

**THREE MAJOR STRUGGLES  
ON CHINA'S  
PHILOSOPHICAL FRONT  
(1949-64)**

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on  
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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The four articles contained in this booklet may help to acquaint our readers with the major struggles on New China's philosophical front since its founding in 1949. Written by the Revolutionary Mass Criticism Writing Group of the Party School under the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, they first appeared separately in *Renmin Ribao* (*People's Daily*), *Hongqi* (*Red Flag*) and *Guangming Ribao* (*Kwangming Daily*). The present translation is made from an abridged version of the Chinese text.

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## THREE MAJOR STRUGGLES ON CHINA'S PHILOSOPHICAL FRONT (1949-64)

**“The philosophy of the Communist Party is the philosophy of struggle.” “Marxism can develop only through struggle, and not only is this true of the past and the present, it is necessarily true of the future as well.”**

Between 1949 and 1964, three major struggles of principle took place on China's philosophical front, centring around the question of China's economic base and superstructure, the question of whether there is identity between thinking and being, and the question of **one divides into two** or “combine two into one.” These struggles were provoked one after another by Yang Hsien-chen, agent of the renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi in philosophical circles, at crucial junctures in the struggle between the two classes (the proletariat and the bourgeoisie), the two roads (socialism and capitalism) and the two lines (Chairman Mao Tsetung's proletarian revolutionary line and Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist line). They were fierce struggles between dialectical materialism and historical materialism on the one hand and idealism and metaphysics on the other, and were a reflection on the philosophical front of the acute class struggle at home and abroad.

The founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 marked the basic conclusion of the stage of China's new-democratic revolution and the beginning of the stage of its socialist revolution. In his Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China held in March 1949, our great leader Chairman Mao pointed out that after the countrywide victory of the Chinese revolution the basic contradiction in Chinese society was **"the contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie"**; he urged the people to continue the revolution, strengthen the people's democratic dictatorship, i.e., the dictatorship of the proletariat, and **"build China into a great socialist state."** At the end of 1952, Chairman Mao went further to formulate the general line for the period of transition: bringing about, step by step, the socialist industrialization of the country and the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts and capitalist industry and commerce.

Running counter to this, Liu Shao-chi openly opposed the spirit of the Second Plenary Session of the Party's Seventh Central Committee. As early as 1949, the year the session was held, he desperately preached the fallacy that "exploitation is a merit" and advocated the development of capitalism. Waving the tattered banner of the "theory of productive forces" after liberation, he dished up a sinister programme for developing capitalism which called for "co-operation among the five sectors of the economy<sup>1</sup> to consolidate the new-democratic system."

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<sup>1</sup> The five sectors of China's national economy were state-owned economy, co-operative economy, the individual economy of the peasants and handicraftsmen, private capitalist economy, and state-capitalist economy.



This showed that he blatantly opposed the Party's general line for the period of transition.

At that moment of acute struggle between Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist line, Yang Hsien-chen, at the bidding of Liu Shao-chi, churned out the so-called theory of "synthesized economic base," thereby provoking the first big struggle on the philosophical front.

Yang Hsien-chen claimed that the economic base during the period of transition was of a "synthesized nature," "including both the socialist sector and the capitalist sector of the economy" which "can develop in a balanced and co-ordinated way." He babbled that the socialist superstructure should, without discrimination, "serve the entire economic base," including the capitalist sector of the economy, and "also serve the bourgeoisie." This was the notorious theory of "synthesized economic base."

It is obvious that, in putting forward these reactionary absurdities, Yang Hsien-chen obliterated the diametrical antagonism and struggle between the socialist economy and the capitalist economy, and denied the class nature of the superstructure, his aim being all-round class collaboration and class capitulation in all spheres, from the economic base to the superstructure. This was an attempt to change the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat in our country, oppose the establishment of a socialist economic base and perpetuate capitalism in China.

The theory of "synthesized economic base," which advocated the development of capitalism, was nothing

new. It was just a variant of the "theory of productive forces" which old and new revisionists in China and other countries have held sacred for scores of years. According to this "theory," China must not carry out the socialist transformation of the private ownership of the means of production, it cannot go in for socialism but can only allow capitalism to spread unchecked, because its productive forces are backward and capitalism is not developed.

As soon as Yang Hsien-chen trotted out his reactionary fallacy, he was dealt a head-on blow by the proletariat. Not reconciled to defeat, he concocted in 1955 an article entitled "On the Question of the Base and the Superstructure During the Transition Period in the People's Republic of China," preaching his theory of "synthesized economic base" more systematically than ever. When he sent his sinister article to Liu Shao-chi for examination, the latter openly supported him and said: "You are right," adding that private capitalism "is a component of the base."

Chairman Mao sternly criticized Liu Shao-chi's reactionary programme of "co-operation among the five sectors of the economy to consolidate the new-democratic system," pointing out that its reactionary nature lay in its advocating the development of capitalism. Under the guidance of Mao Tsetung Thought, the socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production was basically completed in 1956 and the Party's general line for the period of transition was successfully implemented. Yang Hsien-chen's theory of "synthesized economic base" not only went bankrupt theoretically but was thoroughly smashed by revolutionary practice.

**“Revolution means liberating the productive forces.”** The socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production has greatly promoted the growth of productive forces. In 1958, Chairman Mao put forward the general line of **going all out, aiming high and achieving greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism.** Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, once grasped by the masses, becomes a material force capable of changing the world, a force under whose impact the entire old superstructure and ideology crumble. **“So inspired, so militant and so daring,”** the Chinese people brought their conscious dynamic role and revolutionary initiative into full play, creating the new situation of the great leap forward in socialist construction and establishing the people’s communes which are of great historic significance.

The swift, forceful development of revolution and construction scared the handful of Right opportunists out of their wits. Liu Shao-chi *et al.* jumped out and frenziedly attacked the general line, the great leap forward and the people’s commune and slandered the revolutionary mass movements. They accused the Party of “subjective idealism” which “exaggerated man’s conscious dynamic role.” Taking his cue from Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen seized the opportunity and provoked a new battle in the field of philosophy by dishing up the theory that “there is no identity between thinking and being.”

Yang Hsien-chen arbitrarily declared: “Identity between thinking and being is an idealist proposition.” He raved that “identity between thinking and being” and

“dialectical identity” did not mean the same thing, that they belonged to “two different categories.” Viciously distorting Marxism-Leninism, he tried to set the identity between thinking and being against the materialist theory of reflection, alleging that, with regard to the question of the relationship between thinking and being, “materialism uses the theory of reflection to solve it, while idealism solves it by means of identity.”

Materialist dialectics teaches us that the law of the unity of opposites is universal. The identity of opposites, that is, their mutual dependence for existence and their transformation into each other, is undoubtedly applicable to the relationship between thinking and being. By denying the identity between thinking and being, Yang Hsien-chen was denying that the two opposite aspects of the contradiction, thinking and being, depended on each other for their existence and could transform themselves into each other in given conditions. If Yang Hsien-chen's assertion were true, the law of the unity of opposites as taught by dialectics would not be universal.

Yang Hsien-chen metaphysically negated the interconnection between thinking and being, regarding them as absolute opposites. Thus he sank into dualism and, from there, into subjective idealism. He denied the dynamic role of revolutionary theory and opposed the revolutionary mass movement. He exaggerated the non-essential and secondary aspects of the revolutionary mass movement to the point of absurdity. He concentrated his attack on one point to the complete disregard of the rest, closing his eyes completely to the essence and the main aspects of the revolutionary mass movement. He even had no scruples to palm off his counter-revolutionary subjective perceptions as the objective reality. He did

all this in a vain attempt to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat and restore capitalism.

By denying the dialectical identity between thinking and being, Yang Hsien-chen was, in the final analysis, opposed to arming the masses with Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought and using it to actively transform the world, that is to say, he was trying to hoodwink the masses with counter-revolutionary revisionist ideas and attempting to transform the world with the reactionary world outlook of the bourgeoisie. It was precisely this reactionary theory of Yang Hsien-chen's that provided the "theoretical basis" for Liu Shao-chi's slavish comprador philosophy and his doctrine of trailing behind at a snail's pace.

Backed by Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen started preaching this reactionary theory in 1955. In 1957, he went so far as to flagrantly demand that those opposing his trash and consistently advocating the identity between thinking and being be labelled "Rightists." In 1958, he knocked together his sinister article "A Brief Discussion of Two Categories of 'Identity,'" branding as "subjective idealism" the scientific thesis that there is identity between thinking and being; then he ordered his men to write articles to propagate his reactionary theory. Chairman Mao sharply pointed out the reactionary essence of Yang Hsien-chen's fallacy in October the same year, but the latter resisted for all he was worth. Also, when giving lectures in November 1958, Yang Hsien-chen vilified the theory of the identity between thinking and being as "sheer nonsense and out-and-out reactionary theory." And between 1959 and 1964, in close co-ordination with Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary activities for capitalist restoration, he

repeatedly waged counter-attacks against Mao Tsetung Thought on this particular question. But all these schemes fell apart one after another under the crushing blows from the proletariat.

In 1963, Chairman Mao wrote the well-known article *Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?* In it he penetratingly expounded the great truth that “**matter can be transformed into consciousness and consciousness into matter,**” creatively developed the Marxist theory of knowledge and thoroughly criticized the bourgeois idealism and metaphysics of Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen and company, and made a scientific summation of the struggle centring around the question of the identity between thinking and being.

### III

Not resigned to their defeat, Liu Shao-chi and company put up a last-ditch struggle. In 1964, Liu Shao-chi directed Yang Hsien-chen to concoct the reactionary theory “combine two into one” in open opposition to Chairman Mao’s revolutionary dialectics **one divides into two**. This gave rise to a struggle on a still wider scale.

That year, class struggle was very acute and complex within the country and on the international scene. In concert with the class enemies abroad in their blatant anti-China activities, Liu Shao-chi and his sort lost no time in trying to effect a capitalist restoration in China. Guided by Chairman Mao’s theory of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the Chinese people waged a tit-for-tat struggle against the class enemies both within and outside the country. They

launched a socialist education movement at home and conducted open polemics with modern revisionism. That the reactionary theory "combine two into one" should make its appearance at this juncture completely met the counter-revolutionary needs of the class enemies at home and abroad.

Chairman Mao pointed out: **"Everything divides into two."** **"In society as in nature, every entity invariably breaks up into its different parts, only there are differences in content and form under different concrete conditions."** Chairman Mao's brilliant thesis that **one divides into two** is a penetrating and concise generalization of the law of the unity of opposites; it is a great development of materialist dialectics.

Acknowledging that **one divides into two** means acknowledging the existence, in socialist society, of classes, class contradictions and class struggle, the struggle between the socialist road and the capitalist road, the danger of capitalist restoration, and the threat of aggression and subversion by imperialism and social-imperialism. To resolve these contradictions, it is essential to continue the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

However, the reactionary theory "combine two into one" advocated that "combine two into one" applies to everything" and that the identity of opposites showed that the opposites had an "inseparable link," a "common ground" and a "common demand." This reactionary fallacy aimed at reconciling contradictions, liquidating struggle, negating transformation and opposing revolution. It was out-and-out bourgeois metaphysics and idealism. In essence, it wanted "combining" into one the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, revolution and

counter-revolution; it opposed continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat and tried to restore capitalism. It was the basis of Liu Shao-chi's theory of "the dying out of class struggle."

To peddle their reactionary wares, Yang Hsien-chen *et al.* shouted that "too much has been said about 'one divides into two' and too little about 'combine two into one.'" They went out of their way to attack Chairman Mao's **one divides into two**, slandering it as "the philosophy of attacking people." But the ferociousness on the part of the reaction only hastened its total collapse. As soon as the theory "combine two into one" made its appearance, it met with crushing blows from the proletarian headquarters and the revolutionary masses. Chairman Mao personally led the struggle of criticizing this reactionary theory and pointed out in a clear-cut way that its core was revisionist class conciliation, thus sealing its doom.

#### IV

The three major struggles on the philosophical front showed that the confrontation of the two opposing sides in this field has always been a reflection of class struggle and the struggle between the two lines, that it serves these struggles, and that we must not take the struggle in philosophy to be merely an "academic controversy." In frenziedly attacking dialectical materialism and historical materialism, spreading reactionary idealism and metaphysics and provoking one struggle after another, Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen and company were motivated by the vile attempt to shake the philo-



sophical basis of Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and create a "theoretical basis" for the counter-revolutionary revisionist line aimed at restoring capitalism.

The three major struggles on the philosophical front also told us that the struggle between the two lines is, in the final analysis, the struggle between the two world outlooks, the proletarian and the bourgeois. One's world outlook decides which line he defends and implements. In terms of world outlook, the root cause of the fact that Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen and their kind peddled the counter-revolutionary revisionist line was their bourgeois idealism and metaphysics. In order consciously to implement the proletarian revolutionary line, we must conscientiously study dialectical materialism and historical materialism in conjunction with the three great revolutionary movements of class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experiment, overcome the idealism and metaphysics in our minds and earnestly remould our world outlook; we must learn to distinguish genuine Marxism from false Marxism, and tell the correct line from an erroneous line.

The three major struggles in the field of philosophy all ended with resounding victories for Chairman Mao's philosophical thinking. But class struggle has not ended. The struggle between materialism and idealism and between dialectics and metaphysics will always go on. We must carry on deep-going revolutionary mass criticism of the idealism and metaphysics spread by Liu Shao-chi and other political swindlers, and eradicate whatever remains of their poisonous influence.

THE THEORY OF  
“SYNTHESIZED ECONOMIC BASE”  
MUST BE THOROUGHLY  
CRITICIZED

Shortly after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Liu Shao-chi instigated Yang Hsien-chen, his agent in the philosophical circles, to put out a theory of “synthesized economic base,” starting a major struggle on China's philosophical front. It was a struggle of principle concerning the road China was to take, the socialist or the capitalist, whether China was to have a dictatorship of the proletariat or a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

The theory of “synthesized economic base” was actually a variant of the reactionary “theory of productive forces” which is, in turn, an idealist conception of history serving as the common “theoretical basis” of the revisionist trend in China and abroad. Such pseudo-Marxist swindlers as Liu Shao-chi and Yang Hsien-chen had all along used such reactionary theory to push their counter-revolutionary revisionist line and shape public opinion for their counter-revolutionary activities of opposing the proletarian revolution, overthrowing the proletarian dictatorship and restoring capitalism.

## PRODUCT OF THE COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY REVISIONIST LINE

The founding of the People's Republic heralded a new era in China, that of the socialist revolution and the proletarian dictatorship.

In his Report to the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in March 1949, Chairman Mao Tsetung made a penetrating analysis of the class relations and economic conditions prevailing in China at that time, clearly pointing out that following the countrywide seizure of power by the proletariat the principal internal contradiction was **"the contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie."** The focus of the struggle remained the question of state power. Chairman Mao called upon the whole Party to continue the revolution, rely on and strengthen the people's democratic dictatorship, that is, the proletarian dictatorship, develop the socialist state economy and carry out step by step the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts and capitalist industry and commerce and socialist industrialization so as to **"build China into a great socialist state."**

At this turning point of the revolution, Liu Shao-chi waved the tattered banner of the reactionary "theory of productive forces" in hysterically opposing the socialist revolution. To counteract the resolution of the Second Plenary Session of the Party's Seventh Central Committee, he flaunted his counter-revolutionary programme calling for "co-operation among the five sectors of the economy to consolidate the new-democratic system." Liu Shao-chi and other such swindlers went about drumming up trade for the development of cap-

italism, babbling, "Our country's production is undeveloped and backward. Today it is not that there are too many factories run by private capital, but too few. Now, not only must private capitalism be allowed to exist, but it needs to be developed, needs to be expanded." "Socialism in China is a matter for two or three decades later." They advocated preserving the rich-peasant economy for a long time and developing it energetically, called for "consolidating the peasants' private property" and attacked agricultural co-operation as "a kind of wrong, dangerous and utopian agrarian socialism."

Chairman Mao waged a sharp, tit-for-tat struggle against Liu Shao-chi and his gang who mulishly plotted to take the capitalist road. In 1953, in a talk on the Party's general line for the period of transition, Chairman Mao thoroughly discredited their counter-revolutionary programme of "consolidating the new-democratic system." He pointed out: **"After the success of the democratic revolution, some people stand still. Failing to realize the change in the character of the revolution, they continue with their 'new democracy' instead of undertaking socialist transformation. Hence their Rightist errors."** As for the so-called formulation of "consolidating the new-democratic system," Chairman Mao said that it was **"harmful"** and was **"at variance with the realities of the struggle and hinders the development of the socialist cause."**

Still these renegades did not give up. At a time when the whole Party was studying and applying the Party's general line for the transition period, Yang Hsien-chen, given his cue by swindler Liu Shao-chi *et al.*, refurbished the sinister programme of "consolidating the new-

democratic system" and came up with the theory of "synthesized economic base." This variety of the reactionary "theory of productive forces" he spread everywhere in his feverish effort to oppose the Party's general line.

However, guided by the Party's general line, the poor and lower-middle peasants' socialist initiative mounted as never before so that the movement for agricultural co-operation flourished; likewise, the socialist transformation of the capitalist industry and commerce accelerated. In their futile attempt to brake the wheel of history, Liu Shao-chi and his like drew up, in 1955, their vicious scheme of "opposing rashness" and set forth their counter-revolutionary policy of "holding up," "contraction" and "checking up" which drastically slashed the number of co-operatives. Yang Hsien-chen stepped in at this point and, racking his brains, penned his reactionary screed "On the Question of the Base and the Superstructure During the Transition Period in the People's Republic of China," systematizing his theory of "synthesized economic base" to conjure up a "theoretical basis" for the plot of Liu Shao-chi *et al.* to oppose the socialist revolution. He sent his scribble posthaste to Liu Shao-chi with a covering letter in which he said, "I hope you will find time to examine it and give me your instructions." Yang Hsien-chen himself admitted that concerning his theory of "synthesized economic base," he also had "consulted with" the big careerist swindler who referred to himself as a "humble little commoner." All this proves to the hilt that the struggle started by Yang Hsien-chen was a counter-revolutionary political plot which he had worked out hand in glove with Liu Shao-chi and other swindlers.

At a critical point in the grave struggle between the two lines, Chairman Mao made his report *On the Question of Agricultural Co-operation*, shattering in theory and practice the revisionist "theory of productive forces" and the counter-revolutionary plot of Liu Shao-chi & Co. An immediate upsurge in the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts and capitalist industry and commerce swept the country, characterized by: **Opportunism is falling, socialism is on the rise.** China's socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production won a great victory, while the reactionary theory of "synthesized economic base" met with total bankruptcy.

#### REACTIONARY FALLACY FOR OVERTHROWING PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP

What, after all, was the theory of "synthesized economic base" made of?

Yang Hsien-chen asserted: "In the period of transition the economic base of the state power of the socialist type" was of a "synthesized nature," "embracing both the socialist sector and the capitalist sector, and the sector of individual peasant economy as well"; they "can develop in a balanced and co-ordinated way"; the socialist superstructure should "serve the entire economic base," including the capitalist economy, and "also serve the bourgeoisie." This was an altogether reactionary and fallacious theory for overthrowing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

According to Marxism-Leninism, "state power of the socialist type" can only be the dictatorship of the pro-

letariat. It is the concentrated expression of the fundamental interests of the working class and other labouring people, and its economic base can only be **“the socialist economic base, that is, . . . socialist relations of production”** (*On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People*). The capitalist economy is a paradise where the bourgeois amass fortunes, while for the proletariat and other labouring people it is a hell on earth. It is the economic base of the bourgeois dictatorship. Capitalist economy and proletarian dictatorship are as incompatible with each other as fire with water. How is it conceivable that the proletarian dictatorship can rest on any so-called “synthesized economic base” which includes the capitalist economy?

Yang Hsien-chen’s fallacy becomes even more preposterous when viewed against the historical mission of the proletarian dictatorship, which aims at abolishing capitalism and all other systems of exploitation, at ending private ownership. Referring to the economy in the transition period, Lenin pointed out: **“As long as private ownership of the means of production. . . and freedom to trade remain, so does the economic basis of capitalism. The dictatorship of the proletariat is the only means of successfully fighting for the demolition of that basis, the only way to abolish classes. . .”** (*Collected Works*, Vol. 31). In China, it is precisely by using this means of proletarian dictatorship that the struggle against capitalism is waged. We took a series of measures to confiscate bureaucrat-monopoly capital, carry out socialist transformation of medium-sized and small capitalist industry and commerce, and set up agricultural and handicraft co-operatives in order gradually to abolish capitalism and private ownership

and establish a socialist economic base. Only thus can the victory of the revolution be consolidated, can we have the proletarian dictatorship. How can our proletarian state power take as its economic base the so-called "synthesized economic base" embracing the capitalist economy?

In fact, any so-called "synthesized economic base" simply doesn't exist, but is a mere fabrication by Yang Hsien-chen and his like. For historical reasons, China's proletariat did face five sectors of the economy after seizing state power, and these boiled down to the socialist and the capitalist sectors. Diametrically opposed to each other, the socialist and the capitalist sectors do not and cannot exist peacefully side by side, as Yang Hsien-chen claimed, or combine to form any so-called "synthesized economic base," still less can they "develop in a balanced and co-ordinated way." Lenin said: **"This transition period has to be a period of struggle between dying capitalism and nascent communism — or, in other words, between capitalism which has been defeated but not destroyed and communism which has been born but is still very feeble"** (*Collected Works*, Vol. 30). And Chairman Mao pointed out: **"The period of transition is full of contradiction and struggle. Our present revolutionary struggle is even more profound than the armed revolutionary struggles of the past. It is a revolution that will for ever bury the capitalist system and all other systems of exploitation."**

Precisely so. Events in China's transition period testify to an intense, life-and-death struggle between the two sectors of the economy, socialist and capitalist. One swallows up the other. Either progress towards socialism



or retrogress to capitalism: There is absolutely no room for compromise in the struggle between the two classes, the two roads and the two lines. Yang Hsien-chen's "synthesization" was a clear case of attempting to "combine two into one," to deny the contradiction and struggle between socialism and capitalism, and allow the latter to swallow up the former. So-called "balanced development" was, in essence, development of capitalism and reversion to semi-feudal, semi-colonial society. Did not Liu Shao-chi & Co., taking as the point of departure their reactionary "theory of productive forces," openly declare that they would work along with the capitalists for several decades and then go in for socialism "when China's industrial production shows a surplus"? The swindler that styled himself a "humble little commoner" but was actually a big careerist also shouted: "In contemporary China the capitalist system of exploitation is progressive," "it has a role to play in industrially backward China," etc., etc. This was what lay at the bottom of Yang Hsien-chen's "synthesization" and "balanced development." His preaching of "synthesized economic base," when stripped of all its fancy wrappings, was nothing but an attempt to build China on a capitalist economic base.

Chairman Mao points out that if we do not build a socialist economy, our proletarian dictatorship will become a bourgeois dictatorship, a reactionary, fascist dictatorship. Clearly, Yang Hsien-chen concocted and advertised his theory of "synthesized economic base" in order to abolish the socialist revolution, to pave the way for Liu Shao-chi & Co. to usurp state power and establish a reactionary, fascist dictatorship.

Yang Hsien-chen said shamelessly that the socialist superstructure should “serve the entire economic base,” including the capitalist economy; that it should “also serve the bourgeoisie.” What a statement — “it should also serve the bourgeoisie”!

Marxism tells us that superstructure has class character; that state power which is at the very centre of the superstructure is an instrument of class struggle, an apparatus with which one class oppresses another. Every state power is a dictatorship by a certain class: either a proletarian dictatorship with which the proletariat and other labouring people oppress the bourgeoisie and other exploiting classes, or a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and other exploiting classes with which these classes oppress the proletariat and other labouring people. Yang Hsien-chen went to the length of trying to make the socialist superstructure “serve the entire economic base,” including the capitalist economy, and make our state of proletarian dictatorship “serve the bourgeoisie.” What is this if not meeting the counter-revolutionary needs of overthrowing the proletarian dictatorship?

Of course, Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen *et al.* did not stop just at words. Hell-bent on “serving the bourgeoisie,” they enforced nothing less than a reactionary, fascist dictatorship in the departments where they had usurped power. Politically, they plotted to usurp the Party, military and government power in a vain attempt to reduce China to a colony of imperialism and social-imperialism. Economically, they tried to restore capitalism by large-scale practice of the “four freedoms,”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Freedom of land sale, of hiring labour, of usury, and of trading.

*san zi yi bao*,<sup>1</sup> profit in command, material incentives, technique first, and exclusive reliance on specialists in running factories. Ideologically and culturally, they did their best to peddle the vicious feudal, capitalist and revisionist wares and glorify feudal emperors and princes, generals and ministers, scholars and beauties so as to mould public opinion in favour of their counter-revolutionary activities. Organizationally, they formed an underground bourgeois headquarters by recruiting deserters and renegades, protecting one another and working hand in glove. So their heinous activities certainly went beyond the formula "also serve the bourgeoisie." They are in fact faithful agents, steeped in crime, of the imperialists, modern revisionists and Kuomintang reactionaries. As for the theory of "synthesized economic base" it was simply a manifestation, in theory, of the counter-revolutionary attempts at the overthrow of the proletarian dictatorship on the part of these anti-Communist Kuomintang elements, renegades and enemy agents.

#### "FITTING THE CHARACTER OF CHINA'S PRODUCTIVE FORCES" REFUTED

The principal argument fabricated by Yang Hsien-chen to justify his theory of "synthesized economic base" was that the five kinds of production relations in the transition period "fit the character of China's productive forces." This was a gross exposure of Yang

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<sup>1</sup>This means the extension of free markets, the extension of plots for private use, the promotion of small enterprises with sole responsibility for their own profits or losses, and the fixing of output quotas on a household basis.

Hsien-chen and his sort as peddlers of the reactionary "theory of productive forces."

The five kinds of production relations in question covered socialist economy and capitalist economy, and also individual economy. Was it possible that all these "fit the character of China's productive forces"? As early as 1940 Chairman Mao pointed out that the Great October Socialist Revolution changed the whole course of world history, and ushered in a new era. The ideological and social system of capitalism throughout the world resembled "**'a dying person who is sinking fast, like the sun setting beyond the western hills,' and will soon be relegated to the museum**" (*On New Democracy*). In the 1950s, especially when China had established the proletarian dictatorship and entered the stage of socialist revolution, how could it still be said that capitalist relations of production "fit the character of China's productive forces"? After seizing state power, we proceeded at once to confiscate bureaucrat-capital — the principal part of China's capitalism — and change it into state owned. Towards the industry and commerce of the national bourgeoisie, we adopted the policy of using, restricting and transforming them, but this never implied that capitalism "fit the character of China's productive forces." On the contrary, it showed that capitalism did not suit the character of the productive forces and that it was necessary to transform it step by step into socialist ownership by the state. In fact, it was inevitable that the bourgeoisie's reactionary profit-seeking nature and the growing contradictions between capitalism and socialism seriously hamstrung the expansion of social productive forces. People still remember the frantic attack the bourgeoisie, aided and abetted by

Liu Shao-chi & Co., made shortly after the founding of the People's Republic against the proletariat by spreading the five evils of bribery of government workers, tax evasion, theft of state property, cheating on government contracts and stealing economic information from government sources for private speculation, seriously undermining China's industrial and agricultural production. With all this, how could one say that capitalist relations of production "fit the character of China's productive forces"?

As to the individual economy, it was, as Chairman Mao described, scattered and backward, not much different from that of ancient times. It is true that our land reform had broken the bonds of the feudal system of exploitation and liberated the productive forces in Chinese agriculture, but individual economy afforded very little room for their expansion. In fact, the marketable grain and raw materials supplied by peasants farming individually had, to an ever increasing degree, fallen short of the growing needs of the people and of socialist industrialization. Moreover, individual economy is unstable but engenders capitalism daily and hourly. Such being the case, could individual economy "fit the character of China's productive forces"?

Yang Hsien-chen's argument, "fitting the character of China's productive forces," boiled down to this: Because of its backward productive forces, China was destined to develop only capitalism and build a capitalist economic base; it should not, nor could it, carry out socialist revolution and build a socialist economic base. It must then set up a bourgeois dictatorship to serve a capitalist economic base; it should not, and could not,

institute proletarian dictatorship. This is the thoroughly revisionist "theory of productive forces."

The "theory of productive forces" is an international revisionist trend that makes a fetish of spontaneity. It absurdly exaggerates the decisive role of productive forces, which it reduces to means of production plus techniques. It completely negates the factor of man and denies the effect of revolution on the development of production, of production relations on productive forces and of the superstructure on the economic base. Such a fallacy would make it appear as if social development were merely the natural outcome of the development of productive forces, that when the productive forces are highly developed a new society would naturally appear, that if the productive forces are not yet highly developed it would be futile for the proletariat consciously to carry out socialist revolution. This fallacy, substituting vulgar evolutionism for revolutionary dialectics, and class conciliation for class struggle, opposes the proletarian revolution and proletarian dictatorship. It is historical idealism unalloyed.

Chairman Mao says: **"True, the productive forces, practice and the economic base generally play the principal and decisive role; whoever denies this is not a materialist. But it must also be admitted that in certain conditions, such aspects as the relations of production, theory and the superstructure in turn manifest themselves in the principal and decisive role"** (*On Contradiction*). This highly important scientific thesis, enriching and developing the basic principles of dialectical materialism and historical materialism, clearly points out that in a period of change in the revolution the relations of production and the superstructure can play the principal and

decisive role with regard to the productive forces and the economic base. Revolution means liberating the productive forces and promoting their growth. History shows that every revolution is brought about by the development of the productive forces to a certain extent, but this does not necessarily imply that the transformation of the backward relations of production must be preceded by the full development of the productive forces. Rather, the first thing is to prepare public opinion, seize state power, and then solve the question of ownership, after which comes the question of greatly developing the productive forces. Such is the general law of revolution. If, according to the fallacies of Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen & Co., instead of the backward relations of production being transformed after the seizure of state power, capitalism had been allowed to spread unchecked in the hope of developing the productive forces, China would have become a colony of imperialism and social-imperialism, and there would be no socialism at all.

The "theory of productive forces" trumpeted by Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen *et al.* is nothing new, but the same revisionist trash of the Second International which Lenin thoroughly discredited long ago.

Lenin refuted the revisionist "theory of productive forces," exposing the renegade features of Bernstein, Kautsky *et al.* In his article "Our Revolution," he pointed out that all the "heroes" of the Second International kept harping in a thousand different keys that "the development of the productive forces of Russia has not attained the level that makes socialism possible." This nonsense he repudiated by declaring: **"You say that civilization is necessary for the building of socialism. Very good. But why could we not first create such prerequisites of civi-**

lization in our country as the expulsion of the landowners and the Russian capitalists, and then start moving towards socialism? Where, in what books, have you read that such variations of the customary historical sequence of events are impermissible or impossible?" (*Collected Works*, Vol. 33). Lenin mercilessly tore off the pseudo-Marxist mask of these "heroes" with these words: "They all call themselves Marxists, but their conception of Marxism is impossibly pedantic"; they "are afraid to deviate from the bourgeoisie, let alone break with it, and at the same time they disguise their cowardice with the wildest rhetoric and braggartry" (*ibid.*).

Doesn't every word, every sentence of Lenin's hit such pseudo-Marxist swindlers as Liu Shao-chi and Yang Hsien-chen where it hurts most? To oppose the socialist revolution in the ownership of the means of production, these swindlers had likewise been harping in a thousand different keys on their fallacy, that "due to backward productive forces, China can not go in for socialism."

REFUTING THE FALLACY, "CONTRADICTION  
BETWEEN THE ADVANCED SOCIALIST  
SYSTEM AND THE BACKWARD  
SOCIAL PRODUCTIVE FORCES"

In May 1956, when China had in the main completed the socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production, and the theory of "synthesized economic base" had been exploded, Liu Shao-chi personally consoled and encouraged Yang Hsien-chen, saying, "You're right," private capitalism "is part of the base," "but you needn't talk about this question any more now." Strange!



If Yang was right why shouldn't he talk about it any more?

Before long the cat was let out of the bag: "needn't talk about this question any more" was a dodge; the real thing was to mount a feverish counter-attack. Their theory of "synthesized economic base" having gone up in smoke, Liu Shao-chi and other swindlers changed their tactics, now claiming that China's principal internal contradiction was "the contradiction between the advanced socialist system and the backward social productive forces." This so-called "contradiction" was only another expression of the reactionary "theory of productive forces" in the new circumstances. The fallacy of "synthesized economic base" and the invention of this "contradiction" were like two poison gourds on the same vine. Before socialist transformation, these swindlers tried by every means to protect the capitalist relations of production under the pretext that China's production level was low. After socialist transformation, using the same pretext, they insidiously plotted against the socialist system and against continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

How can there be such a thing as contradiction between an advanced social system and backward productive forces? Marxism tells us that the productive forces, first and foremost the labourers, are the most active and revolutionary factor in any mode of production, that social development invariably begins with the growth of productive forces. When the productive forces have advanced beyond the production relations, a situation will emerge where the production relations no longer correspond with the productive forces, the superstructure no longer corresponds with the production relations, and it becomes

necessary to change the production relations and the superstructure so as to make them correspond. It is only in a relative sense when we say that the superstructure corresponds with the production relations and the production relations correspond with the productive forces, or when we say that there is balance between the two aspects respectively. What is absolute is that the productive forces keep advancing and consequently there is always imbalance, and contradiction will always arise.

Analyzing the basic contradictions in Chinese society, Chairman Mao pointed out: **“Socialist relations of production have been established and are in harmony with the growth of the productive forces, but they are still far from perfect, and this imperfection stands in contradiction to the growth of the productive forces. Apart from harmony as well as contradiction between the relations of production and the developing productive forces, there is harmony as well as contradiction between the superstructure and the economic base”** (*On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People*). China's socialist relations of production are unquestionably advanced; they are better suited to the development of the productive forces than were the old relations of production and permit the productive forces to develop at a rate impossible in the old society, so that production can expand steadily to meet gradually the ever growing needs of the people.

Of course, contradictions still exist between our socialist relations of production and the productive forces, and between the superstructure and the economic base. These contradictions inevitably find expression in the struggle between the two classes, the two roads and the two lines. They arise because, on the one hand, the bourgeoisie still

exists and, on the other, the socialist system has to undergo a continuous process of building up and consolidating. This shows precisely that in socialist society, too, the development of the productive forces runs ahead of the relations of production. Therefore, "contradiction between the advanced socialist system and the backward social productive forces" does not exist.

One cannot help asking: Why, then, should Liu Shao-chi and other swindlers make up this so-called "contradiction" which is theoretically groundless and actually non-existent, and declare it as China's principal internal contradiction?

Their fabrication of this "principal contradiction" was to create a "basis" for their fallacy of "the dying out of class struggle" in order to negate Chairman Mao's Marxist-Leninist scientific thesis that the principal internal contradiction in China is **"the contradiction between the working class and the bourgeoisie,"** deny the existence of contradictions, classes and class struggle in socialist society, oppose continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, overthrow the proletarian dictatorship, and restore capitalism.

Chairman Mao exposed in good time and exploded thoroughly the reactionary fallacies of these swindlers. In 1957, in his brilliant essay *On the Correct Handling of the Contradictions Among the People*, he scientifically analyzed the class contradictions and class struggle in socialist society, laying a theoretical foundation for continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Again, at the Tenth Plenary Session of the Party's Eighth Central Committee held in September 1962, Chairman Mao further exposed Liu Shao-chi & Co.'s plot for restoring capitalism.

Still, these renegades did not and would not "lay down their butcher's knives and become Buddhas." During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, when they reached a dead end and faced their doom, they again waved their ragged banner of the "theory of productive forces" and mouthed such nonsense as "production can promote revolution," etc., trying to make a last-ditch struggle. They desperately opposed Chairman Mao's policy of **"grasping revolution and promoting production,"** in an attempt to suppress revolution in the name of production and thus undermine the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

But, the dialectics of history is inexorable. No matter how hard Liu Shao-chi and other swindlers struggled and resorted to sophism, the storm of this great Cultural Revolution finally swept them, one after another, onto the garbage heap of history.

## MOMENTOUS STRUGGLE ON THE QUESTION OF THE IDENTITY BETWEEN THINKING AND BEING

The question of the identity between thinking and being was at one time turned into a serious struggle on China's philosophical front by Yang Hsien-chen, Liu Shao-chi's agent in this field. Influenced by changes in international and domestic class struggle, it had its ups and downs three times and lasted eight or nine years, from the end of 1955 to 1964. Endeavouring to cover up the essence of this struggle, Yang Hsien-chen and his kind spread lies, such as that the question was an "academic contention which has nothing to do with politics," and that they belonged to a "school of thought" engaging in "academic explorations," etc.

Was this true? Not at all.

Yang Hsien-chen's shabby merchandise — "there is no identity between thinking and being" — was designed to oppose putting Mao Tsetung Thought in command and launching revolutionary mass movements. It sought to provide the "theoretical basis" for Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist line aimed at overthrowing the dictatorship of the proletariat and restoring capitalism.

The so-called "academic contention which has nothing to do with politics" was actually an expression of the sharp struggle between the two classes, the two roads and the two lines.

As for the so-called "school of thought" for "academic explorations" it in fact consisted of a handful of counter-revolutionaries who committed numerous crimes under the wing of Liu Shao-chi's bourgeois headquarters.

## I

The Marxist theory of knowledge has consistently affirmed the identity between thinking and being and that, though thinking and being are opposites, they are interconnected and can transform themselves into each other under certain conditions. Marx clearly pointed out: **"Thinking and being are thus no doubt distinct, but at the same time they are in unity with each other"** (*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*). Lenin also said: **"Not only is the transition from matter to consciousness dialectical, but also that from sensation to thought, etc."** (*Conspectus of Hegel's Book Lectures on the History of Philosophy*). **"The thought of the ideal passing into the real is profound: very important for history"** (*Conspectus of Hegel's Book The Science of Logic*).

Chairman Mao has inherited, defended and developed the dialectical-materialist theory of reflection and raised the Marxist theory of knowledge to a higher, completely new stage. He penetratingly revealed the law of development of human knowledge, pointing out: **"Practice, knowledge, again practice, and again knowledge. This form repeats itself in endless cycles, and with each cycle the content of practice and knowledge rises to a higher level. Such is the whole of the dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge, and such is the dialectical-material-**

ist theory of the unity of knowing and doing" (*On Practice*). The dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge is an active and revolutionary theory of reflection. It not only recognizes that being is primary and thinking secondary and thinking is a reflection of being, but scientifically explains the primary importance of social practice to knowledge and stresses the great role of revolutionary theory in actively changing the world. It is a sharp weapon for the proletariat to know and change the world, and is the theoretical basis for putting Mao Tsetung Thought in command and giving full play to the revolutionary mass movement in all our work.

At crucial junctures in China's socialist revolution and construction, Yang Hsien-chen would come out with the reactionary statement that "there is no identity between thinking and being" to resist the active and revolutionary theory of reflection, and oppose putting Mao Tsetung Thought in command and launching revolutionary mass movements.

Chairman Mao made public in 1955 his *On the Question of Agricultural Co-operation*, thoroughly criticizing the Right opportunist line of Liu Shao-chi and his gang, which had slashed the co-operatives. This immediately gave rise to a high tide of socialist revolution in China. It was at that time that Yang Hsien-chen, in a futile effort to resist the mighty current of socialist revolution, put forward his fallacious idea that "there is no identity between thinking and being" and attacked as "idealist" the thesis that there is identity between thinking and being.

In 1958, Chairman Mao formulated the general line of **going all out, aiming high and achieving greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism.** He issued the call to do away with all fetishes and

superstitions, emancipate the mind and carry forward the communist style of daring to think, speak and act. Again and again he stressed that we must persevere in putting politics in command and give full play to the mass movement in all our work. The people's revolutionary enthusiasm and creativeness were enormously mobilized by Chairman Mao's revolutionary theory and revolutionary line. And the great leap forward emerged all over the nation and people's communes were set up throughout the rural areas. The great victory of Mao Tsetung Thought aroused mad opposition by the class enemies at home and abroad. Answering their needs, Yang Hsien-chen racked his brains to systematize his "there is no identity between thinking and being" rubbish and came up with his reactionary article "A Brief Discussion of Two Categories of 'Identity.'" In it he opposed the Marxist theory of knowledge and attempted to deny fundamentally the general line, the great leap forward and the people's commune.

The law of the unity of opposites is the fundamental law of the universe, a law applicable to everything including, of course, the relationship between thinking and being. But Yang Hsien-chen fabricated the fallacy that "identity between thinking and being" and "dialectical identity" belonged to "two different categories," that "although the same in wording, they are different in meaning." He openly opposed applying revolutionary dialectics to the theory of knowledge.

The active and revolutionary theory of reflection not only recognizes thinking as the reflection of being but also the reaction of thinking on being. Hence it firmly holds that there is identity between thinking and being. Yang Hsien-chen, however, tried to set the identity be-



tween thinking and being against the theory of reflection, alleging that, with regard to the question of the relationship between thinking and being, "materialism uses the theory of reflection to solve it, while idealism solves it by means of identity." In denying the identity between thinking and being he totally denied the great role of revolutionary theory, negated the conscious dynamic role of the masses, and twisted the active and revolutionary theory of reflection into the mechanical theory of reflection.

The dialectical-materialist conception of the identity between thinking and being holds that thinking and being are interconnected and can transform themselves into each other on the basis of practice. But Yang Hsien-chen deliberately distorted the theory of the identity between thinking and being into the idealist nonsense of the sameness of thinking and being, raving that recognition of the identity between thinking and being meant upholding that "being is thinking, and thinking is being." He wantonly attacked the idea that there is identity between thinking and being as an "idealist proposition."

To defend his reactionary trash, Yang Hsien-chen distorted Engels' meaning by vilely making use of an error in punctuation in the 1957 Chinese edition of *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*. Engels said: **"The question of the relation of thinking and being has yet another side: in what relation do our thoughts about the world surrounding us stand to this world itself? Is our thinking capable of the cognition of the real world? Are we able in our ideas and notions of the real world to produce a correct reflection of reality? In philosophical language this question is called the question of the identity of thinking and being, and the over-**

**whelming majority of philosophers give an affirmative answer to this question.”** The 1957 Chinese edition broke up the last sentence of this passage into two sentences by erroneously putting a period after **“this question is called the question of the identity of thinking and being.”** Yang Hsien-chen and his bunch quibbled and argued obstinately, alleging that what had been solved by “the overwhelming majority of philosophers,” according to Engels, was not “the question of the identity of thinking and being.” In fact, even with that inadvertent period in the Chinese edition, what Engels wanted to say is clear enough in the context. He definitely pointed out that the overwhelming majority of philosophers have affirmed the identity of thinking and being.

In his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Lenin thoroughly criticized the Machist theory of the sameness of thinking and being, that is, the reactionary subjective idealist fallacies Ernst Mach & Co. advocated, such as “things are complexes of sensations,” and the sameness of social being and social consciousness. Deliberately confusing the theory of the identity between thinking and being with the Machist fallacy that thinking and being are the same, Yang Hsien-chen alleged that Lenin’s *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* “criticized the identity between thinking and being from beginning to end.” Moreover, in order to attack the active and revolutionary theory of reflection, he was so mad as to fly in the face of logic to distort facts and change the relevant translation by whatever means he could.

Yang Hsien-chen tried to publish his reactionary article “A Brief Discussion of Two Categories of ‘Identity’” in October 1958 in order to openly oppose Mao Tsetung Thought. The proletarian headquarters headed by Chair-

man Mao discovered this and immediately exposed that the reactionary essence of "there is no identity between thinking and being" lay in the denial of the universality of the law of the unity of opposites, was dualism characterized by the separation of thinking and being. The proletarian headquarters solemnly pointed out that all such reactionary absurdities were opposed to Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tsetung Thought. Thus Yang Hsien-chen's scheme was crushed.

Unwilling to give up, however, Yang Hsien-chen made a frantic counter-attack. Supported by modern revisionism, a group of anti-Party elements in Liu Shao-chi's bourgeois headquarters came up in 1959 with a thoroughly sinister counter-revolutionary programme the purpose of which was to overthrow the correct leadership of the Party Central Committee headed by Chairman Mao. In the first half of that year, Yang Hsien-chen busied himself with shady activities in all places, hawking his poisonous ideas to pave the way for their plot to usurp Party leadership. Aping Khrushchov, he attacked our Party and our socialist system and opposed Mao Tsetung Thought.

The Eighth Plenary Session of the Party's Eighth Central Committee held in August 1959 smashed the plot of these anti-Party elements and also dealt Yang Hsien-chen a heavy blow. Unreconciled, he went further afield in opposing the theory of the identity between thinking and being. He collected a gang and did many things with ulterior motives under the cloak of "academic explorations." In October of the same year, his henchmen finally came out with the rehashed version of his reactionary article "A Brief Discussion of Two Categories of 'Identity.'" This stirred up an open struggle on the

question of the identity between thinking and being in order to oppose the Party Central Committee's Eighth Plenary Session mentioned above and reverse the correct verdict on that bunch of anti-Party elements.

The proletarian headquarters headed by Chairman Mao exposed Yang Hsien-chen's counter-revolutionary crimes and guided the criticism of him. The press responded with counter-attacks against Yang Hsien-chen and his ilk, publishing articles criticizing their fallacy that "there is no identity between thinking and being."

## II

In 1961-62, taking advantage of the temporary economic difficulties from which China suffered, Liu Shao-chi's bourgeois headquarters, in co-ordination with the anti-China chorus abroad, did its utmost to restore capitalism at home. Under these circumstances, Yang Hsien-chen once again provoked an open struggle centred around the question of the identity between thinking and being.

As a matter of fact, Yang Hsien-chen had long prepared the ground and his scheme for this open battle. In the first half of 1961, he turned up here, there and everywhere to collect material with which to flagrantly attack the general line, the great leap forward and the people's commune; he advocated individual farming for all he was worth and abetted the Right opportunists to demand reversal of the decisions justly passed on them. Using the pretext of "summing up historical experience and educating cadres," he gave a string of reports in a feverish attempt to prepare public opinion for counter-revolutionary purposes.

Now let us see how he went about his "summing up historical experience and educating cadres."

Yang Hsien-chen totally denied the necessity of a process for man's cognition of objective phenomena. In his eyes, it was "idealism" when the subjective could not readily conform with the objective. Proceeding from this fallacy, he used the tactics of attacking one point to the total disregard of the rest and grossly exaggerated the temporary, isolated shortcomings which were difficult to avoid in our actual work, labelling them all "idealism." He wildly went for so-called "mistakes" in the great leap forward and ascribed the cause to "the identity between thinking and being," to "man's conscious dynamic role which makes a mess of things," etc. He made a big show of upholding materialism while actually using metaphysics and idealism to oppose the active and revolutionary theory of reflection.

Chairman Mao has taught us: **"Often, correct knowledge can be arrived at only after many repetitions of the process leading from matter to consciousness and then back to matter, that is, leading from practice to knowledge and then back to practice"** (*Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?*). A process is necessary for the leap from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom in man's cognition of the objective world. Only after repeated practice can people advance from inexperience to experience, from ignorance to knowledge and from incomplete knowledge to relatively complete knowledge. Owing to various limitations, certain shortcomings and mistakes are hardly avoidable in the process of cognition and practice, and so is the failure for the subjective to fully accord with the objective. How can these be called "idealist"? Especially in such great revolutionary mass

movements involving hundreds of millions of people as the great leap forward and the people's commune, we can only acquire experience step by step in the course of practice, gradually deepen our knowledge of the essence of things and expose and resolve the contradictions that arise as we go forward. In summing up our experience, we must use the Marxist theory of knowledge as our guide to affirm our achievements and overcome our shortcomings so that we can all the better advance along Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line unswervingly and bravely. It is crystal clear that Yang Hsien-chen's so-called "summing up historical experience and educating cadres" was nothing but an attempt to totally negate the general line, the great leap forward and the people's commune and create confusion among the people so as to help Liu Shao-chi and his gang, representatives of the bourgeoisie, to usurp Party and state leadership.

The open struggle incited by Yang Hsien-chen was a completely premeditated scheme to reverse correct decisions and restore capitalism. At a sinister meeting in November 1961, he complained bitterly on behalf of a gang of anti-Party elements and shouted that the criticism of him was "unjust." When he instructed his henchmen to "speak up with articles," they responded with the cry that Yang Hsien-chen "should be rehabilitated and we should co-ordinate in this connection by writing articles in his favour." This handful also worked out an "operational plan": some would "write long articles to fight a major battle"; others would "write relatively short but timely articles to fight skirmishes"; still others would "write with regard to actual problems so as to fight a co-ordinated battle," etc.

Yang Hsien-chen and company watched for the opportunity they deemed most favourable to provoke the open struggle. Making use of the temporary difficulties facing China's national economy, Liu Shao-chi insidiously plotted, in 1961-62, to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat and restore capitalism. Working madly to spread counter-revolutionary ideas, he again brought out his sinister book *Self-Cultivation* advertising idealism, stuff which opposed proletarian revolutionary practice and betrayed the dictatorship of the proletariat. Yang Hsien-chen and company pitched in at once, raising an uproar and launching one vicious attack after another as though they really had a leg to stand on. They thus stirred up another open struggle concerning the question of the identity between thinking and being. Now Yang Hsien-chen cast aside all disguises and came out into the open to vent his bitter hatred for the Party and the people, thus further exposing his savage renegade features.

Because they are decadent and moribund reactionaries and a handful of fools blinded by inordinate ambition, the enemies invariably miscalculate the situation. While they were in the midst of their wild counter-attacks, the proletarian headquarters headed by Chairman Mao sharply pointed out: Yang Hsien-chen and company had for a long time deliberately distorted Engels' words to buttress up their reactionary fallacy and they had to be criticized. With the proletarian headquarters' guidance, Ai Szu-chi<sup>1</sup> and other comrades published articles exposing and criticizing theoretically and politically the

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<sup>1</sup> Comrade Ai Szu-chi was a vice-president of the former Higher Party School under the C.P.C. Central Committee. He died of illness in March 1966.

fallacy that "there is no identity between thinking and being."

Chairman Mao issued the great call "**Never forget class struggle**" at the Tenth Plenary Session of the Party's Eighth Central Committee held in September 1962. He led the whole Party and nation in an all-out counter-attack against revisionism and the bourgeoisie. At this session, the proletarian headquarters headed by Chairman Mao also exposed and criticized the counter-revolutionary crimes of Yang Hsien-chen and his cronies.

### III

Instead of ceasing their counter-revolutionary activities after the Tenth Plenary Session of the Party's Eighth Central Committee, Yang Hsien-chen and company used methods more clandestine than before in a last-ditch struggle, resorting to a series of plots to provoke the third open struggle.

In May 1963, Chairman Mao wrote *Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?* This was aimed at Khrushchovian revisionism abroad and the plot by Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen and their gang to oppose proletarian revolutionary practice and restore capitalism at home. This famous essay by Chairman Mao and his other brilliant writings thoroughly criticized their bourgeois idealism and metaphysics, and formulated the line and policies for unfolding the socialist education movement in both city and countryside. An advance on the Marxist theory of knowledge, Chairman Mao's *Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?* is a new generalization and a new development of this theory. It is also the scientific



summary of the struggle on the philosophical front centring around the question of the identity between thinking and being.

Chairman Mao's great theory that **"matter can be transformed into consciousness and consciousness into matter"** was a body blow to Liu Shao-chi and Yang Hsien-chen. They resisted it frantically. Liu Shao-chi trotted out a bourgeois reactionary line which was "Left" in form but Right in essence; he suppressed the masses, shielded the capitalist roaders and undermined the socialist education movement. At the same time, he wildly opposed the Marxist theory of knowledge and openly attacked the scientific method of investigation and study advocated by Chairman Mao. Denying the transformation of matter into consciousness as well as that of consciousness into matter, he shouted: "It is idealism if one holds that all man-made things are preceded by ideas." Taking his cue from Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen maintained that, regarding the transformation of matter into consciousness and consciousness into matter, "such transformation cannot be achieved haphazardly" and "it cannot be applied at random." Here, Yang Hsien-chen was making malicious insinuations to vilify as "idealism" the Marxist theory of knowledge developed by Chairman Mao.

In claiming that it was "idealism" to hold that there is identity between thinking and being, Yang Hsien-chen was hurling vicious slanders and dressing himself up as a confirmed adherent of materialism. His shamelessness knew no bounds! In denying the identity between thinking and being, Yang Hsien-chen denied the interconnection of matter and consciousness and their mutual transformation into each other based on practice. Thus he carved out an unbridgeable gap between matter and

consciousness, and cut asunder the relationship between matter and consciousness and between practice and knowledge, making them unrelated to each other. In this way, he denied that consciousness stems from matter and that knowledge originates in practice. According to his absurd theory, consciousness and knowledge were like rivers without sources and trees without roots; they could only be something innate in the mind or something that had dropped from the sky. This was Kant's dualism and idealist transcendentalism pure and simple.

Yang Hsien-chen never tired of talking about "being is primary, thinking is secondary," as though he was adhering to materialism. But this was unmitigated hypocrisy. Marxists not only acknowledge the objective world but, more important, they actively change it in accordance with its laws. To Yang Hsien-chen, however, merely acknowledging that "being is primary, thinking is secondary" meant everything, and as long as one "acknowledges objective reality" everything would be all right and he "is a conscious materialist." Accordingly, "acknowledging objective reality" meant that if there was a nail before you, you had just to "acknowledge" its existence but never do anything about it. But could this be called "conscious materialism"? Not at all: It was "conscious" capitulationism, renegade philosophy through and through. If Yang Hsien-chen's preaching were to be followed, people could only remain helpless before the objective world, they could only leave everything to fate and be docile tools. In the past decades, Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen and company had acted precisely in line with this kind of "materialism" and knuckled under time and again to the enemy.

Yang Hsien-chen said he "acknowledges objective reality," but actually he and his like, because of their counter-revolutionary nature, turned a blind eye to the objective realities, stubbornly refusing to acknowledge the infinite superiority of socialism, the inexhaustible strength of the masses armed with Mao Tsetung Thought, and the tremendous successes in China's socialist revolution and construction. To put it bluntly, what Yang Hsien-chen meant when he said he "acknowledges objective reality," etc. was sheer deception. Whether he "acknowledged" something or not was determined entirely by the bourgeoisie's counter-revolutionary needs, and by whether this was favourable or not to the restoration of capitalism. Materialism in words and idealism in deeds — such was the essence of Yang Hsien-chen's theory that "there is no identity between thinking and being."

Yang Hsien-chen slandered those advocating the identity between thinking and being as "propagating the theory of Bernstein" and "brandishing Bernstein's weapon to oppose Marxism." Here he was merely acting the thief crying "Stop thief!" In exposing Bernstein's revisionism, Lenin said: **"In the sphere of philosophy revisionism followed in the wake of bourgeois professorial 'science.' The professors went 'back to Kant' — and revisionism dragged along after the neo-Kantians"** (*Marxism and Revisionism*). Bernstein made "amendments" to the Marxist theory of knowledge by deliberately distorting the identity between thinking and being into an idealist theory that "thinking and being are the same." He raved that materialism and idealism were alike and, though they proceeded from different viewpoints, both simply presumed that thinking and being were the same. It was by such rotten methods that

Bernstein completely denied the identity between thinking and being. What Yang Hsien-chen tried to smuggle in was simply Bernstein's trash. The only difference was that while Bernstein openly declared that he firmly supported Kant's viewpoint in principle, Yang Hsien-chen sought to cover this up and did not dare say so in so many words. Thus we see it is no one but Yang Hsien-chen himself who was "propagating the theory of Bernstein" and "brandishing Bernstein's weapon to oppose Marxism."

The publication of Chairman Mao's work *Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?* thwarted the plot of Yang Hsien-chen and his gang who stirred up the third open struggle. But they still refused to give up. In March 1964, they published several reactionary articles which in a roundabout way propagated the reactionary theory that "there is no identity between thinking and being" and opposed the great theory that **"matter can be transformed into consciousness and consciousness into matter."** At the same time, in a desperate struggle, they turned up with the counter-revolutionary theory "combine two into one" to oppose the revolutionary dialectics of **one divides into two** and oppose the socialist education movement and the struggle against revisionism.

As soon as Yang Hsien-chen's counter-revolutionary theory "combine two into one" appeared, the proletarian headquarters headed by Chairman Mao hit the nail on the head and exposed its real nature and led the people in openly criticizing him. Following this, the mass movement of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution swept Yang Hsien-chen, along with his sinister master Liu Shao-chi and their bourgeois headquarters, onto the garbage heap of history. Finally, no matter what trickery

Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen and their gang used or how desperately they resisted, their counter-revolutionary revisionist line and their metaphysics and idealism went bankrupt for good.

\* \* \*

Reviewing the struggle centring around the question of the identity between thinking and being, we can clearly see that the activities of Yang Hsien-chen and his gang in this connection were an important component part of Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary plot to restore capitalism. Philosophy always serves politics. One's world outlook determines the kind of philosophical thought he advances to serve his political line. We must respond to the call issued by the Second Plenary Session of the Party's Ninth Central Committee held in the second half of 1970, conscientiously study Marxism-Leninism and Chairman Mao's philosophical works and heighten our consciousness of the struggle between the two lines and strive to further consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat.

## THE THEORY OF "COMBINE TWO INTO ONE" IS A REACTIONARY PHILOSOPHY FOR RESTORING CAPITALISM

Our great leader Chairman Mao points out: **"Everything divides into two."** **"The law of contradiction in things, that is, the law of the unity of opposites, is the basic law of materialist dialectics"** (*On Contradiction*). This scientific thesis of Chairman Mao's profoundly expresses the objective law of things and penetratingly expounds the core of materialist dialectics. It is a sharp weapon for the Chinese people in carrying out the three great revolutionary movements — class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experiment, a sharp weapon for consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat and steadfastly continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The wide dissemination of the brilliant concept **one divides into two** among the people met with the extreme fear and hatred of a handful of class enemies at home and abroad. In 1964, Liu Shao-chi instigated Yang Hsien-chen, his agent in philosophical circles, to set off a heated debate centring around the question of **one divides into two** or "combine two into one." The proletarian headquarters headed by Chairman Mao directly led this struggle on China's philosophical front, a struggle involving a matter of cardinal principle. With Mao Tsetung Thought as their weapon, workers, peasants and soldiers,

cadres and intellectuals criticized the reactionary theory of "combine two into one" and demolished it by the revolutionary dialectics of **one divides into two**.

As the "theoretical basis" of Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist line, the theory of "combine two into one" once permeated the political, economic, ideological, cultural, art and other fields. To eliminate the remaining poisonous influence of Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist line in all spheres, we must further criticize the bourgeois idealism and metaphysics of Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen and other such swindlers, as well as the reactionary theory of "combine two into one."

#### A REACTION TO CONTINUING REVOLUTION UNDER PROLETARIAN DICTATORSHIP

On the orders of Liu Shao-chi, the renegade Yang Hsien-chen, who long ago had prostrated himself before the Kuomintang reactionaries, came out at every crucial juncture in the socialist revolution to launch attacks on the Party in the field of philosophy. He frenziedly opposed Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and tried to use the reactionary world outlook of "combine two into one" to remould our Party and country.

In 1958, Yang Hsien-chen, with ulterior motives, advocated "using identity of contradiction" and by insinuation attacked our Party because it "talked only about the struggle between the opposites, but not their unity." His aim was to provide philosophical ground for Liu Shao-chi's theory of "the dying out of class struggle" in direct opposition to Chairman Mao's great work *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People*.

In 1961-62, Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary clique, in close co-ordination with the anti-China adverse current abroad, plotted counter-revolutionary restoration all along the line from the top down. At that time Yang Hsien-chen ran hither and thither to spread his reactionary philosophy, opposing more frantically than ever Chairman Mao's philosophical thinking. He babbled that the unity of opposites meant "common points," that we had "common points" with U.S. imperialism and that we and modern revisionism had "common points with some differences." Here he was openly calling for "combining" the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, socialism and imperialism, Marxism and revisionism, into one.

Chairman Mao was the first to perceive the danger of the counter-revolutionary plots of Liu Shao-chi and his gang, and time and again warned the whole Party and the people of the whole country to guard against revisionism. At the Tenth Plenary Session of the Party's Eighth Central Committee held in 1962, Chairman Mao put forward more comprehensively the basic line of the Chinese Communist Party for the entire historical period of socialism and issued the great call: "**Never forget class struggle.**" Under Chairman Mao's wise leadership, the Party intensified propaganda and education in the revolutionary dialectics of **one divides into two**, launched the socialist education movement on a broad scale, conducted open polemics against modern revisionism and dealt the class enemies at home and abroad hard blows. However, all these warnings and struggles did not and could not change the counter-revolutionary nature of Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen and company, who were impatient to restore capitalism. Yang Hsien-chen first openly peddled the theory of "combine two into one"



in the former Higher Party School under the C.P.C. Central Committee. After careful planning, this reactionary philosophy was launched for the public in 1964.

Lenin has said that the struggle in philosophy "**in the last analysis reflects the tendencies and ideology of the antagonistic classes in modern society**" (*Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*). The concocting of the theory of "combine two into one" was intended externally to meet the needs of imperialism and social-imperialism in subverting great socialist China, and internally to meet the needs of the counter-revolutionary restoration by the bourgeoisie. It was a hack philosophy serving Liu Shao-chi's efforts to restore capitalism, and ran counter to continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

#### OUT-AND-OUT BOURGEOIS IDEALISM AND METAPHYSICS

To oppose Marxist philosophy, all opportunists and revisionists do their best to negate the boundary between materialism and idealism as well as between dialectics and metaphysics. In peddling the reactionary theory of "combine two into one," Yang Hsien-chen, too, resorted to this kind of base counter-revolutionary tactics. He dressed this reactionary theory up as dialectics and prated that "combine two into one" and "one divides into two" had "the same meaning," deliberately trying to negate the fundamental antagonism between **one divides into two** and "combine two into one."

Lenin pointed out: "**The splitting in two of a single whole and the cognition of its contradictory parts. . . is**

**the essence . . . of dialectics”** (*On the Question of Dialectics*). **“In brief, dialectics can be defined as the doctrine of the unity of opposites. This grasps the kernel of dialectics, but it requires explanations and development”** (*Conspectus of Hegel’s Book The Science of Logic*).

Chairman Mao developed this great idea of Lenin’s further in his *On Contradiction, On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People* and other important philosophical works. Chairman Mao says: **“The law of the unity of opposites is the fundamental law of the universe. This law operates universally, whether in the natural world, in human society, or in man’s thinking. Between the opposites in a contradiction there is at once unity and struggle, and it is this that impels things to move and change”** (*On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People*). The concept **one divides into two** that Chairman Mao put forward profoundly and concisely summarizes the law of the unity of opposites and grasps the heart of materialist dialectics.

According to the concept **one divides into two**, there are contradictions in everything. The two aspects of a contradiction depend on and struggle with each other, and this determines the life of all things. The natural world, society and man’s thinking, far from “combining two into one,” are full of contradictions and struggles. Without contradiction, there would not be the natural world, society, and man’s thinking; nothing would exist. Contradictions are present in all processes of things and permeate all processes from beginning to end, and it is this that promotes the development of things. The constant emerging and resolving of contradictions — this is the universal law of the development of things.

Applying the concept **one divides into two** in examining socialist society, we have to recognize that throughout the entire historical period of socialism there are classes, class contradictions and class struggle, there is the struggle between the two roads of socialism and capitalism, there is the danger of capitalist restoration, and there is the threat of subversion and aggression by imperialism and social-imperialism. To resolve these contradictions, we must strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat and steadfastly continue the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Even in a communist society, there will be contradictions and struggles between the new and the old, the advanced and the backward, and right and wrong. Just as Chairman Mao has pointed out, **“Wherever there are groups of people — that is, everywhere apart from uninhabited deserts — they are invariably divided into left, centre and right. Ten thousand years from now this will still be so.”** Only by adhering to this concept and applying it to guide revolutionary practice can we be thorough-going dialectical materialists. To deny the concept **one divides into two** means to deny the universality of contradiction and to betray materialist dialectics and, politically, this inevitably leads to betrayal of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The core of the theory “combine two into one” lies in merging contradictions, liquidating struggle, opposing revolution, “combining” the proletariat with the bourgeoisie, “combining” Marxism with revisionism, “combining” socialism with imperialism and social-imperialism. This out-and-out reactionary bourgeois idealist and metaphysical world outlook is diametrically opposed to the world outlook of **one divides into two**.

## THEORY OF "COMMON NEEDS" REFUTED

Yang Hsien-chen repeatedly said that the identity of a contradiction consisted of "common points" and "common things." He distorted Lenin's thesis on the identity of contradiction, alleging that "the identity in the sphere of dialectics" meant "seeking common needs."

Let us read what the great Lenin wrote on the subject.

Lenin pointed out: "*Dialectics is the teaching which shows how opposites can be and how they happen to be (how they become) identical — under what conditions they are identical, transforming themselves into one another, — why the human mind should take these opposites not as dead, rigid, but as living, conditional, mobile, transforming themselves into one another*" (*Conspectus of Hegel's Book The Science of Logic*). Lenin here was talking about the identity of contradiction. Is there any trace of "common points" and "common needs" in this? Yang Hsien-chen was blatantly lying and slandering Lenin when he alleged that what Lenin meant by the identity of contradiction was "common needs."

In *On Contradiction*, Chairman Mao incisively explains Lenin's thinking on the identity of contradiction. Chairman Mao clearly points out: "**All contradictory things are interconnected; not only do they coexist in a single entity in given conditions, but in other given conditions, they also transform themselves into each other. This is the full meaning of the identity of opposites.**"

Chairman Mao's teaching clearly tells us: The first meaning of the identity of contradiction is that, in given conditions, the two contradictory aspects are interdependent for their existence. For instance, during the period of China's new-democratic revolution, the contradictory

aspects, the masses of the people on the one hand and imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism on the other, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, did not exist in isolation from each other. Each aspect had the other as the condition for its existence and they coexisted in a single entity. We should interpret the first meaning of the identity of contradiction only in this way and should never allow Yang Hsien-chen to distort it into having "common needs." Were there any "common needs" in the interdependence between the masses of the oppressed people and imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism? Certainly not. Even though the national bourgeoisie joined the united front in the national democratic revolution for a period and had certain common needs with the proletariat against imperialism and feudalism, this absolutely did not mean the identity of the two contradictory aspects, the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. When we speak of these common needs, we take the proletariat, the peasantry, the petty-bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie as one aspect of the contradiction and the three enemies, imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism, as the other. In the contradiction in which the proletariat and the bourgeoisie are the two opposite aspects, the relation between them is that of the exploited and the exploiter, and the needs of one are fundamentally opposed to the needs of the other.

Chairman Mao also stresses that the matter does not end with the interdependence of the two contradictory aspects on each other for their existence; what is more important is that, in given conditions, each of them transforms itself into its opposite, changes its position to that of its opposite. This is the second meaning of the identity of contradiction. Our Party led the Chinese

people in decades of heroic struggle aimed precisely at creating conditions for the promotion of the transformation of things so as to achieve the goal of the revolution. For instance, after the new-democratic revolution, the masses of the people who had long been oppressed and exploited transformed themselves into masters of the country, and imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism, the three enemies that oppressed and exploited the people, were completely overthrown. Through the socialist revolution in the ownership of the means of production, individual ownership in agriculture and handicrafts was transformed into socialist collective ownership by the working masses, and capitalist ownership in industry and commerce was transformed into socialist ownership by the state. Yang Hsien-chen used every means to oppose these revolutionary transformations. To call a spade a spade, his reactionary theory of "common needs" was nothing but an attempt to make the proletariat and other working people submit for ever to the misery of exploitation and enslavement, and to permit imperialism, the landlords and the bourgeoisie to sit on their backs for ever.

Basing himself on the reactionary theory of "common needs," Yang Hsien-chen tried his utmost to negate the fundamental antagonism between the two lines in the Chinese Communist Party. He alleged that the two lines in the Party were "both for socialism," and so they did not mean any struggle between the two roads.

Chairman Mao penetratingly pointed out: **"The revisionists deny the differences between socialism and capitalism, between the dictatorship of the proletariat and the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. What they advocate is in fact not the socialist line but the capitalist line"**

(*Speech at the Chinese Communist Party's National Conference on Propaganda Work*). This scientific thesis of Chairman Mao's exposed point-blank the counter-revolutionary features of Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen and their ilk and hit at the heart of their so-called theory of "common needs."

### THEORY OF "INSEPARABILITY" REFUTED

Yang Hsien-chen endlessly preached that the opposite aspects were "links that cannot be separated." He raved that learning dialectics meant "learning how to link the two opposing ideologies." This was a clumsy attempt to tamper with materialist dialectics.

Materialist dialectics holds that the nature of a thing is the contradictoriness within the thing and its separability. Engels pointed out: **"Dialectics has proved from the results of our experience of nature so far that all polar opposites in general are determined by the mutual action of the two opposite poles on each other, that the separation and opposition of these poles exist only within their mutual connection and union, and, conversely, that their union exists only in their separation and their mutual connection only in their opposition"** (*Dialectics of Nature*). That is to say, we cannot talk about the links between the two opposite aspects apart from their struggle and separability. The struggle of the opposite aspects inevitably leads to the breaking up of their interconnection, to the disintegration of the entity, and to change in the nature of the thing. Therefore, the interconnection between the opposite aspects is conditional and relative while their separability is unconditional and absolute.

As Chairman Mao points out: **“In society as in nature, every entity invariably breaks up into its different parts, only there are differences in content and form under different concrete conditions”** (*Speech at the Chinese Communist Party’s National Conference on Propaganda Work*). There is nothing in the world that cannot be separated. The development of objective things has time and again exposed the rotten metaphysical idea that a thing cannot be separated. Have there not emerged various old and new anti-Marxist revisionist factions in the course of the development of the international communist movement? In the course of the development of our Party, there emerged the “Left” and Right opportunist lines of the renegades Chen Tu-hsiu and Wang Ming, and Liu Shao-chi’s counter-revolutionary revisionist line. Chairman Mao’s proletarian revolutionary line has won great victories precisely through struggles against these erroneous lines. Therefore, revolutionary “separation” is not a bad but a good thing. It helps raise the people’s ideological consciousness, enhances the unity of the revolutionary people, promotes the development of the proletarian revolutionary cause, and impels society forward. Yang Hsien-chen did not say a word about the struggle of opposites and their transformation into each other. He completely denied the separability of a thing, describing the interdependence of the two opposite aspects on each other for their existence as “links that cannot be separated.” But in fact such dead and rigid links free from contradictions and transformation are non-existent.

Yang Hsien-chen had vicious political motives for advocating the theory of “inseparability.” When the socialist transformation of the ownership of the means



of production reached a high tide in China in 1956, he came out sermonizing that the proletariat and the bourgeoisie "will both benefit if they come together, and will both suffer if they separate." This was of the same mould as the fallacies advocated by Liu Shao-chi, such as that the bourgeoisie's "exploitation is a merit." This fully shows that they are a gang of faithful agents of the bourgeoisie.

The contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie is, in essence, antagonistic and irreconcilable, and can be resolved only by socialist revolution. As Chairman Mao pointed out in 1959, in the period of socialist revolution the life-and-death struggle between the two big opposing classes — the proletariat and the bourgeoisie — **"will continue . . . for at least twenty years and possibly half a century. In short, the struggle will not cease until classes die out completely."** In a sense, by steadfastly continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat, the proletariat separates completely from the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes. In the life-and-death struggle between these two classes, how can we "combine two into one"? If we should "combine two into one" with regard to the bourgeoisie, forget classes and class struggle and forget the dictatorship of the proletariat, **"then it would not be long, perhaps only several years or a decade, or several decades at most, before a counter-revolutionary restoration on a national scale would inevitably occur, the Marxist-Leninist party would undoubtedly become a revisionist party, a fascist party, and the whole of China would change its colour. Comrades, please think it over. What a dangerous situation this would be!"** That Yang Hsien-chen spared no effort to preach that the proletariat and the bourgeoisie

should “combine” and not “separate” was precisely for the purpose of realizing the counter-revolutionary plot of restoring capitalism.

THEORY OF “SYNTHESIS MEANS  
‘COMBINE TWO INTO ONE’ ” REFUTED

Yang Hsien-chen and company also alleged that “analysis means ‘one divides into two’ while synthesis means ‘combine two into one.’” This is not merely a question of their ignorance of Marxist philosophy; their real purpose was to cut asunder the dialectical relation between analysis and synthesis and to substitute reactionary metaphysics for materialist dialectics.

Marxist philosophy tells us that analysis and synthesis are an objective law of things and at the same time a method for people to understand things. Analysis shows how an entity divides into two different parts and how they are locked in struggle; synthesis shows how, through the struggle between the two opposite aspects, one prevails, defeats and eliminates the other, how an old contradiction is resolved and a new one emerges, and how an old thing is eliminated and a new thing triumphs. In plain words, synthesis means one “eats up” the other. The course of historical development is: What is revolutionary always “eats up” what is reactionary, and what is correct always “eats up” what is wrong. But this has to go through many complex and tortuous struggles. As Chairman Mao points out: **“Classes struggle, some classes triumph, others are eliminated. Such is history, such is the history of civilization for thousands of years. To interpret history from this viewpoint is historical**

**materialism; standing in opposition to this viewpoint is historical idealism”** (*Cast Away Illusions, Prepare for Struggle*). The history of mankind’s civilization is one of class struggle, one in which the revolutionary classes defeat and “eat up” the reactionary classes. Imperialism headed by the United States, social-imperialism and all other systems of exploitation will eventually be “eaten up” by socialism and communism. This is an objective law independent of man’s will. When reflected in men’s minds, such objective analysis and synthesis require that we make a concrete analysis of the movement of opposites in all things and, on the basis of such analysis, synthesize and point out the nature of the questions involved and determine the methods to resolve them. Different types of contradictions are resolved by different methods. It is quite clear that objective or subjective analysis and synthesis can only be **one divides into two** and not “combine two into one.”

Analysis and synthesis are closely connected. There is synthesis in analysis and analysis in synthesis. As Engels said in reference to the science of chemistry: **“Chemistry, in which analysis is the predominant form of investigation, is nothing without its opposite pole — synthesis”** (*Dialectics of Nature*). Yang Hsien-chen and company denied the connection between analysis and synthesis and said that “analysis means ‘one divides into two’ while synthesis means ‘combine two into one.’” This was the same stuff as the bourgeois dualism preached by Trotsky: “Politics — Marxist, art — bourgeois.”

Chairman Mao points out in *On Contradiction*: **“It was not until Marx and Engels, the great protagonists of the proletarian movement, had synthesized the positive achievements in the history of human knowledge and, in**

particular, critically absorbed the rational elements of Hegelian dialectics and created the great theory of dialectical and historical materialism that an unprecedented revolution occurred in the history of human knowledge." Chairman Mao has most profoundly explained how the founders of Marxism analyzed and synthesized the achievements in the history of human knowledge. Marx and Engels neither affirmed nor negated Hegelian dialectics in its entirety, but, dividing one into two, criticized its idealist shell and absorbed its rational kernel. Such analysis and synthesis fully demonstrated the thoroughgoing proletarian revolutionary spirit and scientific attitude which they consistently advocated. This is a brilliant example for us to follow.

The process of summing up our experience is also one of analysis and synthesis. By undertaking various kinds of struggles in social practice, men have accumulated rich experiences, some successful and some not. In summing up experience, it is necessary to distinguish the right from the wrong, affirm what is correct and negate what is wrong. This means, under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, reconstructing the rich data of perception obtained from practice, **"discarding the dross and selecting the essential, eliminating the false and retaining the true, proceeding from the one to the other and from the outside to the inside,"** raising perceptual knowledge to the level of rational knowledge and grasping the inherent laws of a thing. The movement of opposites — **one divides into two** — runs throughout this process. With the experience summed up in this way, we are able to uphold the truth and correct our mistakes, **"popularize our successful experience and draw the lessons from our mistakes."**

## REACTIONARY TREND OF INTERNATIONAL REVISIONISM

Was the reactionary philosophy "combine two into one" a creation by the renegades Liu Shao-chi, Yang Hsien-chen and their ilk? No! It was nothing but a variant, under new historical conditions, of the theory of "conciliation of contradictions" of the old-line opportunists and revisionists.

Since the emergence of Marxism, the mortal enemies of scientific socialism have openly advertised the reactionary theory of "conciliation of contradictions." Proudhon declared that he wanted to "seek the principle of accommodation" so as to conciliate the contradictions of capitalist society. Dühring uttered such nonsense as that the world was "indivisible" and "there are no contradictions in things." The reactionary chieftains of the Second International vainly attempted to replace revolutionary dialectics with vulgar evolutionism and replace the Marxist theories of class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat with the theory of "class collaboration." Kautsky trumpeted that "there are no two classes in a society that do not have common interests. There were common interests even between the slaveowner and his slaves." "There are indeed common interests between the capitalists and the workers." One and all, they were only fleeting intruders in history. Relentless criticism and exposure by Marx, Engels and Lenin showed these types up in their true colours.

When, after the victory of the October Revolution, the Soviet people, under the leadership of Stalin, embarked upon socialist industrialization and agricultural collectivization, Deborin and company jumped forth to fren-

ziedly oppose Lenin's theory of the unity of opposites. They maintained that contradictions appeared not at the inception of a process but only when it had developed to a certain stage and that the resolution of contradictions was the "conciliation of opposites." This theory of "conciliation of contradictions" of Deborin's was a reflection in philosophy of Bukharin's theory of "the dying out of class struggle" which alleged that "capitalism will peaceably grow into socialism." This reactionary philosophy for the restoration of capitalism was sternly criticized by Stalin. Modern revisionism, however, blatantly revived and developed Deborin's reactionary philosophy. Posing as a saviour, Khrushchov clamoured: "The world is whole and indivisible in face of the threat of nuclear disaster. That is where we all are the human race." In response, his academic title-holding servants clamoured that the law of the unity of opposites was "outmoded," that unity had "become the source and motive force playing a constant role in social progress," etc. They shamelessly described this renegade revisionist philosophy as "creatively developing Marxism-Leninism."

In face of this revisionist adverse current against Marxist philosophy, Chairman Mao, with great proletarian strength of mind, repeatedly stressed the great importance of disseminating materialist dialectics. He pointed out: **"We want gradually to disseminate dialectics, and to ask everyone gradually to learn the use of the scientific dialectical method"** (*Speech at the Chinese Communist Party's National Conference on Propaganda Work*). In his speech at the Moscow Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties in 1957, Chairman Mao once again expounded in a deep-going way the revolutionary

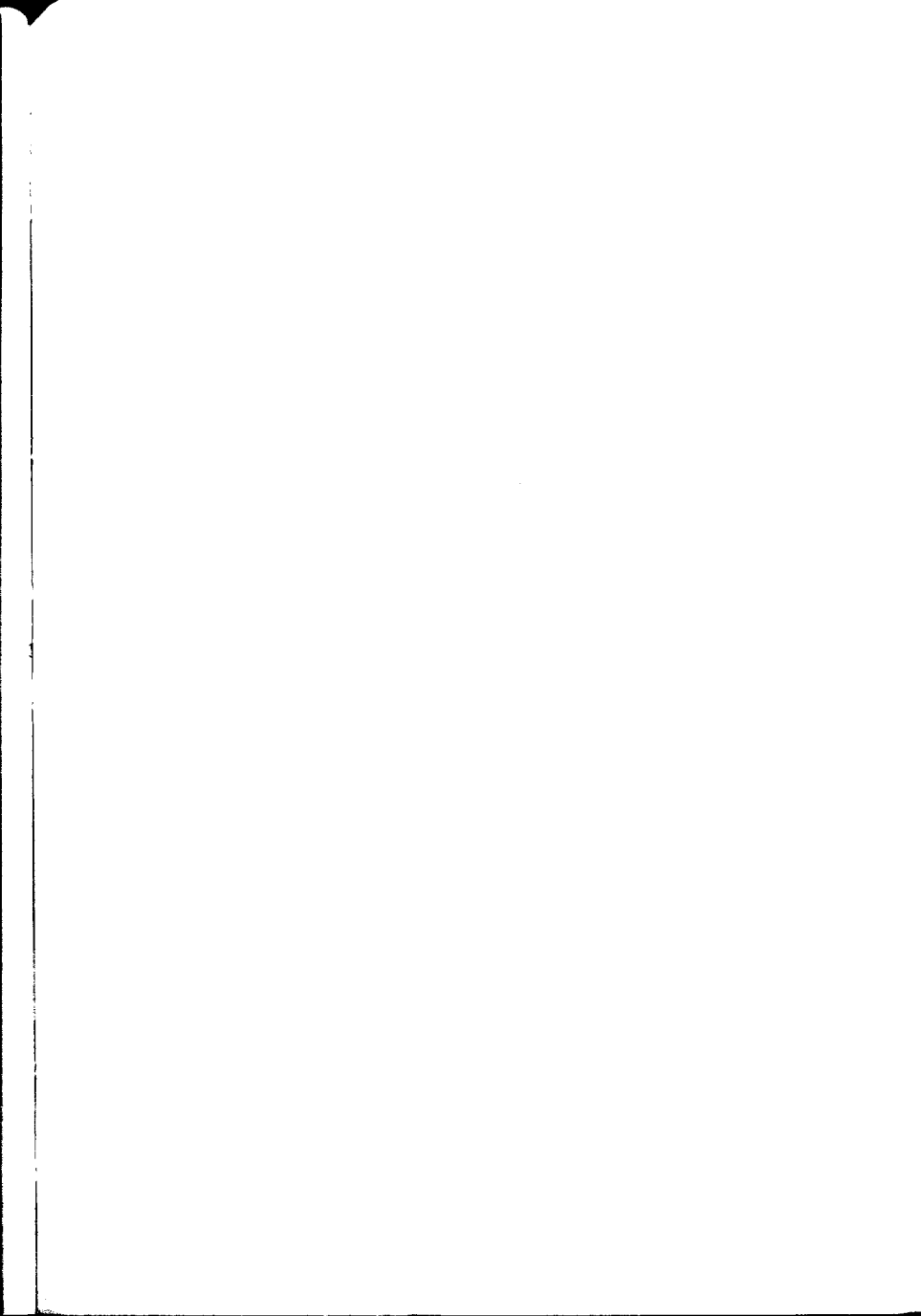
dialectics of **one divides into two**, giving a head-on blow to the revisionist adverse current.

The historical experience of the international communist movement has repeatedly proved that if a Marxist-Leninist political party does not observe, analyze and handle problems from the viewpoint of dialectical materialism and historical materialism, it will commit mistakes and degenerate politically. Since modern revisionism has thoroughly betrayed dialectical materialism and historical materialism and thoroughly betrayed the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, it has inevitably gone further and further down the road of revisionism and degenerated into social-imperialism.

The reactionary theory of "conciliation of contradictions" has become a tool today for social-imperialism in intensifying its fascist dictatorship, pushing an aggressive policy and in collaborating with U.S. imperialism and contending with it for world hegemony. Social-imperialism vehemently clamours for the creation of a "socialist community" and "giving first place to common interests." This is a vain attempt on its part to obliterate the differences between the aggressor and the victim of aggression, the exploiter and the exploited, the controlling and the controlled. It wants the working people of the countries in the "community" to sacrifice their own interests, give up their independence and sovereignty and "merge" completely into the "entity" of colonial rule by social-imperialism. But the reactionary theory of "conciliation of contradictions" can in no way save it from its doom. The inherent laws of dialectics are independent of the will of the revisionists. It has become an irresistible historical trend today for the people of the whole world,

and many medium-sized and small countries, to unite and oppose hegemony by the two superpowers, U.S. imperialism and social-imperialism, and draw a clear line of demarcation between themselves and these superpowers. Revolutionary dialectics is striking firm root in the hearts of the people, is being grasped by more and more Marxist-Leninist political parties and revolutionary people. It has become their sharp weapon in making revolution. So long as they integrate the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism with the concrete practice in the revolutionary movement of their respective countries, the revolutionary people of all lands will overthrow the entire old world and win final victory in the proletarian world revolution.





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