November, 1943.

\*\*See *Amerasia*, October 1, 1943, for a devastating analysis of the emptiness of these promises in the past.

‡"This system with every ten families as the unit, was originally used as a measure for common defense but has long been utilized by the authorities as a means of demanding community responsibility and as an additional instrument for the maintenance of peace and order." *Agrarian China*, page 212.

The Generalissimo's Western-educated wife is apparently more aware of the general need for material reform. However, she wholeheartedly endorses the Generalissimo's spiritual path as an immediate substitute. See her book, *China Shall Rise Again*, Harper's, 1940. The Generalissimo's Russian-educated son, Chiang Ching-kuo, is magistrate of Kansien. "His methods and ideology are called communitarian or fascist by people who object to his authoritarian administration. His system is called state socialism by people who dislike regimentation." (*New York Times*, November 5, 1943.)

that their struggle is part of a world struggle against fascism and reaction. The planes flying overhead, the use of medicines and surgery, and the demands made up the population to care for the wounded have gone far to emancipate the Chinese from old superstitions, ancestor worship and the old religion. In the huts of the most backward areas, placards with political slogans have replaced the ancestral tablets with their Confucian proverbs. After the 1911 revolution, the queues and bound feet which symbolized servitude to the Manchus began to disappear. In the 1925-27 revolution the bobbed hair of the women was a sign of popular emancipation. Today, the Chinese soldier in a uniform of shorts, shirt and tie and the emancipated Chinese woman in slacks and blouse symbolize a new freedom.

For centuries the Chinese people have borne the heavy load of taxation for a bureaucratic landlordism and an expanding military, civil and party bureaucracy. The taxation envisaged for a bureaucratic capitalism will only increase this load. The Chinese people have been actively engaged in a struggle for national liberation from Western as well as Japanese imperialism for half a century. They have reached the

stage where further concessions to "friendly capital" strikes both at their pride and their stomachs. Japanese conquest of British colonies in Asia has reduced the white man's prestige in China and increased the Chinese sense of their own potential power.

Everywhere the struggle is for the creation of a new world to supplant the old. Even Chiang must speak constantly in terms of revolution and pose as the revolutionary leader.

Today the conflict between Chiang Kai-shek's old world and the new world vaguely present to the masses takes the amorphous forms of resentment and passivity. In the flux of the post-war struggles this contrast will be sharpened into vigorous conflict. For nearly half a century the Chinese ruling class has been able to deflect the rebellion of the Chinese masses to a struggle against the foreign invaders. Today the foreign enemy is Japan; yesterday it was the Western powers. Tomorrow the Chinese people will have engaged the forces of every imperialist power. No people can capture the admiration of the whole modern world and not demand the opportunities commensurate with its sacrifices. *(To be continued.)*

RIA STONE.

# China Under the Stalinists – III

## *National Revolution and Peasant Revolt*

[Continued from last issue]

Ever since the great Russian Revolution of 1917 the Chinese masses have been inspired by the example of the Russian workers and peasants. From 1920 to 1927 they flocked to the banner of the Communist Party so that it grew almost overnight into a mass party. Even after the betrayal by the Stalinists in the 1926-27 revolution, the Red Armies in the interior were able to attract millions of peasants by driving out the landlords and sponsoring the division of the land.

Compromises with rich peasants and isolation from urban workers finally made it impossible for the Soviet districts to resist Chiang Kai-shek's armies, and the Communists migrated to the Northwest. The "Long March" to the Northwest is itself a testimony to the strength of the Chinese masses in their desperation and to the great symbolic hold of the Russian Revolution over their aspirations.

Today there are three main areas either completely or partially under Communist control or influence. These are:

1. *The frontier area, made up of the Northwest provinces of Shensi, Kansu and Ningshia.*

This area, west of the Yellow River and South of the Great

Wall, is bounded on the north and west by Mongolia and Tibet. It has been one of the most backward sections of China and has a population of only approximately two million. The government of this area is a direct continuation of the Chinese Soviet Republic, formally liquidated when the anti-Japanese United Front was formed, but maintaining complete autonomy from the Chinese National Government.

2. *The "Border Region," made up of the Northeastern provinces of Hopei-Chahar and Shansi.*

This region is completely within Japanese lines, and within it the Communist-influenced governments compete with the Japanese provisional government militarily, economically and politically. The old provincial governments are negligible, functioning only in unoccupied corners of their provinces or in exile. On a smaller scale than Chiang Kai-shek's régime, they are but another variant of that modern phenomenon—the government in exile.

3. *The New Fourth Army zone in the Yangtze Valley, made up of sections of the East Central provinces of Anhwei, Kiangsu, Kiangsi, Fukian and Chekiang.*

In this area the Chinese Soviet Republic functioned before the "Long March" to the Northwest. Although officially abol-

ished by Chiang in January, 1941, the main forces of the New Fourth Army probably continue to function within the Japanese-occupied zones, where Chiang's armies cannot reach them.

While differences exist between these areas in the degree of Communist influence, autonomy, etc., they all exhibit the general pattern of peasant revolt. The most informative and complete study of this pattern in China has been made by George E. Taylor in his book, *The Struggle for North China*, dealing with the Border Region. The latter will therefore be used as an example of the three areas.

The outstanding characteristics of peasant revolts are their local, dispersed and temporary character. Their possibilities and limitations have been classically described by Engels in his study, *The Peasant War in Germany*. The successes and failures of the Chinese Soviets from 1928 to 1934 are a modern instance of the inability of peasant armies to achieve the agrarian revolution on a national and permanent scale without the leadership and coöperation of the proletariat. Today, in occupied China, the temporary character of the successes of the guerrillas against the Japanese may be summarized in the statement that the Japanese rule by day and the Chinese guerrillas by night.

The unsuccessful national revolution of 1900, known as the Boxer Rebellion, had been a Northern movement. The republican revolution of 1911 had developed out of a Southern movement. Northern China, unlike Central and Southern China, barely experienced the revolution of 1926-27. The last orderly government in the experience of the population was the Manchu dynasty. The Kuomintang had never made serious inroads.

The cities of the North had remained picturesque souvenirs of ancient feudal China. Peking, for example, had been from 1900 on little more than a garrison for foreign troops and a center for imperialist intrigue. Industrialization in the North had been confined to the communications required by the imperialists to exploit the natural resources of the country. The areas lying between the railroads and roads were a hinterland, partially if not completely self-sufficient. However, relative to Southern and Central China, there is in the North a larger agricultural proletariat because the poor productivity of the land requires farming on a larger scale.\*

### The Bankruptcy of the Local Gentry

This economic and political background dictated the possibilities and necessities of Japanese expansion. With very little difficulty they were able to overrun the chief cities and railroads. For the rest, they were compelled and had the opportunity to introduce a new order for the people. The peasants at first put up no resistance "because the invasion directly and immediately threatened the security of the landlords. . . . When the poor peasants witnessed how the landlords were forced to become refugees overnight and to run for their lives, they were not sorry to see their rich oppressors suffer for a change."\*\*

The principles of the Japanese New Order were eradication of the evils of the Kuomintang, eradication of Communism, and the pan-racial unity of Asia. For the San Min Chu I, or Three People's Principles of the Kuomintang, the Japanese substituted the Hsin Min Chu I, or New People's Principles. In reality, the New People's Principles meant that there would be no reduction of land rents, no revision of land

taxation, no regularization of land tenure and no revision of village usury. Hence a fair proportion of the gentry were willing to become allies of the Japanese.

All over the world today, popular sensitivity to collaboration with the invader exists on an unprecedented scale. However, in Asia even more than in Europe, the war brought to a head the social uselessness of the local gentry. In China, where the landlords could not claim any social function as managers, the Japanese found no social force of any consequence to collaborate with them in funding their New Order. If the Quislings stayed in the villages, the guerrillas branded them as traitors and meted out suitable corporal punishment. If they fled to the Japanese-occupied cities, their property at home was confiscated. In the cities, only a few were needed for fronts. The rest actually were competitors of the Japanese second "army" of merchants, officials and administrators. Many of the gentry therefore found it more expedient to remain in or return to the villages and join in the anti-Japanese United Front. This shuttling back and forth did not help the "face" of the would-be Quislings. In some places, to restore their prestige, the landlords called themselves guerrilla commanders whenever they could gather five or ten people together. The landlord forces, in reality, permitted the activities of traitors in their areas, never attacked the Japanese and, instead, harassed the real popular guerrilla forces.

The Japanese occupation was also in the dilemma of encouraging the old classical education for political purposes, although the economic development of occupied China required vocational training of the masses. Without giving this technical training they could neither repair the economic damage they have caused nor promote large-scale development.

### The Development of Mass Resistance

The inability of the Japanese to give political, economic and social stability to the occupation tremendously facilitated the tasks of the Communists in rallying the people for resistance. Functioning virtually within a vacuum, the Communists had the opportunity to create a new form of government. Their limitations have been self-imposed in accordance with the Stalinist's policy of a united front against Japan.

The population had been accustomed by many decades of brigand armies to taxes without public services, and forced labor to landlord and warlord. To gain their support in the resistance it was necessary to point out a new road of coöperation between the military and the civilian. As in the days of civil war with Chiang Kai-shek, the Communists have had to depend upon guerrilla tactics; surprise and mobile warfare in small groups, self-reliance of lower officers, and capture of ammunition from the enemy. In the end, however, the basis of guerrilla tactics is the willingness of the population to coöperate.

The ignorant, illiterate and impoverished people had to be given something to fight for at the same time that they were shown an enemy to fight against. This has been achieved by direct but moderate economic reforms, such as suspensions or reduction of rents to landlords and interest to usurers, regulation of share-cropping and lowering of taxes. The property of traitors (comprising ten to twenty per cent of the land in this region) has been confiscated and redistributed, pending the "repentance" of the traitors. Army auxiliaries have been created to assist the peasantry in farming their land and to minimize the burden of supplying the military.

As in some areas of Chiang Kai-shek's China, industrial

\*"Forms of Farm Labor in China," *Agrarian China*, page 69.

\*\*The Organization of a Typical Guerrilla Area in South Shantung," by Wang Yu-chuan, appendix to *The Chinese Army*, by E. F. Carlson.



coöperatives have been organized to produce the essentials for consumers and for the army.\* Throughout there has been an emphasis on economic self-sufficiency and hence an employment of all hands in productive labor. Since no external trade with the Japanese is permitted, there has been a limitation on such crops as cotton. Production of essentials by simple handicraft has been restored to supply the population and keep labor from migrating to the cities. But economic penetration knows no borders, and despite border government control of trade, smuggling has been widespread.

Politically, the population of the guerrilla areas has been given a new sense of human dignity by its participation in village mobilization committees and county political councils. The principles of universal suffrage and political democracy have been instituted. For this rôle the people have been given education which, while limited mainly to political agitation, has opened up to the masses a whole new world. These are peasants who have depended entirely upon one man in a whole village to read and write their letters, and who have sold their daughters to repay a twenty-dollar debt. Today they grasp at even token recognition of their humanity.

In some places the villagers are so well organized in the anti-Japanese movement that they will evacuate their homes when the Japanese approach, bury food, remove all animals and utensils and retire into the hills.

The Communists, in line with their appeasement of Chiang Kai-shek, have persistently discouraged the increasing class tensions arising between the peasants and the landlords. In the tradition of peasant wars, the victories of the masses are nullified by compromise with the middle class. The Communist Party is pledged not to accept more than one-third of the elected positions in any local or hsien government. In the border region there is a farmers' union in which the landlords are not permitted membership. The efforts of this union to gain economic advantages for the class it represents are discouraged by the United Fronters.

The party itself has admitted that it had difficulties in convincing the ranks of the Eighth Route Army to accept the United Front policy. "... The men do not fully understand the reasons for such actions, some men actually accusing their leaders of 'counter-revolutionary orders.'"

The Communists have sought to remove all obstacles in the way of those gentry who may wish to return from the occupied areas. The border government actually collects rents for absent landlords and holds them in reserve for the prodigals' return. Mao Tse-tung, the Communist leader, has summarized the compromise policy of the Communists beyond any misunderstanding: "Regarding agrarian problems, on the one hand, we advocate a policy of reducing rents and interests so that the peasants can have clothing and food; on the other hand, we are also carrying out a policy of recognizing the payment of rents and interest as obligatory so that the landlords can also have clothing and food. Regarding the relation between labor and capital, on the one hand, we are realizing the policy of helping the workers so that they may have food and clothing; while on the other hand we are also carrying out a policy of industrial development which will provide the capitalists with profit." There can be no clearer statement of anti-revolutionary policy.

The compromise policy of the Stalinists against the Chi-

\*It is generally agreed by everyone except the enthusiastic sponsors of the Indusco movement that even the very moderate success of the movement is only a temporary phenomenon, possible only because of wartime isolation of various areas from the world and national market. Out of a proposed 30,000 corps, only 2,300 have been established with 80,000 workers. For an uncritical appraisal of Indusco, see *China Shall Rise Again*, by Madame Chiang Kai-shek. For more critical accounts, see Snow, *Battle for Asia*, and Mitchell, *Industrialization in the Western Pacific*.

nese bourgeoisie in 1925-27 brought death, imprisonment and disillusionment to hundreds of thousands of workers in industrialized China. Their compromise policy against the rich peasants in 1933 brought pessimism, mass desertions, and eventually defeat of the agrarian revolutions following in the wake of the proletarian revolution. Their pressure for the release of Chiang from Sian in 1926 produced cynicism and confusion among the soldiers in the Northern armies. Today the threat of the foreign enemy holds the people together in the United Front. As the end of the war approaches, the class tensions will emerge more openly. After the war, the Chinese Communist Party will have more difficulty in imposing the Kremlin's will on masses who have fought, and died by the thousands, in a supposedly revolutionary cause.

### Training for the Social Revolution

Today the peasants are being given invaluable training for the social revolution. They have learned that bona fide national defense depends on them and that there is political meaning to their instinctive rebellion. They have learned that rights must accompany responsibilities and they are learning to enjoy popular government. They are acquiring a modicum of literacy and tools for self-expression and they are also receiving some industrial training through the Indusco movement. They have learned how to deal with the treacherous gentry by assassination and by confiscation of property. They have seen a popular army in the process of development and become part of it, acquiring the consciousness that the sword belongs to the community. Into the backward North there have migrated thousands of peasants and intellectuals from the South, where they have lived in closer contact with the modern world.

Moreover, the Chinese masses in Communist-controlled China have been indoctrinated with an international outlook. The Soviet districts regarded themselves as part of the world proletariat. The course of the civil war and the conquest of Abyssinia were followed with intense interest. In view of this background, it is possible to credit the report of a split in the Chinese Communist Party over the dissolution of the Comintern.

The border region has also stressed solidarity between the Japanese and the Chinese masses against their common enemy, the Japanese militarists and capitalists. The Eighth Route Army especially employs the technique of indoctrinating Japanese prisoners and sending them back to educate their comrades-in-arms.

This training in the techniques of social revolution is constantly on the verge of overflowing into practice. No modern revolution has been able to linger for long at the bourgeois democratic stage. It has either moved forward under the impulsion of the masses or succumbed to bourgeois dictatorship. Hence the intense mutual hostility of the China of Chiang Kai-shek and the China that is Communist-led.\* Ideas and techniques cannot be limited by geographical boundaries, nor hemmed in by mass armies made up of peasants.

As Trotsky said in 1928: "... With a new rising wave of the proletarian movement... one will be able to speak seriously about the perspective of an agrarian revolution."

RIA STONE.

\*The New York Times of September 8, 1943, reports that Communists numbering 10,000 made two unprovoked attacks against the pacification corps in Southwestern Siantung on July 20 and August 6. In the summer of 1943, five divisions of Chiang's best armed and fed troops were moved into the Northwest area away from the Japanese front. At the Plenum of the Kuomintang in September, 1943, a resolution was adopted accusing the Chinese Communist Party of subversive activities and calling upon it to fulfill its promise to abandon the Communist movement, dissolve the Soviet government and disband the Red Army. Only one of seven Communist delegates attended the subsequent session of the People's Political Council. See *Amerasia*, October 1, 1943.

## MAO AND THE PEASANTRY: HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

### PAST PEASANT REVOLTS

Mao's rise to power on the crest of a peasant upheaval is not without precedent in China's long history. Hardly a generation has passed without a more or less widespread peasant revolt. Lack of space permits mention of only the most important of these. The first big recorded rising took place in 209 B.C. during the reign of the Second Emperor of the Ch'in dynasty. The whole of present-day Shantung and Kiangsu rose in arms, the Ch'in Empire was overthrown and the peasant leader Liu Pang took power (becoming emperor and establishing the Han dynasty). Again in A.D. 8 there was the mass peasant rebellion of the Red Eyebrows, so called from the way the rebels applied their war paint, which took hold over all northern China for many years. In A.D. 184 the rebellion of the Yellow Turbans shook the country. In A.D. 874 a peasant revolt broke out, which swept over most of the provinces of the Yellow, Yangtze, Huai and Pearl River Valleys in the course of ten years, gained hold of the capital, overthrew the T'ang dynasty and made the peasant leader emperor. (This rebellion collapsed after 27 years under the blows of the old dynasty.) In A.D. 1351, a peasant rebellion overthrew the Mongol Dynasty and replaced it with a new one, the Ming. 1628 bore witness to another big peasant rising which spread all over North China and, after a long struggle, led in 1644 to the downfall of the Ming dynasty. (This rebellion did not lead to the establishment of a new dynasty headed by a peasant leader, as was customary, but to the invasion of the Manchus into China proper.) Finally, there was the nearest revolutionary precursor of Mao's peasant movement—the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom.

The scale of the peasant revolts that fill the pages of Chinese history are without comparison elsewhere in the

### MAO AND PEASANTRY: HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

world.<sup>1</sup> Although not all the 25 dynasties chronicled in official histories of China rose on the crest of peasant rebellion, many did. In each case, the peasants overthrew the economic domination of the cities in which the State bureaucrats as well as the landlords, lived. Reforms aimed at lightening the burdens imposed on the peasants and often including land redistribution invariably followed. Sometimes the new leaders went so far as to propose a primitive sort of nationalisation of the land; others provided for the establishment of a rudimentary form of State capitalism. None of these ambitious reforms matured, however; they broke on the rock of the more or less static productive technique. The peasant wars which gave rise to them exhausted themselves, and the new emperor and his clique reintroduced the old social forms once again.

The Taiping rebellion followed the same tragic pattern. As the nearest relevant precursor of the Maoist revolt, it merits special attention.

The rebellion started in 1849 in a mountainous village in Kwangsi province. The peasant armies advanced northward from Kwangsi, fought in Hunan and Hupeh, brought most of the Yangtze River Valley under their sway and established their 'Heavenly Capital' in Nanking. Their forces then numbered as many as a million peasant-soldiers, who followed up previous successes with even greater victories until 17 provinces of the Empire—more than two-thirds of the country—were under their sway. They nearly, but not quite, succeeded in taking Peking, thus putting an end to the Manchu Empire. Their battles were so ardently fought that, it is believed, no fewer than twenty million lives were lost.

Hung Hsiu-ch'uan, the Heavenly King, declared that all land should be owned by those who cultivated it. All landlords' land was to be confiscated and reallocated in a general redistribution in which the land was to be divided into nine grades by quality and shared equally among all peasants according to need. The revolutionary government declared further:

<sup>1</sup> An investigator found records from local files of 67 peasant revolts within a period of some 180 years (1448-1627) in one small border region between Kiangsi and Fuhien. (Shu-chung Lee, 'Agrarianism and Social Upheaval in China', *American Journal of Sociology*, Chicago, May, 1951.)

## MAO AND PEASANTRY: HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

Very detailed ceremonial forms, ranks and titles were introduced to differentiate the upper levels of the hierarchy from the masses and distinguish between the members of the hierarchy itself. The Heavenly King with his sons and daughters headed the list; there followed another five kings, marquises, generalissimos and many others. Orders of precedence, modes of address, and all points of Oriental etiquette were reintroduced and strictly adhered to.<sup>6</sup>

Many historians consider that 'corruption was the fundamental cause of the failure of the Taipings. After Nanking was conquered, the leaders began to live extravagant, indolent and licentious lives, with a harem of women, contrary to the avowed platform of monogamy.'<sup>7</sup> This last was the crowning aspect of social inequality; moreover it was written into the law. A decree of 1861 regulated marriages as follows: high princes were allowed 11 wives, high ranking officers 3; middle ranking officers 2; other officers and rank and file 1.<sup>8</sup>

In time the leaders of the Taiping fell prey to jealousy and feuds. Blood flowed freely, almost all the chief leaders of the Taiping as well as scores of thousands of veterans were murdered.<sup>9</sup>

The available evidence suggests that the Taiping actually introduced the radical, egalitarian land law with which they had set out to change the face of the country in only a small portion of the area under their control. It is very doubtful whether their fate would have been any different to what it turned out to be, or that they would have done more than what former peasant revolts in China had succeeded in doing—merely resurrecting the old Chinese society—even if they had succeeded in overthrowing the Manchus and taking power over the whole country.

The peasantry proved itself capable of a mass revolutionary uprising which as such had a democratic character, but it proved incapable of democratic self-rule. They could be united only by an external force—an élite which rose above them and consequently dominated and exploited them. This inherent incapacity of the peasantry for self-rule makes their domination by an élite

<sup>6</sup> W. H. Medhurst, compiler, *Pamphlets Issued by the Chinese Insurgents at Nan-king*, Shanghai, 1853, pp. 51-3.

<sup>7</sup> Sau-yü Teng, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

<sup>8</sup> Kara-Murza, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

<sup>9</sup> Hua Gan, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-5.

Having fields, let them cultivate them together; and when they get any rice, let them eat together; so also with regard to clothes and money let them use them in common, so that everyone may share and share alike, and everyone be equally well-fed and clothed.

The people were to be divided into groups of 25 households, each with its public granary to which the peasants would hand over their harvest after retaining an amount sufficient for their own maintenance. From this common granary relief was to be given to all who were, because of old age, infirmity or other disabilities, incapable of work; it was also to provide grants for marriages and funerals, as well as pay the salaries of government officials.<sup>2</sup> Equality of the sexes was proclaimed, and women actually held positions on equal terms with men in the administration and the army.

The amorphous mass of ignorant peasants could not raise a leadership of their own, and so the Taiping leaders were mainly intellectuals interspersed with some rich peasants, merchants, and even a few landlords.

Like all its predecessors, the Taiping rebellion did not lead to social equality. Privileges were quick to arise. The higher members of the hierarchy exploited their position to take more than an equal share of rice, meat, oil, etc., from the public granaries and storchouses.<sup>3</sup> They soon began to dress in rich and costly clothes, to wear gold and jewel-studded crowns and to live in luxurious palaces.<sup>4</sup> It was not long before such manifestations of privilege as the following were to be seen:

The sedan chair of the Heavenly King was carried by sixty-four porters and that of the East King by forty, and the latter's retinue was usually from several hundred to one thousand. Whenever he went out, all people in the streets had to kneel down at the sides of the road where he passed.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Hua Gan, *History of the Revolutionary Wars of the Taiping State* (Russian), Moscow, 1952, pp. 268-70.

<sup>3</sup> G. S. Kara-murza, *The Taipings* (Russian), Second Edition, Moscow, 1950, p. 86.

<sup>4</sup> For a description, see Lin-ic, *Tai-ping Tien-kuoh*, *The History of the Tai-ping Revolution*, London, 1866, Volume I, pp. 243-4.

<sup>5</sup> Sau-yü Teng, *New Light on the History of the Taiping Rebellion*, Cambridge, Mass., 1950, p. 123.

#### MAO AND PEASANTRY: HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

and-death struggle . . . As a result . . . their sense of organisation and discipline strengthened.<sup>10</sup>

Again, the fact that the Party and army cadres had often to change their place of work and to move from one part of China to another, inevitably cut the Party member off from the village in which he was born and grew up, and from any real intimate identification with the peasantry. Thus, for instance, it was reported:

. . . the data for 1943 show that in Taipei, of the 37 cadres of eight region Party committees there were only nine local cadres (or 26 per cent of the total) in comparison with 28 outside cadres (or 74 per cent of the total). Of the 37 cadres of county Party committees under the control of four region Party committees in Taiyueh only six (or 16 per cent) were natives of these counties, while 31 (or 84 per cent) were outsiders. In T'aihang, of the 18 cadres of five county Party committees under the control of the Sixth Region Committee only five (or 27 per cent) were natives and 13 (or 72 per cent) were outsiders.

Again:

. . . according to reports from South Hopei, secretaries of region Party committees there had been transferred six times or more in seven years, with five times as the minimum; secretaries of county Party committees had been transferred five to 13 times.<sup>11</sup>

The connection between the CCP and the peasantry thus became very tenuous.

Careful scrutiny of the policies of the Communist Party over the many years of Mao's leadership shows that they were never identical with the interests of the peasantry as a whole, or of any of its strata. As a matter of fact the Party manoeuvred between, but kept aloof from, the contending classes in the countryside—landlords and peasants—and the different strata of the peasantry. A cursory résumé of the history of the Party's agrarian policy brings

<sup>10</sup> Liu Shao-chi, *On the Party*, Report to the Seventh Congress of the CCP, delivered on May 14, 1945, Peking, 1951, p. 17.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 14-16.

inevitable, but the élite need not be the same in every circumstance. The élite of the past—the Mandarinate of the Empire—mainly fulfilled the function of organising the country's large irrigation works. The present State bureaucracy, existing in a world of steel and electricity, embodies the urge of making China an industrial giant.

The lesson emerging from the Chinese peasant revolts is instructive. They foreshadow, embryonically, the Maoist peasant movement; its culmination in giving 'the land to the tiller' (land reform) as well as its negation of this in the expropriation of the peasantry (the so-called 'collectivisation of agriculture').

#### MAO NOT A PEASANT LEADER BUT AN EXPLOITER OF THE PEASANT REVOLT

The history of the Maoist Communist Party since its inception shows quite clearly that it was never a peasant party—that is, a party made up of peasants and representing their interests on the usual pattern—but an élite made up of ex-peasant army professionals and officials. The hundreds of thousands of CCP and PLA cadres lived under conditions which made them anything but typically narrow- and locally-minded individualists. Untrammelled with these typically peasant characteristics they were psychologically prepared to take power over a whole, and large, country. The fact that these cadres had for many years, stretching into decades, not worked on a small individual farm, but had obtained food through the 'supply system'—a centralised food allocation system—weakened or practically eliminated the basic peasant psychological traits which they had brought with them when they joined the Communist movement. The Communist Party was thus not a party made up of peasants, but a party of professional politicians and military activists. As Liu Shao-chi, the theoretician of the Party, second to Mao only, put it:

More than twenty years of civil war and national war have steeled our Party. Several hundreds of thousands of Party members have given up their respective occupations in society for a long time and become engaged in revolutionary military collective life and life-

## MAO THE PEASANTRY: HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

this out clearly. A list of some of the sharp zigzags in this policy follows.

In December 1928 the Government of so-called Soviet China at Chingkangshan, on the Hunan-Kiangsi border, passed an agrarian law which provided for the nationalisation of all land: the Soviet Government became the owner of all land and distributed it among the peasants; private property in land was abolished, and its purchase and sale prohibited. This law alienated the mass of individualistic peasants, and it was therefore changed to expropriation of all landlords' land; rich peasants' land was expropriated except for a plot that could be tilled without hiring labour.<sup>12</sup>

After the destruction of the Soviets in South China, the Long March, the establishment of the Communist regime in Shensi in North-west China and the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War, the agrarian policy turned full circle. On February 10, 1937, the Central Committee issued a statement which said: "... the policy of confiscating the land of the landlords will be discontinued ..."<sup>13</sup> Instead a programme was announced providing for the reduction of rent and interest while guaranteeing landlords' property. Thus a *Decision of the Central Committee on Land Policy in the Anti-Japanese Base Areas*, passed by the Political Bureau on January 28, 1942, stated:

In the areas where rent has not been reduced, rent should, in principle, be reduced by twenty-five per cent, i.e. a reduction of twenty-five per cent from the pre-war rate for rent . . . it should not uniformly be ruled that the landlord is to obtain no more than forty or sixty per cent, but there should be a twenty-five per cent reduction of the former percentage in rent. . . . In guerrilla areas or places near enemy (Japanese) strongholds, rent reduction may be less than twenty-five per cent.<sup>14</sup>

The Party would not identify itself either with landlords' or peasants' interests:

. . . the policy of the Party is only to help the peasants in reducing feudal exploitation but not to liquidate feudal exploitation

<sup>12</sup> *Fundamental Laws of the Chinese Soviet Republics*, London, 1934, pp. 25-7.

<sup>13</sup> Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Works*, London, 1954, Volume I, p. 333.

<sup>14</sup> C. Brandt and associates, *A Documentary History of Chinese Communism*, London 1952, p. 282.

entirely, much less to attack the enlightened gentry who support democratic reforms. Therefore, after rent and interest rates are reduced, the collection of rent and interest are to be assured; and in addition to protecting the civil liberties, political, land and economic rights of the peasants, we must guarantee the landlords their civil liberties, political, land and economic rights . . .

In settling rural disputes, the working members of the Party and government should base themselves on the above basic principles and follow a policy of adjusting the interests of both sides. They should not take a one-sided stand either for the landlord or for the peasant.<sup>15</sup>

Speaking on the results expected from the law reducing rent, Liu Shao-chi, at the time Political Commissar of the New Fourth Army, declared in June 1941:

True, the income of the landlords will be a little decreased for the time being, and possibly their living standards will also be lowered. But this cannot be helped for the moment. Possibly also due to this reduction the anti-Japanese democratic movement will be viewed by them with dissatisfaction. But sooner or later rural production will increase, and the rent then received by the landlords may amount to even more than before the reduction . . .

At the same time we emphasise that we do not approve of rent reduction exceeding 25 per cent of the former rent . . .<sup>16</sup>

The Party's war-time programme for reducing rent and interest payments remained unaltered for about ten months after the war, except for one change of great importance in the North-east: land owned by the Japanese government or its officials or by the puppet government or its officials was confiscated and distributed among the peasants. On May 4, 1946, however, the CC, CCP, issued a directive calling for the purchase of portions of landlords' land, while leaving them a larger share than the average peasant. It warned especially against the encroachment upon the land of rich peasants. A draft law for government compulsory purchase of excess landlords' land in the Shensi-Kansu-Ninghsia Border Region, promulgated on December 21, 1946, set out in detail the

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 278-9.

<sup>16</sup> L. K. Rosinger, *China's Crisis*, New York, 1945, pp. 207-8.

### MAO AND PEASANTRY: HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

All debts had to be paid back with interest at 15-30 per cent per annum. If interest was double or more than double the principal, the debt was to be cancelled. Landlords' and rich peasants' commercial and industrial enterprises were to be protected. In a report to the Third Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee, Mao Tse-tung went so far as to say: '... there should be a change in our policy toward the rich peasants, a change from the policy of requisitioning the surplus land and property of the rich peasants, to one of preserving a rich peasant economy. . . .'<sup>19</sup>

Subsequent developments in the Party's agrarian policy have been described in the present part of this book.

From the short summary of the history of the Party's agrarian policy, it is obvious that the Party shifted from one section of the peasantry to another, now seeking the support of the poor peasants, now that of the rich, and at times even adapting itself to the landlords. No real peasant party, whatever stratum of the peasantry it represented, could change its line so quickly, so radically and so often. The Chinese Communist Party was certainly a movement of peasants, but it was not a peasant movement. It behaved like an élite, now moderate and mild, now baring its teeth and exhibiting its power.

It is almost superfluous to observe that since its rise to power, it has been impossible to identify the Party with the peasantry. Were the Party identified with the peasantry, it could never have instituted its current policies, aimed at the exploitation, oppression and eventual expropriation of this same peasantry.

Marxists considered it axiomatic that the peasantry must today follow the lead of either the working class or the bourgeoisie. As Lenin said:

The city cannot be equated to the village, the village cannot be equated to the city in the historical conditions of the present epoch. The city inevitably leads the village, the village inevitably follows the city. The only question is which of the urban classes will lead the villages.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> NCNA, Peking, June 16, 1950.

<sup>20</sup> Lenin, 'The Year 1919', in *Works*, Russian, Volume XXVI, p. 442, quoted in L. Trotsky, *The Third International After Lenin*, New York, 1936, p. 226.

measures to be taken. The landlord was permitted to keep 50 per cent more land than the average middle peasant or, if he had been active in the war against Japan, 100 per cent more. The rest of his land had to be sold to the government for land bonds redeemable in ten years. Rich peasants' land was not to be touched. Landless and land-poor peasants would have to pay for the land—half the total compensation paid to the landlord—in instalments over ten years.<sup>17</sup> Similar measures were taken by Communist governments in other areas.

Later, under the pressure of civil war, when landlords and rich peasants inclined towards the Kuomintang and the Communist Party found it expedient to make its policies more attractive to the mass of the peasantry, its agrarian policy veered again to the left. In September 1947 an Agrarian Conference convened by the CC, CCP, passed a *Basic Programme of the Chinese Agrarian Law*, which became law on October 10, 1947. Its salient points are as follows:

1. All landlords' land was to be expropriated and divided equally among the poor peasants, the landlords getting the same amount of land; the surplus land of rich peasants was also to be taken over and distributed. All land to be distributed equally.

2. Landlords' animals, agricultural implements, houses, grain and other properties, together with the surplus animals, agricultural implements, houses, etc., of rich peasants, were to be confiscated and distributed equally among poor peasants, the previous owners getting no more than anybody else.

3. All standing debts were cancelled.<sup>18</sup>

The change in the military situation in 1948-9 and the entry of the PLA into areas in which the differentiation of the peasantry was more complex and diversified pushed agrarian policy once again very much to the right. In the period from April 1949 to June 1950, the policy adopted for all the new areas taken over by the PLA—East, Central, South, South-east and North-west China—was basically the same as the war-time one: rent was reduced by 25 per cent and was not to exceed 37.5 per cent of the crop.

<sup>17</sup> K. C. Chao, 'Chinese Land Policies', *Current History*, New York, June 1953.

<sup>18</sup> NCNA, North Shensi, October 13, 1947.

And in every case of class conflict between the two main urban social classes—workers and capitalists—the peasantry has indeed followed one of them, or rather, some strata of the peasantry has followed the one, and some the other. The Russian Revolution highlighted this, as did the 1925-7 revolution in China. But history plays tricks. The mutual paralysis of the contending classes in the towns—the 1927 defeat of the workers who thereafter never rose again to be an independent socio-political force, and the continued impotence of the bourgeoisie, aggravated by the Japanese occupation of the key cities and by the rise of 'bureaucratic capitalism'<sup>1</sup>—turned the city into a political vacuum and scrambled the seemingly inexorable pattern. The peasantry had thus to find another leadership to replace the absent city leadership. It sought something more advanced, less narrow-minded and ignorant than it could produce itself; it found the Maoist élite.

Coming to power on the crest of a peasant revolt, the Maoist élite, like many of its predecessors in China's long history of peasant revolts, is bent upon exploiting the mass of the peasantry. Here the similarity with previous revolts ends. Born into a world of industrial giants and intent on quick industrialisation, the new élite does not limit itself to merely exploiting the peasantry. It is set upon its total expropriation.

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 188-90

## REGIMENTATION OF THE WORKING CLASS

### THE WORKING CLASS PLAYS NO ROLE IN MAO'S RISE TO POWER

The urban working class did not play any role at all in Mao's rise to power. This fact greatly influenced the initial trends in Peking's labour policy.

The kernel of Mao's strategy was to rely on the peasantry as the bearer of the revolution. Thus, as early as February 1927, in his well-known *Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan*, he wrote:

To give credits where they are due, if we allot ten points to the accomplishments of the democratic revolution, then the achievements of the urban dwellers and the military units rate only three points, while the remaining seven points should go to the peasants in their rural revolution.<sup>1</sup>

Seeing that 'urban dwellers' presumably include some sections of the bourgeoisie and that 'military units'—those engaged in the Northern Expedition at the time—also take a share of the three points left over by the peasantry, the share of the proletariat in the revolution is according to Mao, scarcely more than residual.

Mao's strategy contradicted everything considered to be true by Marxists regarding the relations between the working class and the peasantry in a revolution. Lenin, for instance, declared unequivocally:

There can be no doubt that all elements of the Party must strive toward the cities and industrial centres for only the industrial proletariat is capable of a resolute mass fight against absolutism.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Brandt, *op. cit.*, p. 83. This statement is deleted from recent editions of the *Report* and also from Mao's *Selected Works*.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'The Workers Party and the Peasantry', *Works*, Fourth edition, Russian, Volume IV, p. 400.

## REGIMENTATION OF THE WORKING CLASS

have a single healthy Party nucleus among the industrial workers'.<sup>7</sup> It was admitted officially that workers comprised only 10 per cent of the Party in 1928, 3 per cent in 1929, 2.5 per cent in March 1930, 1.6 per cent in September of the same year, and virtually nothing at the end of the year.<sup>8</sup> From then and until Mao's final victory the Party had no industrial workers to speak of.

For a number of years the party was confined to insurgent peasant movements deep in the provinces of Central China where it established a Chinese Soviet Republic; later, after a military defeat in the Central provinces (1934), it moved to Northern Shensi, in the North-West. In both these areas there was practically no industrial working class to speak of. The peasant nature of the Party's social basis could not be better symbolised than in the 'capital', Yenan. This consisted of a cluster of small villages made up of caves dug in the loess cliffs and a population of 1,000 when Mao chose it as his residence and headquarters for the next twelve years. A Comintern organ was not exaggerating when it wrote that 'the Border Region is socially and economically one of the most backward regions of China'.<sup>9</sup> Chu Teh repeated: 'The regions under the direction of the Communists are the most backward economically in the whole country . . .'<sup>10</sup> Not one real town came under the control of the Communists until a couple of years before the establishment of the Chinese People's Republic.

Palpable evidence of the unimportance attached to worker elements in Communist Party strategy during the period of Mao's rise to power is the fact that the Party did not find it necessary to convene a National Congress of Trade Unions for 19 years after the one held in 1929. Further, it did not even seek workers' support, as witness its declaration that it did not intend to maintain any Party organisations in the Kuomintang controlled areas during the crucial years 1937-45.<sup>11</sup> When the Kuomintang Government in December 1937 decreed the death penalty for

<sup>7</sup> H. R. Isaacs, *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution*, London, 1938, p. 333.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 394.

<sup>9</sup> *World News and Views*, April 22, 1939.

<sup>10</sup> S. Gelder, *The Chinese Communists*, London, 1946, p. 167.

<sup>11</sup> See Communist Manifesto published in Chungking on November 23, 1938, NYT, November 24, 1938.

Again he wrote:

The city cannot be equated to the village, the village cannot be equated to the city in the historical conditions of the present epoch. The city inevitably leads the village, the village inevitably follows the city. The only question is *which* of the urban classes will lead the village?<sup>3</sup>

He vehemently rejected any notion that the Marxist Party should itself organise the peasantry:

In our opinion, there should be no Social Democratic Peasant Committees. If they are Social Democratic, that means that they are not purely peasant committees; if they are peasant committees that means that they are not purely proletarian, nor Social Democratic committees.<sup>4</sup>

The same Marxist-Leninist line of argument was followed by the Chinese Communist Party leadership prior to Mao's taking control of the Party. For instance, it declared in August 1927:

The major task of the Party is to win over the majority of the working class, to secure their active support for the vanguard of the proletariat, the Communist Party, and to induce them to believe in the Communist Party and consciously accept its leadership. Full attention should be paid to the labour movement, especially to industrial workers. Only thus can the leadership of the working class over the peasantry be strengthened.<sup>5</sup>

Mao's rise in the Chinese Communist Party coincided with a transformation in its social composition. Towards the end of 1926 at least 66 per cent of the membership were proletarians, another 22 per cent intellectuals and only 5 per cent peasants.<sup>6</sup> By November 1928, the percentage of workers had fallen by more than four-fifths, and an official report admitted that the Party 'did not

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Trotsky, *The Third International After Lenin*, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

<sup>4</sup> V. I. Lenin, 'Attitude of the Social Democrats Toward the Peasantry', *Works*, Russian, Vol. IX, p. 214.

<sup>5</sup> Brandt, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-50.

<sup>6</sup> R. C. North, *Kuomintang and Chinese Communist Elites*, Stanford, 1952, p. 32.



## REGIMENTATION OF THE WORKING CLASS

or County Governments of various levels, or delegates of the 'National Assembly', members of the Legislative and Control Yuans or People's Political Council members, police personnel and heads of 'Pao Chia' organisations . . . are to stay at their posts, obey the orders of the PLA and People's Government.<sup>14</sup>

The working class obliged and remained inert. A report from Nanking on April 22, 1949, two days before the PLA occupied it, described the situation thus:

Nanking's populace is showing no signs of excitement. Curious crowds were seen this morning to gather at the river wall to watch the gun duel on the opposite side of the river.

Business is going on as usual. Some shops are closed, but it is due to lack of business. . . . Movie houses are still showing to packed houses.<sup>15</sup>

A month later a *New York Times* correspondent wrote from Shanghai: 'The Red troops began putting up posters in Chinese instructing the populace to be calm and assuring them they had nothing to fear.'<sup>16</sup> In Canton: 'After their entry the Communists made contact with the police station, and instructed the officers and men to remain at their posts to keep order.'<sup>17</sup>

After occupying the towns Mao followed a consistent policy of regimenting and atomising the working class, and subordinating it to State and Party.

## NO RIGHT TO STRIKE

A few months after they took Shanghai, the Communist leaders found it necessary to have a policy for labour disputes. On August 19, 1949, the Shanghai Military Control Commission of the People's Liberation Army issued a *Provisional Procedure for the Mediating and Settlement of Labour-Capital Disputes in Private Enterprises*.<sup>18</sup> This was later copied, almost word for word, into the new

<sup>14</sup> NCNA, May 3, 1949.

<sup>15</sup> *North China Daily News*, April 23, 1949.

<sup>16</sup> NYT, May 25, 1949.

<sup>17</sup> *South China Morning Post*, October 17, 1949.

<sup>18</sup> NCNA, Shanghai, September 7, 1949.

workers who went on strike or even agitated for a strike while the war was in progress, a Communist Party spokesman told an interviewer that the Party was 'fully satisfied' with the Kuomintang's conduct of the war.<sup>19</sup> Even after the outbreak of civil war between the Communist Party and the Kuomintang, hardly any Communist Party organisations existed in the Kuomintang areas, which included all the industrial centres in the country.

The PLA's conquest of the towns exposed more than anything else the Communist Party's complete divorce from the industrial working class. On May 30, 1925, the Shanghai workers had focussed the attention of the world on themselves through a general strike which paralysed the city. These same workers reached an even more significant level of activity in March 1927, when, in a combined general strike and armed uprising, they seized the city, and then, on Communist Party instructions, handed it over to Chiang Kai-shek's army. No such proletarian uprising greeted the PLA.

In fact, the Communist leaders did their best to prevent any workers' uprisings in the towns on the eve of their being taken. Thus, before the fall of Tientsin and Peking, the commander of the front, General Lin Piao, issued a proclamation saying:

The people are asked to maintain order and continue in their present occupations.

Kuomintang officials or police personnel of provincial, city, county or other level of government institution; district, town, village or *pao chia* personnel . . . are enjoined to remain at their posts . . .<sup>19</sup>

At the time of the crossing of the Yangtze River, before the great cities of Central and South China (Shanghai, Hankow, Canton) fell to them, Mao and Chu Teh again issued a special proclamation stating among other things:

It is hoped that workers and employees in all trades will continue to work and that business will operate as usual.

. . . officials of the Kuomintang Central, Provincial, Municipal

<sup>19</sup> Isaacs, *op. cit.*, p. 456.

<sup>20</sup> NCNA, January 11, 1949.

## REGIMENTATION OF THE WORKING CLASS

Commune in December 1927 included in its programme 'the right to organise and strike'.<sup>13</sup> Four years later, in 1931, the Labour Code of the Chinese Soviet Republic again declared: 'The Soviets guarantee freedom of action to the trade unions. The unions shall have the right to declare strikes and to lead them . . .' (Article 59).<sup>14</sup>

While the 1950 *Regulations* can find no support in the traditions of the labour movement or of the Chinese Communist Party, they can find an exact replica in the labour policy of the Kuomintang. The Kuomintang Government in June 1928, decreed an *Act Concerning the Settlement of Labour Disputes* which prohibited strikes and imposed compulsory arbitration.<sup>15</sup> In October 1942, the Kuomintang Government passed the *Regulations Governing Labour Policy in Time of Emergency*, which again prohibited strikes.<sup>16</sup> The Labour Programme adopted on May 17, 1945, stated: 'Labour unions . . . shall use arbitration and mediation to settle disputes between labour and capital.'<sup>17</sup>

## LABOUR DISCIPLINE CODE

Prohibition of strikes and the imposition of compulsory arbitration are insufficient by themselves to guarantee that the workers, collectively or individually, will be disciplined. The worker can resort to other means of defence: absenteeism, coming late to work, the go-slow, deliberately producing shoddy goods, damaging equipment, and so on. To close these loopholes, the Peking Government repeatedly issued regulations, admonishing the workers to abide by labour discipline. The *Outline of Labour Regulations for State-Operated Enterprises*, issued on May 6, 1954, states:

Late arrival or early departure without good reason, or playing around or sitting idle during working hours shall be subject to proper punishment or dismissal, as the case may require (Article 17).  
If due to non-observance of working procedures or irresponsibility,

<sup>13</sup> Isaacs, *op. cit.*, p. 365.

<sup>14</sup> *Fundamental Laws of the Chinese Soviet Republic*, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-3.

<sup>15</sup> A. B. Wagner, *Labour Legislation in China*, Peking, 1938, pp. 227-9.

<sup>16</sup> N. Wales, *The Chinese Labor Movement*, New York, 1945, p. 108.

<sup>17</sup> *China Handbook, 1937-1945*, New York, 1947, p. 51.

*Regulations Governing the Procedures for the Settlement of Labour Disputes* (ratified by the GAC on November 16, 1950), applicable to the whole country.

The leitmotif of the *Regulations* is 'the principle of "equal regard for public and private interests, mutual benefits for both labour and capital, development of production, the thriving of the economy".' (Article 1.) The following three steps, and these only, are to be taken in labour disputes:

The first step in the procedure for settling labour disputes shall be consultation between the two parties; the second step shall be mediation by the Labour Bureau [appointed by the Government], and the third step shall be arbitration by the arbitration committee established by the Labour Bureau. (Article 6).

Dotting i's and crossing t's the *Regulations* states:

After a dispute has broken out, both parties, during the period of consultation, mediation or arbitration, shall maintain the status quo in production. The management should not resort to a lock-out, suspend payment of wages, cease providing meals or take any other measures which lower the workers' living conditions. Labour shall also maintain production and observe labour discipline. After arbitration by the Labour Bureau, even if one party disagrees and calls for settlement by the court, the two parties shall, nevertheless, abide by the arbitration award pending the verdict of the court.

To crown all, the decision of the People's Court is final and binding.<sup>18</sup>

This imposition of compulsory arbitration in place of freedom to strike completely contradicts the traditions of the Communist Party itself during the first decade or so of its existence, not to speak of the labour movement in other countries. On June 10, 1922, the Party issued *The First Manifesto of the CCP on the Current Situation* which included the demand: 'Freedom to strike.'<sup>19</sup> The *Manifesto of the Second National Congress of the CCP* (July 1922) also claimed 'the unlimited right to . . . strike'.<sup>21</sup> Similarly the Canton

<sup>18</sup> NCCNA, Peking, November 25, 1950.

<sup>19</sup> Brandt, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

## REGIMENTATION OF THE WORKING CLASS

If the applicant has had no previous experience, he should produce a certificate issued by a government organ of the *chu* where he resides, or identity papers issued by his school. No employment can be given without any of the above papers (Article 1).<sup>28</sup>

Obviously, a worker cannot get a new job under these conditions unless he carries a satisfactory certificate from his old employer. The Labour Book helps the Ministry of Labour to keep firm control over the employment and movement of workers.

And firm this control certainly is. The need for a permit to leave a place of work was dramatically highlighted in a case of arson at the Matien Coal Mine in Hunan in July 1954, in which 44 workers were killed. The *China Youth Journal* gave the following explanation for the crime of Liang Chung-shu, a miner:

In July this year, he heard that the wages were higher at a certain coal mine in Kwangtung and wanted to go over there. In order to realise his mean and selfish end, he resorted to the venomous measure of arson, thinking that once the mine was destroyed, the workers would have no work to do and no dormitories to stay in and he would be free to apply for a transfer.<sup>29</sup>

## THE JUDICIARY INTERVENES

Law, to be effective, must be supported by the power to execute it. The Labour Bureaus, which have semi-judicial functions, and the People's Courts, play a role in this connection. Two other institutions have been created specifically to deal with breaches of labour discipline—industrial tribunals and workers' courts. The Second All-China Judiciary Conference convened in Peking in April 1953 resolved 'to carry out the gradual and selective establishment of special tribunals in industrial and mining districts and along railway lines and waterways',<sup>30</sup> for the preservation of labour discipline. Steps were soon taken to put this resolution into effect: 'The regional people's courts under the Supreme People's Court have established or are setting up 22 special tribunals in

<sup>28</sup> JMJP, July 14, 1954; SCMP, 859.

<sup>29</sup> CKGNP, December 2, 1954; SCMP, 947.

<sup>30</sup> NCA, Peking, May 12, 1953; SCMP, 573.

rejects are turned out or the tools and equipment are damaged, the worker or staff member shall be held responsible for part or whole payment of compensation for the material loss as conditions may require, whether he is punished or not. The amount of compensation shall be decided by the management and deducted from his wages until it is completely paid up, but the maximum amount to be deducted each time must not exceed 30 per cent of his actual monthly wages. If he corrects his error immediately and this is proved by concrete facts, the amount of compensation may be reduced, as the case may be (Article 21).

Workers and staff members breaching labour discipline shall be subject to the following disciplinary action by the management, as conditions may warrant:

- (1) To be served warning.
- (2) To be given demerit.
- (3) To be given a major demerit.
- (4) To be transferred to work with lower pay, or to be demoted (either in grade or in post) (Article 15).<sup>31</sup>

To ensure that management does not cover up breaches of labour discipline, the *Outline* stipulates:

Except for cases of a complicated nature which the management cannot dispose of in time with good reason, penalty shall be meted out to the responsible administrative personnel who fail to carry out the sanctions within the time limit (Article 18).

## THE LABOUR BOOK

To strengthen labour discipline, a Labour Book was introduced by the Ministry of Labour. This has to be shown to the director of an enterprise whenever a worker takes on a job. The *Outline of Labour Regulations for State-Operated Enterprises*, mentioned above, states:

Workers and staff members applying for employment should submit to the management of an enterprise papers certifying their past record issued by the office where they previously worked, or a certificate issued by the labour office of the local people's government.

<sup>31</sup> JMJP, July 14, 1954; SCMP, 859.

## REGIMENTATION OF THE WORKING CLASS

factory and mine districts and along railway lines.<sup>31</sup> These courts appear to be very busy. One report states that the Tientsin Railway Special Court dealt with 61 cases involving breach of labour discipline in two months.<sup>32</sup>

Workers' courts in factories are 'elected' from among the workers and employees of the plant.

The candidates should be named by the broad workers and staff members. . . . The general practice is to have the candidates named jointly by the Party organ, the management, the trade union and the Youth League. After consideration and discussion by the workers and staff members, election can be held by ballot or show of hands at a meeting of workers and staff members or a workers' and staff members' representative meeting.<sup>33</sup>

The courts are 'set-up . . . under the active assistance and guidance of the local people's court.'<sup>34</sup>

It is charged with the responsibility of settling labour and production discipline cases found among the workers and staff members (after such cases have been handed over or agreed upon by the management or leadership), such as breach of labour discipline, delinquency of duty, minor cases of theft, and disputes among the workers and staff members. The measures of education and sanction to be given by the court are generally: criticism before the public, admission of error and apology, warning, suggestion to the management of the production enterprise for demerit, reduction of salary, demotion, suspension or dismissal.<sup>35</sup>

## WORKERS VIOLATE LABOUR DISCIPLINE

Despite the law, judiciary and police, and the trade unions (which also play an important role in disciplining the workers),<sup>36</sup> workers' performance is disappointing to Peking. Again and again

<sup>31</sup> NCNA, Peking, September 3, 1953; SCMP, 648.

<sup>32</sup> NCNA, Tientsin, February 15, 1954.

<sup>33</sup> Explaining the Workers' Court in Production Enterprises', JMJ, February 18, 1953; SCMP, 754.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> See p. 233-50.

widespread breaches of all laws and regulations by 'anarchist' workers are reported. The *People's Daily* of July 8, 1953, listed some of these:

The state of slackened labour discipline is more common now than before, as manifest in the following aspects:

*First*, the rate of absenteeism, sick leave and leave of absence increased while the attendance rate decreased. Statistics of Tientsin's 99 state-operated and local state-operated units revealed that in January and February this year, a total of 196,149 working days, equal to 4,251 workers absent from work for two months, were lost due to absenteeism on the part of workers. In some factories, the rate of absence was as high as 30 per cent . . .

*Second*, the workers arrived late. . . . At the end of the day, they did not wait until the working hours were finished before they went to wash their hands and waited to leave. During the working hours, they fooled around and kept themselves idle or worked at a low speed.

*Third*, the workers did not observe the factory regulations, the working rules, the safety measures and violated the working procedures . . .

*Fourth*, the workers took little care of their tools and machines and wasted much raw material . . .

*Fifth*, a large number of defective pieces and rejects were produced, due to no attention being paid to the quality of products. Preoccupied with the desire to fulfil the target, some workers paid little attention to the quality of their products and sought to deceive the inspectors by masquerading the defective pieces and rejects as good pieces.<sup>37</sup>

Details to substantiate this over-all picture can be supplied from many localities. Indeed there is such a wealth of examples that it would be well to limit the evidence to reports covering the space of a couple of months. The *Daily Worker* of June 5, 1953, dealt with absenteeism in Shanghai factories:

The attendance rate of workers of the No. 15 Mill of the state-operated Shanghai Cotton Mills is very low. In April, of the 643 workers of the fine yarn workshop, 117 asked for leave of absence.

<sup>37</sup> JMJ, July 8, 1953; SCMP, 631.

### REGIMENTATION OF THE WORKING CLASS

Many of the workers on leave of absence did so to play around . . . According to statistics, about 20 per cent of the sick leave was taken on false pretences.<sup>38</sup>

NCNA gives another report:

The relaxation of labour discipline finds its expression mainly in asking for sick leave while the workers are not sick, asking for leave of absence under false pretences, and asking for absence from duty for no valid reasons . . . A small part of the workers in some of the factories even resorted to all sorts of irregular means to get a sick-leave slip from the doctor. They pretended to be afflicted with headache, abdominal pain and general malaise, which are difficult to diagnose, or even take some hot pepper and hot water before they go to the clinic for their temperature to be taken.<sup>39</sup>

A similar report came from Peking. A *Daily Worker* article entitled 'Slack Labour Discipline in Peking's Factories and Mines', said:

Of the 18 local state-operated and municipal enterprises of the city, only 10 maintained a 90-per cent attendance record of workers during the past three months. The 5th Flour Mill of Peking in the first quarter of the year showed an average attendance record of only 73.5 per cent. The local state-operated enterprises of the city showed a total leave of absence of 355,816 working hours or 44,477 working days in the first quarter of the year. Of this 28.9 per cent represents leave of absence for personal affairs or for no reason at all. The situation is also serious in state-operated factories and mines where the attendance rate of workers is low. For instance, the workers' attendance rate for April at Ch'eng Tzu Mine in the western suburb of Peking was 89 per cent, while the lowest rate for a certain month reached only 76 per cent. In the Railway Workshop at Changhsintien, a total of 10,514 working days were lost through leave of absence by workers in the first quarter of the year. For the working days lost, repair of 12 locomotives might have been completed.<sup>40</sup>

The same sad story was repeated in a NCNA communiqué describing conditions in Chungking factories:

<sup>38</sup> KJJP, June 5, 1953; SCMP, 605.  
<sup>39</sup> NCNA, Shanghai, July 16, 1953; SCMP, 631.  
<sup>40</sup> KJJP, June 14, 1953; SCMP, 606.

In general, violations include reporting for work late and leaving early, asking for leave of absence without sufficient justification, or even being absent without obtaining leave. For instance, statistics for No. 610 Factory for the month of April show that workers who applied for incidental or sick leave, or were absent without leave, numbered 1,063 (leave of absence for child-birth, weddings and funerals excluded). In all, 5,084 workdays were lost. Many of those who obtained leave did not need it.

Some workers intimidated doctors into signing medical certificates for sick leave although they were not sick, and spent the time away from work seeking pleasure. Others have habitually been late for work, or have often taken time off to play during working hours.<sup>41</sup>

In Tientsin the situation was no better.

The state of slackness of labour discipline is rather serious in some of the state-operated factories in Tientsin. . . . According to statistics of 99 state-operated and local state-operated units in Tientsin, a total number of 196,000 working days, equal to 4,200 workers' absence from duty for two months, was lost during January and February alone. The situation is comparatively more serious in the Second Factory of the Tientsin State-operated Cotton Mill where during the first quarter of the year 30,540 working days, equal to 985 workers leaving production for the whole month of March, were lost.<sup>42</sup>

A few months later, a *People's Daily* editorial of December 13, 1953, wrote the following:

According to the statistics of the 92 factories of the First Ministry of Machine Building Industry of the CPG for the first half of the year, the workers' idleness or absence from work amounted to a total of over 1,300,000 workdays, equal to 8,800 persons laying off for 6 months.<sup>43</sup>

As an example of the triumph of 'Communist education' the *Daily Worker* made the following report: 'In the Shansi Coal Mine

<sup>41</sup> NCNA, Chungking, June 26, 1953; SCMP, 631.  
<sup>42</sup> KJJP, June 3, 1953; SCMP, 605.  
<sup>43</sup> JMJP, December 13, 1953; SCMP, 709.

## REGIMENTATION OF THE WORKING CLASS

To improve labour conditions by checking up the ventilation facilities....

To reduce the rate of thread-breaking so as to reduce the fatigue of workers, as this has a direct bearing on the attendance rate of workers....

To reduce the number of meetings as much as possible. Too many meetings for too long a duration have taxed the workers' energy too much and badly affected their health. Spare time should be scientifically distributed and the duration of meetings shortened and strictly restricted to assure the workers their rest.

... Poor dormitory conditions depriving the workers of enough rest has been one of the causes for sickness.<sup>41</sup>

Another important fact emerges from the descriptions of labour discipline: in many cases even the cadres prove unequal to the task of egging on the workers. There are Party members who 'choose to wink at acts of violation' of labour discipline, justifying their action by the thought that they are 'protecting the interests of the working class'.<sup>42</sup> The *People's Daily* complained:

The leadership cadres in some of our departments and enterprises have cherished an erroneous conception of the problem of labour discipline, considering that strict implementation of discipline is a 'capitalist way of management', a 'warlord's style of work', or 'commandism'. Therefore they consciously or unconsciously adopt a compromising attitude towards acts of breach of labour discipline, nor do they take any drastic action against them.<sup>43</sup>

The same paper repeats the theme some weeks later:

Some Party committees and branches... take little heed of the state of labour discipline of their units... They have never... urged the management to deal drastically with acts of breach of labour discipline.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>41</sup> KJJP, June 4, 1953; SCMP, 605.  
<sup>42</sup> KJJP, June 14, 1953; SCMP, 606.  
<sup>43</sup> JMJF, October 22, 1954; SCMP, 922.  
<sup>44</sup> JMJF, November 16, 1954; SCMP, 939.

the attendance rate for May was 80 per cent, but following education on labour discipline it went up to 85 per cent.<sup>44</sup>

Another accusation levelled at workers is that they conduct 'go-slow strikes'. The *People's Daily* repeatedly urges workers to 'combat go-slow strikes and negligence of duties in State organs and production enterprises',<sup>45</sup> to struggle against workers who 'stage go-slow strikes',<sup>46</sup> against 'counter-revolutionaries' who 'organise go-slow strikes',<sup>47</sup> it complains of 'a large number of cases involving counter-revolutionary sabotage, corruption and theft, delinquency of duty and go-slow strikes causing tremendous losses to State property'.<sup>48</sup> In all probability, 'go-slow strikes' in most instances cover cases of workers who simply cannot keep pace with 'model workers', the Chinese Stakhanovites. But possibly, in some cases at least, there is a little fire behind the smoke. Go-slow strikes are certainly in the tradition of the Chinese labour movement, and during the 'thirties were its most prevalent form of struggle.<sup>49</sup>

Accusations for violating labour discipline are numberless. The violators are frequently called 'anarchists', the causes for 'anarchism' being given as 'bourgeois predilection for indolence, pleasure, selfishness, bourgeois individualism and liberal laxity'.<sup>50</sup> But sometimes the attack unwittingly reveals the major real causes for slackness—poor health, the difficulty of the work, bad housing, too many meetings which tire the workers, and so on. These causes were brought out by the National Committee of the All-China Textile Workers' Trade Union when proposing measures to combat absenteeism:

To strengthen health work in summer, as sickness has been the biggest reason for absence. Special attention should be given to the hygiene of the masses, especially their problem of food, so as to minimise gastro-intestinal diseases.

<sup>44</sup> KJJP, August 5, 1953; SCMP, 637.  
<sup>45</sup> JMJF, March 30, 1954.  
<sup>46</sup> JMJF, June 6, 1954.  
<sup>47</sup> JMJF, August 20, 1954.  
<sup>48</sup> NCNA, Peking, September 8, 1954.  
<sup>49</sup> See W. E. Gourlay, 'Yellow' Unionism in Shanghai: A Study of Kuomintang Technique in Labour Control, 1927-1937', *Papers on China*, Volume 7, February 1953.  
<sup>50</sup> JMJF, July 8, 1953; SCMP, 608.

# The Stalinist State in China

## The Social Meaning of Mao Tse-tung's Victory

We are especially pleased at the opportunity to publish this study by M. Y. Wang of the situation in China today. It appeared only a few months ago, in the original Chinese, in a brochure published illegally in Hong Kong. The brochure is devoted primarily to a Marxian analysis of the evolution of modern Russia and the social significance of the Stalinist state. The author, who is one of the ablest Marxists in China today, draws conclusions as to the nature of Stalinism and its state which are substantially identical with those that have been developed and defended in THE NEW INTERNATIONAL for years, and his agreement with us in the theory of "bureaucratic collectivism" is gratifying. The final chapter of the brochure, which we are publishing here, is devoted to the highly important and by no means simple problem of the social significance of the Stalinist victory and the Stalinist state in China. It will impress the readers, as it did the editors, with its penetration which discloses the motor forces of Stalinism in China, and thereby substantiates and enriches the theory of Stalinism which we have ourselves sought to unfold. The author's inclination to place the bureaucratic collectivist state within the category, as it were, of state capitalism, we regard as a scientific inprecision and therefore erroneous. Within the context of the analysis he

makes, however, the proportions and significance of the error seem to us trivial. The study is recommended to the attention of the reader with our warmest support, which is prompted in no small measure by our satisfaction in knowing that Marxian thought is far from extinguished in a country where the Marxists have endured such cruel difficulties and persecutions. We wish also to thank Comrade Leon del Monte for undertaking and executing so well the difficult job of translation.—Ed.

1. Now that the CCP's military forces have conquered the entire mainland, the People's Republic in official existence for five months, and the New Democracy in effect in some of China's principal cities for approximately one year, we possess sufficient material and facts to judge the nature of the CCP and its state machine and to test the accuracy of our past views concerning them.

2. In judging and estimating the nature of a movement, a political party, or a state, for the proletarian revolutionist there is one unchanging standard: What is its relation to the working class, that is, to the only revolutionary class in the modern world? For us there can be no more decisive standard than that, nor can

there be any other point of departure.

3. What is the relation of the CCP, the Liberation Army led by it, and the People's Republic which it has established, to the Chinese working class? What attitude does it take toward that working class? Notwithstanding the fact that the CCP calls itself a working-class party, notwithstanding the fact that the CCP proclaims this new state to be a "people's" state led by the workers, nevertheless a variety of facts demonstrates that the political and economic position of the workers has not only failed to improve, but in certain respects has even deteriorated. The working class is the victim of this "War of Liberation." "The liberation of the working class is the function of the working class itself." Consequently, "liberators" drawn from another class cannot confer genuine liberation upon it. And this has in fact been the case. Politically speaking, the position of the working class has not changed at all. The military governments established by the conquerors are composed entirely of a new nobility, and have no connection with the working class. Not only could workers' soviets not be formed in practice, they were not permitted to exist even as a concept. All that the workers got from their "liberators" was the designation—on paper—of "leaders" of the new society. A new government which proclaims that the working class occupies a position of leadership within it has not given the working class an ounce of such latitude as would enable it to advance to political power.

In the early period of the "liberation," because of the long-standing prestige of the Communist Party and because of the revolutionary illusions

entertained toward it by the workers, the working class got out of hand in some of the big cities and went so far as to demand an improvement in living conditions, even confiscation of factories (as, for example, the Lien-ch'ang iron works in Tientsin), the liquidation of certain capitalists, and so forth. But this period came to an end very quickly. In Tientsin from February to April and in Shanghai during June and July there was extensive activity on the part of the workers, but after the suppression in April of the Tientsin movement by Liu Shao-ch'i and the promulgation in Shanghai on August 19 of Military Government regulations for the adjustment of labor-management disputes, the working class was robbed completely of its right to fight and of its fundamental right to strike. In other words, it was made the victim of exploitation at the hands of private entrepreneurs. This new slave status of the working class was finally fixed in September by governmental fiat, and the workers have been unable to win an improvement in living conditions by striking. In order to disguise this act of barbarism, the new rulers have given the working class the right of "factory control." But this right, as a glance at the *Regulations for the Conduct of Factory Committees* will indicate, is a patently worthless piece of trickery. For example:

7. The Factory Committee shall be presided over by the Head of the Factory (or the Manager) . . .

8. If a decision passed by a majority of the Factory Committee shall be judged by the Head of the Factory (or the Manager) to be in conflict with the said Factory's best interests, or when the said decision shall be in conflict with the instructions of higher authority, the Manager or Head of the Factory is empowered to prohibit its implementation.

In other words, everything depends

on the decision of the factory head or the manager, who is not elected by the workers but is appointed by the "people's" government, which has no connection with the working class. Basically, what is the significance of this sort of "workers' control"? Let us have our answer straight from the mouth of one of the "national capitalists," Sung Fei-ch'ing:

In my opinion, it is not such a bad idea to let the workers participate in factory management. While on the face of it the workers would appear to be detracting somewhat from the rights of the factory head, in reality the purpose of the participation of workers' representatives in the administration of personnel, materiel, profits, finances, etc., is merely to assure the implementation of all decisions passed by the Factory Committee. Since the workers participate in the formation of these decisions, they cannot later oppose them. Thus much friction is eliminated, and in any case the final right of decision remains in the hands of the manager.

These few words constitute a frank and honest description of the real nature of this "workers' control of production." It merely exalts the workers "on the face of it," while retaining control of the factory "in reality!" This is the Chinese Communist regime's general attitude toward the working class, one of paying it lip-service in theory while oppressing it in practice. And besides this, the CCP has yet another poisonous weapon to use against the working class, the system of "heroes of labor," which divides the workers on the one hand while oppressing them more cruelly on the other. Therefore we may affirm that politically the Chinese Communist regime has not improved the position of the working class, while economically it has lowered its standard of living. The Chinese Communist regime, while characterizing itself the "representative of the working class" and making use of the words

"people" and "nation," has in reality, like the Kuomintang, in effect enslaved the Chinese working class. This view must constitute the point of departure for our interpretation of the nature of the CCP and its government.

4. ANY POLITICAL PARTY OR STATE apparatus which enslaves the working class is, in this day and age, from a proletarian, socialist, revolutionary point of view, fundamentally and completely reactionary. Therefore the CCP and the state apparatus which it has set up are also reactionary. Yet at the same time we must recognize the following facts: They have overthrown the Kuomintang government, which represented foreign imperialism and the native bourgeoisie and landlord class; they are wiping out the anachronistic agrarian relations in China's farming villages; they have dealt a mighty blow to the foreign imperialist powers led by the United States. All of these actions, from the point of view of Chinese nationalism and democracy, have an undeniably progressive character.

5. The difficulty is this: How and why can a fundamentally reactionary political party and government perform objectively progressive acts? At bottom, what class does such a political party represent? To answer these questions we must first make a brief study of the development of world capitalism over the last twenty-some years, of the processes of political and economic change within China itself, and of the history of the first proletarian state in the history of mankind. Within this space, naturally, we can point out only with the utmost simplicity and brevity the principal peculiarities in the history of these developments, since our immediate purpose is merely to shed light on the



international background and historical origins of the CCP's victory and the emergence of this new state, and thence to draw a conclusion as to its fundamental nature.

6. Since the international economic crisis of 1929-33, and particularly since the end of the Second World War, world capitalism, in its imperialist stage, in order, on the one hand, to deal with the proletarian revolution within each country (a task in which it has succeeded) and, on the other, because of ever more intense international competition, has acquired certain new characteristics in its internal structure, characteristics which Lenin could not adequately foresee at the time of his analysis of imperialism. The most important among them is the process by which monopoly capitalism becomes more closely bound up with the state, some enterprises are taken over by the state, and capitalism becomes statified. Hitler's Nazism and Roosevelt's New Deal, carried out at approximately the same time in Germany and the United States, represented fundamentally the same tendency towards statification on the part of capitalism. This movement for a time resolved the internal crisis of capitalism, but intensified the international crisis and culminated in the Second World War. As soon as the war broke out, this tendency was greatly accelerated, because the production of the implements of war reached an unprecedented height. It exceeded the manufacture of the machinery of production and of consumers' goods and wrought a change in the most important sectors of the national productive plant. This one sector is of exceptionally large proportions and of an exceptionally exacting nature and makes it difficult for other cap-

ital enterprises to function with complete freedom; hence, the control of it must be directly in the hands of the State, which causes an unprecedented growth in the statification of enterprise. Since the war, this process, far from being retarded, has been intensified in scope.

Beginning with the war itself—except for the Soviet Union, which has a planned economy, and the United States, which gained economically from the war—all of the capitalist empires, victors as well as vanquished, have found themselves in a position from which they cannot extricate themselves. The economy has completely collapsed, the petty bourgeoisie and the workers are exceptionally dissatisfied, the revolutionary crisis is very tense, and at the same time, on the international scene, the world powers, America and Russia, are moving closer and closer to a clash—all of which forces these capitalist countries, for the sake of their continued existence, to concentrate the economic machinery in the hands of the State, to plan for internal stabilization, and, to whatever degree possible, to ward off external attacks. As a result, such countries with traditionally "free" economies as England and France have both carried out "nationalizations" on a very large scale. The United States would seem to be the exception to the rule whereby, since the end of the war, the system of state interference in the individual economy has become more or less solidified. The principal reason, naturally, is that the power of American private monopoly capital is very great, and at the same time the United States is experiencing a period of abnormal prosperity on the back of a bankrupt world, whence these "free entrepreneurs" have a high power of resistance to the in-

ursions of state capitalism. But if we examine more closely, we see that the production of the implements of war, with the atom bomb heading the list, is being more and more concentrated in the hands of the state, while at the same time Truman's so-called "Fair Deal," under the impetus of a future economic panic, could most assuredly take long strides in the direction of state capitalism. (If at such a time a socialist revolution should take place and be successful, then of course the whole picture changes.)

7. A phenomenon accompanying the statification of capitalism and pointed out by Lenin in his study of imperialism, namely, the parasitism and corruption of the bourgeoisie, is also further intensified yet another degree. Broadly speaking, the entire bourgeoisie becomes separated from the means of production and becomes a class of "profit-consumers." The State becomes the agent that reaps the profits for the owners, and the capitalists simply turn into a decayed leisure class.

8. THE DECAY AND STAGNATION of capitalism causes a further change in the polarization of classes within capitalist society. On the one hand, capital concentration and the capitalist class shrink in quantity and size; on the other, the ranks of the proletariat cannot continue to expand, but in some countries the ratio of this class to the total population decreases. The bankrupt, impotent petty bourgeoisie becomes ever larger. At the same time, the so-called "new middle class" formed under conditions of state capitalism, that is, specialists, technicians, bureaucrats, and intellectuals of every type and description—these and other elements of the impoverished petty bourgeoisie at certain times form the base for the Fascist move-

ment, and at others the cadres of Stalinism.

9. These three phenomena, viz., (a) the tendency of world capitalism toward statification, (b) the thoroughgoing corruption and decay of the individual capitalist, and (c) the numerical increase of the petty bourgeoisie and its rise in importance as a social and political force, may serve to explain the principal events that have taken place throughout the world during the last twenty years, particularly since the end of the war, and can explain very adequately the events that have transpired in China.

10. The semi-colonial, backward Chinese bourgeoisie, under the pressure of the enmity of the workers and peasants from within and the direct blows of Japanese imperialism from without, fell in wholeheartedly with the world current of the nationalization of capital. But precisely because the weak base of Chinese industrial capitalism and China's political and social backwardness caused her "nationalized" capitalism to assume a particularly decadent aspect and the capitalists who controlled these "nationalized" enterprises to exhibit a particularly shameless rapacity, the result has been in the last six or seven years a so-called bureaucratic capitalism and unprecedentedly graft-ridden political setup, the stench of which rises to the heavens. This sort of rule not only enraged the Chinese workers and peasants, but also angered broad layers of the urban petty bourgeoisie and even the medium bourgeoisie, the so-called national capitalists.

11. The Chinese Stalinists, taking advantage of this state of affairs, basing themselves on the overwhelming numerical strength of the impoverished and embittered peasantry, and proposing a program of reformed state capitalism (that is, the New Democ-

racy), rallied the urban petty bourgeoisie and medium bourgeoisie, and gathered to their banner even a part of the working class. Through military might they easily transformed the rotten rule of the Chinese-style "national capitalists" and took over (but by no means abolished) the state machinery and the entire economy under its control.

12. The above constitutes our explanation, on the basis of the development of world capitalism and its peculiarities, of the reasons for the collapse of Kuomintang rule and the rise of Chinese Stalinist rule. Of course, this explanation can account for only one half of the story. It still leaves unanswered questions such as the following: Why did the CCP rely on the peasants rather than the workers? Why did the "communists" at the head of China's impoverished peasantry put forth a program of reformed state capitalism rather than socialist revolution? Why are they carrying out a reform from the top down rather than a revolution from the bottom up? Why did they merely "take over" undisturbed the bureaucratic state apparatus rather than abolish it? Why, although they have transformed the rule of the landlords and the bureaucratic capitalists, have they adopted a friendly attitude toward the bourgeoisie in general while carrying out repressive measures against the proletariat? Why do they proclaim themselves to be a working-class party and China to be a "people's republic led by the workers" while giving the workers not the least opportunity to participate in the government or even to organize soviets?

To answer these questions, we can point out the following facts about the internal situation in the country:

The Chinese proletariat since 1927, when it suffered a staggering defeat thanks to its adherence to Stalinist policies, has not ascended the political stage. Although a year or two before the struggle with Japan and within the first year after Japan's surrender the labor movement revived for a time, nevertheless, thanks to the weakness of the proletarian parties, the Kuomintang's oppression and defeat, and the degeneration of Chinese industry in the war, and under the influence of the decay and stagnation of world capitalism, the ranks of the working class were scattered and weakened, and these movements could never acquire sufficient political and revolutionary character. The fact that the Chinese proletariat for over twenty years was unable to interfere in China's political processes to a significant extent determined the peasant aspect, the capitalist nature, and the bureaucratic-collectivist direction of Chinese Stalinism. Of course—and this is far more important—we must seek the answer to this question in the nature of the Soviet Union and the CPUSSR and the influence they exerted on the CCP.

13. THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION, since the late Twenties, after the elimination of the entire Old Bolshevik leadership, quickly degenerated into a bureaucratic clique exploiting the proletariat. Of course, as far as membership, organization, and ideology were concerned, it ceased to be the vanguard of the proletariat or even a part of the proletariat. As for membership, except for a handful of Stakhanovites, workers simply could not join the party; as for organization democratic centralism gave way to bureaucratic absolutism, and lower-ranking party

members (to say nothing of non-party workers) had absolutely no right to criticize, charge, or recall the leaders or their policies; as for ideology, internationalism gave way to narrow Great-Russian nationalism, world revolution gave way to national construction based on the Soviet Union, the class struggle was transformed into "national cooperation" (or a bureaucratic operation), equalitarianism was transformed into the most naked system of privilege and discrimination, collective leadership was transformed into the most arbitrary personal dictatorship. Along with the complete degeneration of the Bolshevik party, and inextricably bound up with it, was the complete change in the character of the Soviet state. This change expressed itself primarily in the following ways: (a) The soviets on which the working class had relied to control the state remained in name but disappeared in fact, and the workers were not only unable any longer to "recall at will those of their own elected representatives who did not suit them," but even to elect their own representatives. (b) The officials of the state apparatus, the officers of the regular army, the responsible persons and specialists, formed a relatively stable ruling class, became estranged from the working class, then oppressed the working class cruelly. (c) The working masses in general were cheated not only of their right to participate in government but also of any right to fight for the improvement of their own living conditions. (d) Therefore the Soviet Union now stands in the following class relationship politically and economically: On the one hand the bureaucracy collectively holds all political and economic power in the state, and on the other the toiling masses are absolutely with-

out rights. This sort of state is naturally not a workers' state, nor even a degenerate workers' state, because the working class is politically ruled over and economically exploited; and yet it is not a capitalist state, since there is no capitalist class in it which privately owns the means of production. In that state all the means and materials of production are concentrated in the hands of a bureaucracy comprising the party, the governmental machinery, and the army, which collectively owns all the wealth.

Therefore we may say that the Soviet Union of today is a country in which the bureaucracy collectively owns the means of production. The reason this sort of state was able to come into being is that, in the first place, the world socialist revolution was late in arriving and its energies dissipated, thus forcing a backward and isolated workers' state to degenerate completely; in the second place, that the decay of world capitalism itself and the process which is pushing it at top speed in the direction of state capitalism made it impossible for the degenerated workers' state to revert to orthodox capitalism.

14. On the face of it, bureaucratic collectivism, that is, Stalinism, would appear to be a completely new thing. It is neither socialism nor capitalism. But upon closer examination it is not difficult to perceive that it belongs under a subheading of capitalism. One difference between it and traditional capitalism is collective ownership of the means of production as opposed to private ownership. The ownership of the means of production has not been socialized, but it has been collectivized (in the hands of the ruling class). And as for the relationship of owners to producers, exploitation continues to exist, and is in fact intensi-

fed. Bureaucratic collectivism has two great advantages over private capitalism and even over state capitalism (under the latter also there is large-scale private ownership): (a) it is possible to regulate capital in a more systematic fashion; (b) it is possible to exploit workers more efficiently. These two advantages are precisely what is needed to overcome the present crisis of capitalism. Seen from this point of view, Stalinism is a special kind of reformism, it is the reformism of the age in which capitalism has developed into imperialism. On the one hand it prevents the emergence and success of a genuine socialist revolution, and on the other, by means of collective exploitation, it continues the rule of capital over labor. Bureaucratic collectivism or Stalinism is essentially the transitional form which obtains during the delayed and difficult birth of socialism from the womb of capitalism. It cannot create a new historical era, but it can maintain itself for a time, and in several countries at once. In southeast Europe several such states have already been created, while the New China is being recast in the same mold.

15. To create a bureaucratic-collectivist state, one must first have a bureaucratic-collectivist party to carry out the action. The Chinese Communist Party has been that ever since Communism degenerated into bureaucratic collectivism. Because of a common international situation and long-standing historical ties, also because the class relationships within China after the defeat of the Great Revolution (the destruction of the proletariat, the long peasant wars, the utter corruption of the bourgeoisie, the anger and dissatisfaction of the petty bourgeoisie) were favorable to reformism and unfavorable to the

features. It attempts to play the part of a supra-class mediator and proclaims "labor-capital unity for the benefit of all society," while in reality manipulating and smoothing over class contradictions for the ultimate advantage of the bureaucratic caste. All varieties of Bonapartism rest primarily on the mass base of the petty bourgeoisie, the present CCP included. All forms of Bonapartism are fundamentally anti-working class, and the CCP at present is no exception. Of course, Stalinist Bonapartism attacks private property, while orthodox Bonapartist dictatorship does not, and therein lies the great difference between them. It is absolutely necessary for us to understand this point. Therefore we cannot say that the Bonapartism of the CCP will perform a capitalist function in the sense in which we could say it of traditional Bonapartism, of Bonapartism in the literal meaning of the word. It will perform the functions of capitalism in a peculiar way, that is, by substituting the collective ownership of the bourgeoisie for the private ownership of the individual capitalist. The capitalism represented by the Stalinists is no longer capitalism in the original sense of the word, but bureaucratic collectivism; the class they represent is not a capitalist class in the original sense, but a bureaucratic class which collectively owns the means of production. This distinction is of exceptional importance. If one points to the Bonapartism of the CCP without understanding this difference, then one will be unable to understand the events taking place before one's very eyes or to predict future developments, because, while others may expect the attitude of the CCP to become daily more conciliatory toward the bourgeoisie, what we shall in fact see is a greater solidification of collectivism

and a strengthening of state capital.

Of course, we are under no obligation to make airily optimistic promises about what the CCP will achieve from these sad beginnings. In semi-colonial, backward China, which has suffered the ravages of civil and foreign wars for over ten years, if only because of the power of resistance of the internal "automatic economy" (not to mention the increasingly acute contradictions on the international scene), the construction by the CCP of a bureaucratic-collectivist system will probably be extremely difficult. Thanks to two wars within the last ten years, the decisively significant sectors of the Chinese economy are nationalized. This gives the CCP's future activities a great boost, but they have yet to absorb all private capital, abolish the backward relationships in the farming villages, and collectivize the small farming units which have gone bankrupt in their technical backwardness—all of them uncommonly difficult tasks. To do this the first and most important step is for the Stalinist party to initiate a broad mass struggle, to absorb countless worker and peasant elements and organize them for action, but this is a step that the Stalinist party is wary of taking. To guarantee that the new China shall remain under bureaucratic rule and not turn into a genuine workers' and peasants' state, they must limit this movement to certain well-defined bounds, beyond which it must not be permitted to stray so much as a single step. In its present position of extreme caution, events have naturally made it impossible for the CCP's collectivization to go very deep; however, the general tendency is in the direction just described, and its principal features have been pointed out above.

17. When the Stalinist party, in or-

growth of revolutionary socialism, the Chinese Communist Party took over entirely the bureaucratic collectivism perfected by Stalin within the Soviet Union. This ideological change was complete by the early Thirties. Now the CCP, embracing this ideology, has come to power and is organizing the state around it. Hence it is quite natural that it can only carry out a reform from top down, put forth a state-capitalist program, simply and easily take over the Kuomintang's bureaucratic state apparatus, destroy only part of the bourgeoisie, put a strict check on the genuinely revolutionary proletariat, and regard with hostility every mass action from the bottom up. Since the creature spawned by the CCP is a bureaucratic-collectivist state and must continue to enslave the workers, it is reactionary; but since such a state must reform capitalism, change property forms, and increase productive power, it cannot help adopting certain progressive measures. Herein we have found our answer to the question posed in 4: How and why can a reactionary regime carry out certain progressive measures? The contradiction between progress and reaction which characterizes the Chinese Communist Party's regime expresses itself particularly in its relation to the bourgeoisie on the one hand and the proletariat and poor peasantry on the other. To stabilize the rule of the bureaucracy it is necessary to conciliate the former and oppose the latter, while to reform capitalism it is necessary to conciliate the latter and oppose the former.

16. THIS INTERNAL CONTRADICTION has caused Chinese Communist rule for the present to assume Bonapartist

view of bureaucratic collectivism that  
 one can understand their nature and  
 their actions. The same is true of the

of workers, peasants, and soldiers, to  
 exchange the Stalinist military agen-  
 cies and the so-called "People's Gov-  
 ernment" for a genuine workers' and  
 peasants' state. We must direct every  
 struggle toward the formation of so-  
 viets. Our principal slogan must be  
 for a Congress of Workers, Soldiers,  
 and Peasants.

18. In view of the political and eco-  
 nomic evidence, the China of Mao  
 Tse-tung, unless a new world war or  
 an internal revolution stops the  
 course of its development, can "peace-  
 fully" turn into another Stalinist Rus-  
 sia (that is, it need not necessarily  
 first go through a proletarian revolu-  
 tion and then degenerate in order to  
 reach the same end result); or, if the  
 China of Mao Tse-tung is to become  
 a workers' state, then nothing short  
 of a proletarian revolution can alter  
 the present rule.

Therefore, not only can we state  
 positively that China is not a workers'  
 state, but we can also prove by the  
 same token that the Soviet Union is  
 no longer any sort of workers' state.  
 The difference between the new  
 China and the Soviet Union at pres-  
 ent is one of degree, not of kind. Both  
 are equally bureaucratic-collectivist  
 states, except for a huge difference in  
*degree* of thoroughness. Therefore the  
 Fourth International's traditional at-  
 titude toward the Soviet Union must  
 be altered. It must reject the view that  
 it is any sort of workers' state. Simi-  
 larly it must reject the view that the  
 Stalinist parties are parties of Men-  
 shevik opportunism, because, al-  
 though the Stalinist parties are at  
 present indeed fundamentally reform-  
 ist, their principal crime is not their  
 collaboration with the bourgeoisie  
 but their bureaucratic enslavement of  
 the proletariat. Needless to say, it is  
 only by viewing the Soviet Union and  
 the Stalinist parties from the point of

der to advance the cause of bureau-  
 cratic collectivism, very cautiously ini-  
 tiates its mass movement, can the  
 workers and poor peasants, taking ad-  
 vantage of this opportunity, push the  
 struggle further, work free of the lim-  
 itations imposed upon them by the  
 Stalinist party, and cause a bureau-  
 cratically dominated movement to  
 turn into the Chinese socialist revolu-  
 tion—or can they not? In theory, we  
 can never exclude this possibility, and  
 we—the Chinese Proletarian Revolu-  
 tionary Party—must turn all our sub-  
 jective efforts in that direction. But, in  
 fact, if we dispassionately analyze  
 China's present class relationships, we  
 cannot deny that this possibility is  
 extremely slight. The prestige of the  
 Stalinist party among the general  
 masses is still very great, the illusion  
 that bureaucratic collectivism equals  
 socialism is widespread; the Chinese  
 proletariat and its real vanguard have  
 yet to educate themselves and unite  
 through the bitter experience of Stal-  
 inist rule, for only then can they initi-  
 ate a mighty anti-Stalinist revolution.

Our chief task at present is patient-  
 ly to interpret and reinterpret the  
 fundamental nature of Stalinist bu-  
 reaucratic collectivism. Naturally,  
 "patient interpretation" by no means  
 signifies passive observation. We must  
 participate actively in these events.  
 We must, while pointing out the in-  
 ternally contradictory character of the  
 Stalinist party's present struggle, on  
 the one hand advance and broaden in  
 scope the fight against the landlords  
 and rich peasants and advocate and  
 participate in all anti-capitalist strug-  
 gles; and, on the other hand, oppose  
 simultaneously the fight of the bu-  
 reaucracy, oppose the enslavement of  
 the workers under whatever guise, op-  
 pose the oppression of the poor peas-  
 antry, and, above all, consistently ad-  
 vocate the convocation of a Congress

To understand Mao's policies one must bear in mind the main historical task facing the Chinese bureaucracy, the task of industrializing the country. The Chinese bourgeoisie proved incapable of accomplishing this. The Chinese working class, after the defeat of the 1925-27 revolution, the world slump and the Japanese invasion, being pulverised and leaderless, has not played an active, decisive role for the last three decades. The task of industrializing an extremely backward country when it cannot rely on the aid of industrially advanced socialist centres is extremely difficult. It demands that the people tighten their belts in order to make quick capital accumulation possible. A considerable tightening of the belt cannot be done democratically for any length of time. Hence the more backward the country and the greater the drive towards quick industrialisation, the more harsh and totalitarian the regime has to be. The rulers of such a regime, while being the guardians of capital accumulation, will not, of course, forget themselves; they accordingly derive increasing privileges from their position of absolute control over the economy, society and State.

#### China's poverty

China is extremely backward economically. Thus, for instance, steel consumption per head of population in 1950 was 2 lbs., as against 11 in India, 111 in Japan, 278 in Russia, 556 in Britain, and 1,130 in the United States. (W. S. Woytinsky and E. S. Woytinsky, *World Population and Production*, New York, 1953, p. 1124.) The output of electricity in 1950 was 3,500 million kwh. in China, as against 5,063 million in India and Pakistan (whose population is two-thirds of China's), 38,840 million in Japan and 91,200 million in Russia. (*Ibid.* p. 967.) The number of spindles in China in 1951 was 4 million as against 10.8 million in India. (*Ibid.* p. 1067.) Chinese transport is also extremely backward. It was estimated that prior to the second world war there was 1 km. of railways per 25,300 people in China, as against 1 per 6,878 in India. (UN., *Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East*, 1947, Shanghai, 1948, p. 113.) In motor transport China was even more backward relatively to India.

As a result of economic backwardness, China's national income is extremely low. Colin Clark estimates that the net income produced per head of population in China (1933-5) was 138 International Units (he defines the Unit as "the amount of goods and services which one dollar would produce in U.S.A. over the average of the period 1925-34); in India (1944-45), 246; USSR (1937), 379; Hungary (1938-39), 408; Poland (1938), 508; Japan (1940), 600; Britain (1947), 1,383; U.S.A. (1947), 2,566 (C. Clark, *Conditions of Economic Progress*, First Edition, London, 1940, and Second Edition, London, 1951).

#### The plans

The rate of industrial growth aimed at by Mao in his first Five

## Tony Cliff Mao Tse-Tung and Stalinism

July 1, 1958.

During recent events in Hungary the Chinese press came out firmly in support of Moscow's oppressive policy. Thus, for instance, the editorial for November 5th in Peking's *People's Daily*, entitled "Celebrate the Great Victory of the Hungarian People," stated: "The joyful news has arrived that the Hungarian people . . . with the support of the Soviet armed forces have overthrow the reactionary Nagy Government which betrayed the Hungarian people and the Hungarian nation." Every victory of Russian arms in Hungary was applauded in ever more glowing terms.

On December 29th, 1956, the *People's Daily* published a major pronouncement entitled "More on the Historical Experience of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." This approved the general course of Moscow's policy, in the main justified Stalin's career, supported Russia's policy in Hungary and reproved Tito. It emphasized the "leading role of the Soviet Union in the Socialist camp." Chou En-lai again and again harped on the same theme throughout his tour of Moscow, Warsaw and Budapest in January this year. It was indicative that Chou applauded the loudest after Khrushchev had said "All of us Communists . . . consider it a matter of pride for us to be as true to Marxism-Leninism as was Stalin himself." (*Manchester Guardian*, January 18, 1957).

#### Not unexpected

To many a sincere Communist, suffering under the profound illusion that Mao and his regime are not Stalinist, this must have come as a great shock. However, to anyone using the Marxist method of analysis, which looks at the economic foundation of politics, Mao's extreme Stalinism is not unexpected.

Year Plan is quite ambitious, although it falls short of Russia's aims in her first Five-Year Plan (see Table 1).

So meagre are China's initial resources that even after her first Five-Year Plan she will be far behind Russia's level of production not only after its first Five-Year Plan, but even before it was started. This can be seen clearly from table 2:

China will need a number of Five-Year Plans to reach the level Russia reached even prior to her Plan era.

China's First Five-Year Plan shows an even greater emphasis on heavy industry than Russia's First Five-Year Plan. According to the plan, of all gross capital investment in industry, 88.8 per cent will be devoted to means of production industries, and only 11.2 per cent to light industries (Li Fu-chun, *Report on the First Five-Year Plan, Peking, 1955*, p. 34). In Russia the corresponding figures were 85.9 and 14.1.

Table 1

	China	Russia
Value of gross industrial output	Index for 1957 (1952: 100)	Index for 1932 (1928: 100)
Output of large-scale industry	198.3	202.0
(Yang Chien-pai, "A Comparative Analysis of China's First Five-Year Plan and the Soviet Union's First Five-Year Plan," <i>Statistical Work Bulletin</i> (Chinese), Peking, August, 1955.)	14.7	19.3
	207.0	230.0
	15.7	23.2

Table 2: Per Capital Output of Different Goods in China and Russia

Unit	1952	1957 (target)	1928	1932
Steel	12.71	25.20	32.50	81.70
Cotton cloth	2.36	6.54	27.60	35.80
Power supply	6.70	8.85	18.00	16.30
Grain	286.95	305.74	475.20	421.50

(Ibid.)

#### Consumption bows to investment

The subordination of consumer goods industries to the needs of capital goods is shown in the fact that while the amount of profits of light industries in the years 1952-1955 was some 10.8 milliard yuan larger than the amounts invested in these same industries, this sum went mainly to capitalise heavy industry. (*Statistical Bulletin* (Chinese), Peking, November 14, 1956).

With the national income very low, capital investment takes up a big portion of the national income. It has been stated that gross capital investment in 1952 made up 15.7 per cent of the national income; in 1953 it was 18.3 per cent; in 1954, 21.6 per cent; in 1955, 20.5 per cent; in 1956, 22.8 per cent. (*Jen Min Jih Pao, (People's Daily)*, September 20, 1956). This rate is only a little lower than in Russia during her first Five-Year Plan, but seeing that in absolute terms the level of income in China is some three times lower than in Russia at the time, a rate of 20 per cent accumulation

is a much greater burden than a rate of even 30 per cent would have been in Russia.

In absolute terms, however the capital accumulation in China is quite small. Thus the average annual investment rate during the five years 1953-7, was planned to be 8,548 million People's Dollars, or, at the official rate of exchange, some 3,650 million U.S. dollars.

In Canada, with a population one-fortieth of China's population in 1956, capital investment reached 7,900 million U.S. dollars. (Even if we consider possible differences in price levels between the two countries, the picture would not alter radically.)

#### The burden of arms

The military budget of China made up 18.1 per cent of the national income in 1952; in 1953, 15.9 per cent; in 1954, 15.2 per cent; and in 1955, 16.2 per cent. (Calculated from Wang Tzu-yung, "On Public Finance," *Ta Kung Pao*, Tientsin, January 29, 1955). These figures compare with the military budget of Russia in 1928, which made up only 2 per cent of the gross national product of the country.

With a high rate of capital accumulation and with the great burden of the military budget, workers' wages naturally lag far behind their output, that is, the rate of exploitation is high—and is rising.

This was underlined by a *People's Daily* editorial, which stated: "In 1952, the workers of State-operated enterprises produced a yearly average rate of 100 million People's Dollars per worker. Of this, except for 500 thousand dollars as the average monthly wage for each worker, 94 per cent directly represented capital created for the State." (*People's Daily*, December 13, 1953). The above figures probably exaggerate the rate of exploitation of the workers, but there is no doubt that it is extreme.

#### Growing exploitation

As time goes by the rate of exploitation is increasing, as can be seen clearly from the lag of wages behind labour productivity. This was the situation according to the *People's Daily*:

	Labour Productivity Increase (%)	Wage Increase (%)
1953	13	5
1954	15	2.6
1955	10	0.6

(*People's Daily*, June 19, 1956)

(For reasons that cannot be dealt with in the present article, it can be proved that it is doubtful if real wages showed even the rise mentioned in this table.)

The exploitation of the peasantry is even more extreme than that of the industrial workers. For lack of space we shall mention only a few facts to show this.

Vice-Premier Chen Yun stated that in the year July, 1954, to

June, 1955, the State acquired in the form of grain tax and compulsory deliveries of produce, a total of 52 million tons of grain, or some 30 per cent. of the total grain output of the country. (*New China News Agency*, April 30, 1955.) This figure is not far behind that taken by the Russian state as taxation in compulsory deliveries: in 1938 it was some 33 per cent. (A. Arina, "Kolkhozes in 1938," *Sotsialisticheskoe Selskokhozyaistvo*, Moscow, December, 1939)

The figure for China exceeds what the peasantry used to pay as rent under the Kuomintang regime—some "30 million tons of grain" (Chen Han-seng "Industrialisation Begins," *China Reconstructions*, Peking, January-February, 1953).

#### Forced labour

Capital being so very scarce and human labour so very plentiful and cheap, the natural result is the widespread use of forced labour—including prisoners, or slave labourers.

Unlike Moscow, Peking is not shy about giving information on forced labour. Thus, for instance, in a "Report on the Work of the Kwangtung Provincial Government during the Past Ten Months," given by Ku Tats'un, its Vice-Chairman, on September 15, 1951, it was stated that in the province of Kwangtung alone during 10 months, a total of 89,701 counter revolutionaries were arrested, 28,332 were executed, while "those whose crimes were punishable by death, but who did not incur the intense hatred of the public were sentenced to death, but had their execution delayed for two years, during which time they were made to undertake forced labour to give them a chance to reform themselves." (Canton, *Nan Fang Jih Pao*, September 18, 1951). If some 60,000 people were condemned to slave labour in only one of China's 27 provinces in a matter of 10 months, the size of the slave labour force in the country as a whole must be huge. Po I-po, at the time Minister of Finance, claimed that in three years "more than two million bandits" were liquidated (*New China's Economic Achievements*, 1949-52, Peking, 1952, p. 152), the majority, presumably, not being killed, but put to work.

A milder form of forced labour is the compulsory conscription of peasants to public works. Thus, Fu Tsoyi Minister of Water Conservancy, stated on October 28, 1951: "During the two years (October, 1949-October, 1951) a total labour force of 10,370,000 workers was mobilised for various conservancy projects . . ." (*People's Daily*, October 30, 1951). The average pay for this kind of work was some 2-3 catties of rice for a 12-hour workday. (Calculated from the book of the Stalinist, W. G. Burchett, *China's Feet Unbound*, London, 1952, p. 157). Under the Kuomintang in the years 1929-33, the average daily wage of agricultural workers was equal to 14 catties of rice. (J. L. Buck, *Land Utilisation in China*, Shanghai, 1937, pp. 305-6.)

The low level of the productive forces at the disposal of the

Chinese bureaucracy makes for an even harsher political regime than in Russia. Space allows for only a few points to be dealt with in this connection.

#### Police dictatorship

As in Russia so in China, there is also a system of internal passports, the obligation to register with the police any change of address, etc. (See the decree of the Ministry of State Security, *Provisional Regulations Governing Urban Population*, *New China News Agency*, Peking, July 16, 1951; Ministry of State Security, *Provisional Rules for Control of Hotels and Lodging Houses*, *New China News Agency*, Peking, August 4, 1951; State Council *Directive Concerning the Establishing of a Permanent System for Registration of Persons*, *New China News Agency*, Peking, July 2, 1955).

To control the population three sets of regulations were issued. First, *Organic Regulations of Urban Inhabitants' Committees*; secondly, *Organic Regulations of Urban Street Offices*; and thirdly, *Organic Regulations of Public Security Sub-stations*. All three were adopted by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on December 31, 1954).

To strengthen these organisations, special *Denunciation Rooms* and *Denunciation Post-Boxes* were set up all over the country.

#### Sons against fathers

Nothing shows the extreme of totalitarianism reached in China more than the demand that children should denounce their own "counter-revolutionary" parents. To give one example: The *China Youth Journal* published an open letter by a student called Lu Ch'eng-hsu, accusing her father of being an agent of Chiang Kai-shek. The letter opens with these words:

"Lu Hsu,  
"When I write out this stinking name of yours, I feel ashamed and intolerably insulted. In the past I looked upon you as my father, but now I have seen your true face: you are a cannibal with your teeth bared in madness and your paws whipping about in the air."

It ends with these words:

"Now, I am a member of the New Democratic Youth League, and you are the people's enemy, forever unpardonable. Between us there is nothing in common now. I would rather be a daughter of the people than the slave of a special agent. It is our sworn principle that we will never co-exist with our enemy. So no matter where you hide yourself, we will get you in the end. You just wait and see." (*China Youth Journal* (Chinese), Peking, May 8, 1951.)

Such a level of depravity imposed by the totalitarian state was not surpassed, indeed not even reached, by Stalinist Russia.

#### Cult of the individual

The cult of Mao is, in a way, even more extreme and nauseating

than the former cult of Stalin. Portraits of Mao hang everywhere. Five storeys high, they adorn Shanghai and other cities. Trains carry portraits of Mao over the boiler. In many peasant houses his picture replaces the former kitchen god, and a kind of grace is said before meals by the household: "Thank Chairman Mao for our good food." His pictures occupy the tiny household shrines where formerly clay images were kept. A report of the Peking Municipal People's Government quotes a peasant approvingly: "Formerly we worshipped Kuan Kung, who was said to be omnipotent. Where is his omnipotence? Whom shall we worship? To my mind, we should worship Chairman Mao." (*General Report of Peking Municipal People's Government on Agrarian Reform in Peking Suburban Areas*, approved by Government Administrative Council on November 21, 1950.)

Special obeisance is made to Mao at all public meetings. A description of a mass trial ran: "The meeting opened with the singing of the national anthem. Then everybody took off their hats and bowed to the national flag and to the portrait of Chairman Mao." (Hsiao Ch'ien, *How the Tillers Win Back their Land*, Peking, 1954, p. 72), just as they had formerly done to the landlord as he was borne past them.

Not to be outdone, Wa-ch-mu-chi, Governor of the Yi Nationality Autonomous *chow* in Lianshen (Sikang) sang the following hymn of praise at the National People's Congress: "The sun shines only in the day, the moon shines only at night. Only Chairman Mao is the sun that never sets." (*New China News Agency*, Peking, July 26, 1953). Practically the same words were used about Stalin: "I would have compared him to the shining moon, but the moon shines at midnight, not at noon. I would have compared him to the brilliant sun, but the sun radiates at noon, not at midnight." (*Znamya*, Soviet Authors' Union Monthly, October, 1946.)

#### China's Stalinism

The basic facts of the Stalinist regime are the subordination of consumption to the needs of quick capital accumulation, the bureaucratic management of industry, the limitation of workers' legal rights, the enforced "collectivisation" of agriculture, the differentiation of society into privileged and pariahs and the totalitarian police dictatorship. All these traits are to be found in Mao's China. Being a relatively late comer and rising on extremely backward productive forces, the oppressive facets of the system are even more accentuated in Mao's China than they were in Stalin's Russia. The historical function of the bureaucracy is the accumulation of capital on the one hand and the creating of a working class on the other (a function fulfilled by the bourgeoisie in the West). The less capital a country is endowed with and the smaller its working class, the deeper are the roots of bureaucratic state capitalism and the longer its span of life, if taken in isolation).

*To put it differently, as the backwardness of China is so much greater than that of Russia, not to speak of the European satellites, the working class so small in size and so lacking in cohesion and culture, the forces compelling the bureaucracy to give concessions and even threatening to explode the regime in revolution are much weaker in China than in Russia, not to speak of Eastern Europe. In all probability, if not for the influence of revolutionary events elsewhere, China will have to go through a whole generation, or perhaps two, until its working class becomes a strong enough power to challenge the rule of the bureaucracy. In isolation the present regime in China will probably surpass in harshness as well as in length of life its Russian Stalinist precursor. In this we find one reason why Peking did not take kindly to the "reformers" in Eastern Europe and why it applauded the defeat of "reactionary Nagy."*

There is another reason, connected with the above, for Mao's support for "Stalinist" policies, and—if there is a split in the Kremlin—for the "Stalinist" faction. Being interested in China's rapid rise to be a giant industrial and military world power, Mao cannot but oppose any weakening or softening of the austere regimen in Russia and Eastern Europe, a regimen that makes for emphasis on heavy industry at the expense of popular consumption. Mao prefers to get steel, machine tools, turbines, etc., rather than that the Russian or Hungarian people should get better housing, food and clothing.

Mao's China is a tremendous rock on which probably many revolutionary anti-Stalinist waves will break. However, in the long run, probably after a few decades, this rock will begin to crumble not only, or perhaps even mainly, through the effect of anti-Stalinist revolutions in Europe, but through revolutionary events in China itself.

April, 1957.