

Highlights of the Historical Struggle between the Two Lines in the Communist Party of China

Gerald Tannebaum

One of the fundamental tenets of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought is that contradiction is universal and is thereby absolute, that contradiction ' . . . is present in the development of all things and permeates every process from beginning to end.' (*On Contradiction*, August 1937.) Since this basic law operates in 'all things', it also holds for the existence and development of political parties because they too embody contradictions. Unity can and must be achieved at given times, but it is temporary, whereas struggle to maintain unity on an ever higher level is absolute. Upon the resolution of one contradiction, another inevitably arises. It is the struggle between the various aspects of contradictions within the party that determines its development, whether it rises to meet the test of each historical period, or falls victim to subjectivism, poor analysis and faulty moves, leading to loss of popular confidence and finally to demise.

The Marxist-Leninist parties are certainly no exception to this rule. Contradictions within them are in fact struggle between the different viewpoints of the party members, who irrespective of class origin are immersed in a class society and

subject to its influence. We must recognise that so long as classes exist, class struggle is an objective reality. Within a proletarian party the ideas of the ascending class are always in conflict with those of the descending class. The ideas representing the future development of society will grow and blossom while battling the ideas representative of the past and the old ruling classes. The clash between the old and new forces and their ideology is never-ending; nothing remains static and immutable. Chairman Mao Tsetung has written: 'History tells us that correct political and military lines do not emerge and develop spontaneously and tranquilly, but only in the course of struggle.' (*Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War*, December 1936.)

The Marxist-Leninist revolutionary ranks have the potential for being the most cohesive in the history of the world, because of the ideological common ground they share, embracing the vital interests of hundreds of millions of people. But we have seen that the experience of the Marxist-Leninist movement has been a succession of titanic struggles over interpretation of the principles, the

formulation of the correct political line and the adoption of the appropriate tactics. The movement has been torn asunder more than once, only to reconstitute its ranks on an ever-broader basis, establish a new unity on a higher ideological plane, and go on to greater and greater victories. This entails the struggle between the classes in society and their political lines outside and within the party, making it possible to face and solve each contradiction as it reaches its critical point.

The Communist Party of China has undergone a similar sequence of events. From its formation to the present, it has risen from a mere 57 members 48 years ago to the multi-millioned bastion of proletarian revolution in the world today, by undergoing one serious tempering after the other. The CPC has been able to do this because from its inception there was the presence of Chairman Mao who integrated Marxist-Leninist principles with the concrete conditions in China, thereby giving birth to a great new body of proletarian revolutionary thought. He has further developed Marxism-Leninism, with the result that his thought provides the foremost political guidance in the era of the collapse of the old imperialist-capitalist world and the rise of the new proletarian-socialist one. And primary in the evolvment of this revolutionary beacon light is his maxim: 'Opposition and struggle between ideas of different kinds constantly occur within the Party; this is a reflection within the Party of contradictions between classes and between the old and new in society. If there were no contradictions in the Party and no ideological struggle to resolve them, the Party's life would come to an end.' (*On Contradiction.*)

Mentally armed for the appearance of both proletarian and non-proletarian lines as every issue arose, Chairman Mao at each crucial juncture of the revolution fought against both Right and 'Left' opportunism, exposing the wrong path,

marking the correct one, and has led the Chinese people to an unbroken succession of victories. Grasping the struggle between the two lines within the Party as the key to progress for or setbacks to the revolution, Chairman Mao has likewise been able to determine in the long process of inner-Party strife the point at which a particular contradiction became intensified to the stage where it crossed the line and turned from a contradiction among the people into one between the people and the enemy. He put it thus: 'At first, with regard to certain issues, such contradictions may not manifest themselves as antagonistic. But with the development of class struggle, they may grow and become antagonistic.' (*On Contradiction.*) By carefully differentiating between the two kinds of contradictions, Chairman Mao was able to give the CPC the proper orientation, enabling it to handle correctly inner-Party struggle and ensuring the greatest unity on the basis of a political line founded on objective reality. It was this factor which engendered within the CPC the resources to overcome tremendous odds and seemingly insurmountable obstacles at each turn of the new-democratic and the subsequent socialist revolutions.

The history of the CPC is in truth the history of the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, their two lines and two roads (socialism versus capitalism), and not one of a 'palace' manoeuvring between individuals for power, as the Western press attempts to project. It is the history of the struggle between adhering to Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and the violation of this line, the struggle between the proletarian world outlook and the bourgeois one, the struggle between the correct ideas and erroneous ones in every field of life and work.

What Kind of Party?

Even prior to the founding of the CPC

in 1921, this conflict among Chinese revolutionaries had already surfaced, especially after the 1917 October Socialist Revolution in Russia. Chairman Mao said: 'The salvos of the October Revolution brought us Marxism-Leninism.' (*On People's Democratic Dictatorship*, June 30, 1949.) At last the Chinese people had the scientifically based social truth, the proletarian viewpoint with which to combat the enslaving ideologies of feudalism and the Western bourgeoisie. The central question then arose: 'Whose example do we follow?' From the very beginning there was a split into a proletarian line and a bourgeois line, even among those who refused to bend their knees to feudal and imperialist domination and were determined to free China and build it anew. But a correct answer to the above question was urgent in order to accomplish this far from easy task, and in groping for the solution two definite lines made themselves heard. Among his initial public writings, in the *Hsiang Kiang Review**, in an article published in 1919, Mao Tsetung expressed his conviction that organisation of the masses should proceed along the lines of the Russian example. This approach had proved itself; it had wrought great social changes in the old Russia that resembled the old China in many ways. The Bolsheviks' liberating ideas and actions had been the motive power behind the May 4th Movement (1919), which rendered the first revolutionary shock to the old order. The Chinese people had been awakened! But those supporting the opposite line wished to imitate the bourgeois democratic trappings of the West, at the very moment when the imperialist powers, all Western with the exception of Japan, were the prime cause of modern China's backwardness and the poverty and ignorance of her people! Chen Tu-hsiu, who was to become the first Secretary-General of the CPC, was one of the main advocates of the blind worship of things Western. Sun Yat-sen travelled this same hap-

less road, until, in the last years of his life, with the help of the CPC he recognised that the imperialists had come to China to exploit the people, not to liberate them. He too arrived at the conclusion: We must learn from the Russian example!

The clash between the two lines in this period came over what attitude to adopt toward the masses, and on what basis to erect the revolutionary party. Mao Tsetung persisted in the view that the masses were decisive and once united were a force that could not be suppressed, that revolutionary strength rested in them, and the people aroused could and would bring new glories to China. Chen Tu-hsiu for his part looked upon the masses as so much 'loose sand' without a particle of cohesiveness. His faith was placed in Wilson, one of the most imperialist- and chauvinist-minded presidents of the United States, and in the heads of other imperialist governments who mouthed words like 'freedom' and 'democracy'. Such divergent beliefs among the Chinese revolutionaries naturally led to diametrically opposite solutions for the liberation of the country. Chen Tu-hsiu was enthralled with the bourgeois parliamentary system and dreamt of various reformist methods of transferring power, then held by a bevy of warlords representing contending imperialist powers and the feudal and big bourgeois classes, to the hands of an intellectual élite to exercise on behalf of the labouring masses. This completely idealist conception of social development was challenged by the budding Marxist-Leninist thinking of the youthful Mao Tsetung. He argued that the fate of the Chinese people and their revolution should be rooted in historical materialism, otherwise it would be impossible to implement, protect and complete the revolu-

* A weekly magazine of the 'United Students Association', which Mao Tsetung played a leading role in founding in Changsha, Hunan. Mao was editor of this journal, the initial issue of which appeared in July 1919.

tion. He called for a Marxist type of uprising, and castigated parliamentarianism as a protective device for the bourgeoisie which bound the proletariat hand and foot with its 'laws'. He ridiculed the idea that the bourgeoisie could be 'converted' to socialism, as Chen contended, because this violated their class psychology, which was to gain more capital at the expense of the working people. He reasoned that the only way out was to knock down imperialism, the warlords and the old society, and to accomplish this task a revolutionary party composed of the proletariat and other labouring masses was necessary. Such a party had the responsibility of educating the people as to the inevitability of a superior social system, socialism, and to lead them in great struggles to win the new society. He believed this was the only practical road for the emancipation of the Chinese people, and was the single concept of *revolution* that was within the realm of realisation. He stood for the formation of a communist party, which would be the headquarters of the revolution, composed of the vanguard of the proletariat, with a strong organisation and a strict discipline. This party would fight selflessly for the liberation of the whole country.

Three decades later Chairman Mao was to summarise his thinking in these words: 'If there is to be a revolution, there must be a revolutionary party. Without a revolutionary party, without a party built on the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary theory and in the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary style, it is impossible to lead the working class and the broad masses of the people in defeating imperialism and its running dogs.' (*Revolutionary Forces of the World Unite, Fight Against Imperialist Aggression!*—November 1948.)

What is the Nature of the Revolution and Which Class Must Lead It?

Once the CPC made its appearance on

the political scene, there arose the question of what role it should play in fulfilling the national-democratic revolution. This became a bone of contention because the Kuomintang, led by Sun Yat-sen, was the main political and military force in the field on the side of this revolution. Sun had successfully led the 1911 Revolution which smashed the 2,000-year rule of feudalism, but had lost power over the bourgeois republic he had set up when the northern warlords and imperialists combined forces to shove him aside. His great failing was that he had not developed a mass base among the workers and peasants. Although he did not give up the struggle, he was making little or no progress; he relied on support from the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois classes and militarily played one warlord off against the other, appealing to their non-existent 'patriotism'. It was only after the founding of the CPC that the communists established contact with Sun, and gradually he came to see the importance of the October Revolution in the planning and execution of the Chinese people's struggles. Thereafter, he welcomed help from Lenin and the Soviet Union and entered into a united front with the CPC. It was only then that the KMT became an effective force and there grew the possibility of success in the revolution.

But this situation gave rise to the double question: 'What kind of revolution is being fought?' and 'Who should play the leading role?'

Not deviating from his subjective analysis of the character of the Chinese revolution, Chen Tu-hsiu in his articles and speeches refrained from mentioning leadership by the proletariat, the seizure of power and settling the question of land to the peasants. Rather he maintained that since it was a bourgeois-democratic revolution, it should be led by the bourgeoisie, that the proletariat could at most only lend a helping hand! His slogan was: All work through the Kuomin-

tang. He visualised that after the bourgeois republic was set up, then a second revolution would be necessary. He saw his bourgeois republic as a 'revolutionary, democratic, mass' political power, but in his next breath exulted that then capitalism could freely develop in China. In other words, he was proposing to organise the working class and peasantry to throw off one set of oppressors, only to immediately saddle them with another!

What is of significance and interest to the contemporary political scene in China is that Chen Tu-hsiu was supported by none other than Liu Shao-chi. In 1923 Liu wrote that the idea of the proletariat seizing power was a consideration so distant in the future, that there was no need at present to give it much time and thought! These so-called proletarian revolutionaries, while professing to espouse the cause of the working class, lost no chance to vilify it by harping on and exaggerating some of its weaknesses, these being difficulties which could be overcome, while paying scant or no attention to developing the strong points and revolutionariness of the workers. Chen uttered the nonsense that the strength of the bourgeoisie was more concentrated than that of the peasants, and more substantial than that of the proletariat; the working class was not an independent revolutionary force in the national revolution; the 'infantile' proletariat could only assist the bourgeoisie, and through the revolution gain a bit of 'freedom' and thereby enhance its capacity; etc. All such trash was the theoretical basis for Chen's counter-revolutionary programme which he inflicted on the CPC. Simultaneously, he constantly expressed his admiration and preference for the leadership of the bourgeoisie, falsely attributing to it revolutionary qualities far beyond its capability as an exploiting class.

While it was true that China was then undergoing a bourgeois-democratic revolution, to limit the horizon of the work-

ing masses and view the potential of the revolution solely from this aspect, withdrawing it from the context of the prevailing world situation, was the height of bourgeois idealism. In this era, no longer was the bourgeoisie the leading revolutionary class, seeking to break the fetters of feudalism. Capitalism had grown into monopoly capitalism and imperialism, and the bourgeoisie were dominating and exploiting most of the world. Any national bourgeoisie in a colonial or semi-colonial country which cherished illusions that it could throw off imperialism and its compradors and set up an independent regime under its hegemony soon had this dream brutally smashed by imperialist intrigue and military invasion. In China, Sun Yat-sen had gone through this very experience, which caused him to opt for unity with the Left. By this time an advanced model had been established—the first proletarian state, standing on its two feet and holding its own in a hostile world. This was a mighty gravitational pull on all revolutionaries which testified that in the modern era the bourgeois-democratic revolution could and *had* to be led by the proletariat. It was the one class with the will, the organisational means and the theory to thoroughly change the basis of society. Revolutions cannot skip stages in their development, but those stages can and do overlap, depending on *which* class is leading the struggle. With China a semi-colonial, semi-feudal country in the era of the proletarian revolution, to achieve complete destruction of exploitation, it was the proletariat that had to take the lead in winning first the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and at the same time prepare the conditions to carry the struggle forward into the next stage, that of the socialist revolution.

In March 1926, Mao Tsetung wrote his famous article: 'Analysis of the Classes in Chinese Society', in which he denoted the various economic groupings, defined their political outlook and degree

of reliability in the revolution. Using this measuring rod, he drew the line between the friends and foes of the revolution: 'The leading force in our revolution is the industrial proletariat. Our closest friends are the entire semi-proletariat and petty-bourgeoisie. As for the vacillating middle bourgeoisie, their right-wing may become our enemy and their left-wing may become our friend—but we must be constantly on our guard and not let them create confusion within our ranks.' The foes he named as '... all those in league with imperialism—the warlords, the bureaucrats, the comprador class, the big landlord class and the reactionary section of the intelligentsia attached to them.'

Inside the CPC this article was extremely important in fighting against Chen Tu-hsiu's Right opportunism—lavishing too much attention on the bourgeoisie—and Chang Kuo-tao's 'Left' opportunism—'closed-doorism', restricting the revolutionary ranks to the proletariat, refusing to recognise the possibilities and necessity for a united front policy. Chang even objected to cooperating with Sun Yat-sen's KMT! And both Chen and Chang forgot the strategical and tactical importance and revolutionary character of the Chinese peasants. It was Mao's article that made it clear where China's proletariat would find its principal ally in the revolution and thus solved the burning question of the worker-peasant alliance, confirming a basic Leninist pre-requisite for victory over the combined might of imperialism and native reaction. In contrast, Chen Tu-hsiu held out barren prospects for the liberation of the peasants. His view was that they would have to wait for the development of industry and the capitalisation of farming before they could benefit from the social revolution. He was never to put forward the question of land reform for liberating the peasantry! Mao Tsetung in his March 1927 stirring work: 'Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan'

countered the opportunists with the formulation that because of the character of China's society the question of the peasants was the heart of the question of the revolution! He said: 'Without the poor peasants there would be no revolution. To deny their role is to deny the revolution. To attack them is to attack the revolution. They have never been wrong on the general direction of the revolution.'

Despite the clarity of Mao's presentation, Chen Tu-hsiu allied himself with reactionary opinion inside and outside the Party and refused to heed the warning that his bourgeois line in leading the CPC was jeopardising the whole revolution. Just when the Northern Expedition was at the height of its success, Chiang Kai-shek betrayed the revolution at Shanghai, and he was soon followed by Wang Ching-wei at Wuhan, precipitating the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of communists, workers and intellectuals. This massacre occurred because Chen Tu-hsiu, (and as now revealed) abetted by Liu Shao-chi, who had secretly sold out the revolution, actually disarmed the workers and peasants instead of mobilising them to rise up and save the revolution, hoping by this to gain favour in Chiang's eyes. These two traitors committed further crimes. They issued orders that the peasants, then being led by Mao Tsetung in a massive revolutionary upsurge throughout south central China, rein in their attacks against the landlords and evil gentry. The proletariat was thus isolated from its main ally and left without weapons, paving the way for Chiang to wage counter-revolution on a nation-wide scale. It was a bitter and costly lesson Mao Tsetung and all true revolutionaries would never forget, nor allow the CPC and the Chinese people to forget!

Where to Locate the Base of the Revolution?

Though reeling under the blows dealt it by Chen Tu-hsiu's treachery and

Chiang Kai-shek's counter-revolution, the CPC was far from finished. As Chairman Mao put it in one of his best known statements: 'But the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese people were neither cowed nor conquered nor exterminated. They picked themselves up, wiped off the blood, buried their fallen comrades and went into battle again.' (*On Coalition Government*, April 24, 1945.) However, 'battle' included not only military warfare but further ideological struggle as well. Now the strategy and tactics of the revolution had to be moulded in the midst of combat. On August 7, 1927, the Central Committee (CC) had deposed Chen Tu-hsiu as secretary-general after thoroughly discrediting his Right opportunist line, this under the influence of Mao Tsetung's firm advocacy of seizing power through armed struggle. The meeting also decided to carry out land reform by mobilising the peasants for armed insurrection and to meet the KMT counter-revolution by all-out resistance. This opened a new period in the Chinese revolution. But the Party's forces were scattered, with the CC remaining in Shanghai, while military units began gathering in the Ching-kang Mountains where Mao Tsetung had established Red political power. It was inevitable that under these circumstances there should be two concepts of how to rekindle the flame of revolution in China. The fact is that one of these lines, that followed by the CC under the leadership of Chu Chiu-pai, and later under Li Lisan and Wang Ming, with assistance from Liu Shao-chi, would have extinguished what possibilities did exist. It was a form of 'Left' opportunism, a dogmatic approach at odds with the concrete conditions in China which emphasised arousing the workers to engage in uprisings in the cities according to the classical approach, with the 'hope' of stimulating supporting 'spontaneous' uprisings of the peasants. But the cities were the very places where the KMT and the reaction-

aries had the backing and armed might of the imperialists and were in the strongest position to suppress at will any mass movement of revolutionaries and workers. Mao Tsetung in a letter dated January 5, 1930, and later entitled, 'A Single Spark Can Start a Prairie Fire', characterised the above 'Left' measures as 'revolutionary impetuosity' which subjectively overestimated the hemmed-in proletarian forces of the revolution and under-estimated those of the counter-revolution. This strategy could only result in 'adventurism' which would and did prove very costly to the revolution.

Mao counterposed his own programme for reviving the revolutionary spirit and mobilising the strength of the vast masses of Chinese people. He went to the remote interior to set up his base among the poorest and most oppressed of the peasantry. Precisely because they were the backbone of the revolution, Mao began to educate and arouse them to the revolutionary solution of their exploitation and oppression. In addition, the locale he selected conformed with the concept of the 'weakest link', and was the very area where the social fabric of old China was in a state of decay, and where the KMT and the imperialists had the least strength and almost no control. It resembled a boiling pot of conflicting interests among numerous petty warlords, thereby allowing the greatest manoeuvrability militarily, yet with enough economic subsistence so that Red political power could exist in pockets completely surrounded by reactionary political power. Mao in the above-mentioned letter pointed out: '... in semi-colonial China the establishment and expansion of the Red Army, the guerilla forces and the Red areas is the highest form of peasant struggle under the leadership of the proletariat, the inevitable outcome of the growth of the semi-colonial peasant struggle, and undoubtedly the most important factor in accelerating the revolutionary high tide throughout the country.' Mao Tsetung's plan and sum-

marisation of his actual practice were detailed in his article, 'Why Is It That Red Political Power Can Exist In China?' (October 5, 1930), and in his report, 'The Struggle in the Ching kang Mountains' (November 25, 1928).

What Should the Military Line Be?

After the failure of the Great Revolution in 1927, the ideological fight to determine the political strategy and tactics for the revolution also had its repercussions in the military field. Since the Chinese revolution was primarily a struggle between armed revolution and armed counter-revolution, from its first days, and especially after Mao Tsetung regrouped the remnants of the Chinese people's armed forces in the Ching kang Mountains, the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Army accumulated much valuable experience both politically and militarily. Mao summarised this experience and carried out repeated ideological struggles on army-building and military strategy and tactics, creating a Marxist-Leninist type army, a people's army almost without parallel in history. The reputation it has built up over the decades has its roots in the Ching kang Mountains period and the many directives drawn up by Mao Tsetung.

One of the prime documents outlining principles to unify the military line, was the resolution Mao wrote for the Kutien Meeting of the Fourth Red Army Party delegates in December 1929, 'On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party'. Here he demolished the old concept of armies being concerned 'purely with military matters'. He pointed out it was wrong to oppose military matters to politics, because the former must have a political objective and '... military affairs are only one means of accomplishing political tasks.' He repudiated the fallacious formula, 'If you are good militarily, naturally you are good politically; if you are not good militarily, you cannot be

any good politically.' Proletarian politics, he underscored, must never be subordinated to military affairs, and consistently Mao's first rule on this point is that the Party leads the gun, and never the reverse. He insisted that the Chinese Red Army be looked upon and operate as '... an armed body for carrying out the political tasks of the revolution', and along with fighting, it was assigned the work of politically educating the masses, organising and arming them, helping them establish revolutionary political power and setting up Party organisations. He said: 'Without these objectives, fighting loses its meaning and the Red Army loses the reason for its existence.'

The opposing view in the early 1930's was the 'Left' opportunist line of Li Li-san and that of Wang Ming. In addition to their military 'adventurism', which brought severe losses to the Red Army, their political line was 'Let Army Headquarters handle outside matters'. As Mao pointed out, this high-handed approach was a departure from the concept of proletarian leadership of the revolution and would alienate the army from the masses of people, eventually causing the Red Army to disintegrate into the warlordism of the KMT armies! Under Mao's vigorous leadership and his patient explanations to the military cadres, such disaster to the Chinese revolution was ultimately averted by the victory of his correct military line throughout the armed forces.

Affected also were the tactics of the Red Army. The 'Left' opportunism of Li Li-san and Wang Ming was manifested in continued over-estimation of the strength of the revolutionary armies and an under-estimation of that of the KMT-imperialist coalition entrenched behind its fortifications and the walls of the major cities. They regarded the rural revolutionary bases as mere centres for amassing military strength with which to launch attacks on the enemy's strongholds. Such was their solution for ending the continuous 'encirclement and suppression'

campaigns of Chiang Kai-shek, then mounting in fury, in number of soldiers and the quantity of equipment used, with the objective of destroying the Chinese Red Army and the areas of Red political power. They did not understand the protracted nature of the military conflict and did not perceive the law governing it—the repetition over a long period of parrying ‘encirclement and suppression’ until the balance of forces could be changed, so that the enemy could then be defeated. However, Mao Tsetung had discovered and grasped this law, and from it he derived a completely different role for the rural revolutionary bases. He saw in them hope for the Chinese revolution as a whole. China, semi-colonial and semi-feudal, required that first emphasis be placed on mobilising those who were the most oppressed and represented the majority of the population, although other forms of struggle were also to be utilised to their fullest capacity. This perforce placed the rural areas and the peasantry, especially the poor peasants, to the fore, and from this premise the political and military tactics had to be drawn. Mao viewed the rural bases not as something to be milched and then discarded, but just the reverse; they were to be nurtured and enlarged, then used to surround the enemy immobilised inside the cities and gradually isolating these one by one, wear them down until they could be overcome by a dashing blow of revolutionary power. If treated in this light the revolution would continuously receive physical and spiritual sustenance from the huge reservoir of man-power and labour-power in these bases. Therefore, his military tactics for confronting the enemy were an extension of his political tactics. His standing order was that the masses should be awakened and mobilised on an ever-broadening scale, because if they are made politically aware, then ‘. . . no enemy, however powerful, can cope with us.’ His second rule was that the revolutionary forces must maintain intimate contact

with the masses. Gaining their support, being like fish in the sea, the revolutionary forces could mainly operate in the rural areas and conduct guerilla warfare. These were summed up in the now world-famous formulation:

Divide our forces to arouse the masses; concentrate our forces to deal with the enemy.

The enemy advances, we retreat; the enemy camps, we harass; the enemy tires, we attack; the enemy retreats, we pursue.

To extend stable base areas, employ the policy of advancing in waves; when pursued by a powerful enemy, employ the policy of circling around.

Arouse the largest number of the masses in the shortest possible time and by the best possible methods.

(A Single Spark Can Start A Prairie Fire.)

It was with such theory and the successful practice of people’s war that Mao demonstrated the absolute superiority of his political and military lines, and it was because of them that the Chinese revolution and the Chinese Red Army were finally victorious. It was due to the ‘Left’ opportunist line that the army and revolutionary bases were so weakened that they could not defeat Chiang Kai-shek’s 5th ‘encirclement and suppression’ campaign. This temporary setback forced the CPC to embark on the historic Long March to North China. At mid-march, in January 1935, an enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the CC took place in Tsunyi, Kweichow Province in Southwest China, at which the ‘Left’ line was thoroughly exposed and denounced. Mao Tsetung was elected Chairman of the CPC, and thereafter his Marxist-Leninist line dominated in forwarding the revolution. This made possible the unification of the Party and the Red Army, enabling the successful completion of the Long March and the establishment of new revolutionary bases, with Yen-an in Shensi Province as a global-acclaimed centre. These bases served as radiating points for the entire Chinese nation in the resistance against Japanese imperialist aggression,

which had begun in 1931 but would be intensified in 1937.

However, no sooner was the 'Left' line soundly trounced when Chang Kuo-tao tried to oppose Chairman Mao's correct policies with a Right opportunist line, characterised by an over-estimation of the enemy's might and an under-estimation of that of the revolutionary forces. Chang incorrectly adjudged the Long March as a great defeat. Opposing the further advance of the Red Army into North China, he advocated a retreat into the sparsely settled national minority areas on the Szechuan-Sikang border. This would have cut the revolutionary vanguard off from its very well of strength—the great mass of the Chinese people. Politically it would have inflicted a heavy blow on the revolution, just when, upon the victorious completion of the Long March, the magnificent heroism of the Red Army was needed to stir a national upsurge of resistance to the Japanese invaders and KMT capitulation to aggression. Chang actually misled a section of the Red Army into this political and military dead end, and further, he openly opposed Chairman Mao's leadership by traitorously setting up a bogus 'central committee' and disrupting the unity and discipline of the Party and army. As a result, the revolution sustained heavy losses, but with his typical patience towards comrades, Chairman Mao and the CC conducted education among the officers and soldiers under Chang until they could accept the correct political and military lines. This they did to a man—with the notable exception of Chang himself, who turned traitor by escaping from the Shensi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Region in the spring of 1938 and joined the KMT secret police!

The repeated, back and forth sharp struggle over the political and military lines, the numerous errors and crimes that were perpetrated by the Right and 'Left' opportunists, naturally all took their toll from the Party, the revolution and the military campaigns. But it was only

through the Marxist-Leninist analysis of these struggles that the correct lines were forged, and in the end the Party and the Red Army became steeled and gained strength. The detailing of this amazing and complicated process of combining theory and practice of people's war in a semi-colonial, semi-feudal country is contained in a work written by Chairman Mao entitled: 'Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War', a series of lectures he gave starting from December 1936. Along with other similar writings, it has since become one of the classic 'musts' for revolutionaries the world over, opening up for them the laws of development in combining political and military strategy and tactics based on the total mobilisation of the masses of people. Because these conclusions which Chairman Mao drew from actual experience can be applied in appropriate ways to almost any revolutionary situation, the immensity of his contribution in developing Marxism-Leninism stands out all the more.

Why a National United Front Against Japan and Who Should Lead It?

By 1937, the Red Army had solidly established its headquarters in Yen-an. From there it exerted the political leadership of the proletariat and its party in organising and educating the Chinese people to meet the gravest challenge to their survival as a nation from Japanese aggression and the capitulationist policy of the KMT. They announced as their objectives: peace, democracy, armed resistance to aggression and setting up a 'unified democratic republic', as the conditions for merging the KMT- and the CPC-led areas into one government. The Party had shown its good faith in its programme by negotiating the Sian Incident (1936), by which the CPC effected the freeing of Chiang Kai-shek from arrest by Chang Hsueh-liang and Yang Hu-cheng, two of his leading generals in North-west China, in return for Chiang's agreement to a grand

alliance of resistance against Japan. This was the second instance of KMT-CPC cooperation, but this time the differing factor was that the CPC was Mao Tse-tung-led and had a maturity grown out of vast experience in political and military struggle with the enemy and with the struggle between the two lines inside the Party.

The CPC set itself the task of organising a national united front in a Political Bureau resolution which was agreed upon on December 25, 1935, in a northern Shensi village. This front was seen as the burning desire of the people who had been awakened by the brutality of the Japanese invasion, and who were aroused in their millions by the common wish for China's complete liberation. Backed by this popular groundswell, the Party set as its goal '... to unite not only all the possible basic forces but also the potential allies likely to resist Japan ...' Those who had labour power were encouraged to give it, those with guns and money to make contributions, and so forth, '... leaving no patriotic Chinese outside the anti-Japanese front.'

The class alignment within this broadest possible united front was as follows: The Chinese working class and peasantry remained the basic motive power of the revolution and thereby of the front itself. Their most reliable allies were the masses of petty-bourgeoisie and the revolutionary intellectuals. The resolution read: 'A solid alliance of the workers, the peasants and the petty-bourgeoisie is the basic force for defeating Japanese imperialism and the traitors and collaborators.' But the way was left open for a section of the national bourgeoisie and even the warlords to join or at least remain neutral. Thus, though these elements might dislike the idea of Red political power and its carrying out of an agrarian revolution, still by their participation or even partial entry, the united front was seen as increasing the total strength of the revolution in the same proportion that the strength of the

counter-revolution was reduced.

Under Chairman Mao's leadership, the CPC embarked on this political course fully aware that it entailed both unity and struggle, and that there would be struggle against the enemy without, and between the proletarian and bourgeois lines within the Party. In his report, 'The Tasks of the Chinese Communist Party in the Period of the Resistance to Japan', delivered on May 3, 1937, Chairman Mao dealt with these conflicts. He outlined how the proletariat should give political leadership to all the revolutionary classes in the country. First, to put forth the principal political slogans that conform to the demands of the historical period and with each of its stages. The example he gives is that the Party called for 'an anti-Japanese national united front' and for 'a unified democratic republic'. But knowing the treachery of Chiang Kai-shek and the reactionary nature of the KMT, the Party concurrently put forth the slogans 'end the civil war', 'win democracy' and 'carry out armed resistance'. Thus was unity combined with struggle on a national scale. Second, Chairman Mao called on all communists to set the example in materialising the above goals, '... be the most far-sighted, the most self-sacrificing, the most resolute and the least prejudiced in sizing up situations, and ... rely on the majority of the masses and win their support.' Third, the CPC should work to establish proper relations with its allies, while 'never relinquishing its defined political objectives'. And fourth, it should expand its ranks and maintain its ideological unity and strict discipline.

On the last point, it was not until the present Cultural Revolution that it was disclosed Liu Shao-chi misused this directive to violate Chairman Mao's instructions for building the Party. In the article, 'Introducing *The Communist*', issued on October 4, 1939, the Chairman wrote: 'During the expansion of the Party's organisation, a good many careerists and enemy saboteurs did succeed in sneaking

in despite the fact that the CC stressed the slogan: "Expand the Party boldly, but do not let a single undesirable in". However, it was just in this period when Liu was working in North China that he made it possible for a large group of traitors, those like himself who had already gone over to the enemy, to enter or re-enter the Party. He was to make use of them for his own counter-revolutionary purposes for over 30 years! This group represented only a small proportion of those admitted to the Party in that period, but nonetheless they were a dangerous, hidden minority.

At the time, this situation was not known or clear, and therefore the inner-Party struggles arose around attitudes and actions in relation to the united front. The first of these battles was against the 'closed-doorism' which was a mark of the 'Left' opportunism of Wang Ming and Po Ku from 1931 to 1935. This line insisted that the entire struggle against Japan should be fought by the CPC single-handedly. Such an idea was taken to task by Chairman Mao in his report, 'On Tactics Against Japanese Imperialism', December 27, 1935. He pointed out the absurdity of the insistence on absolute purity for the revolutionary forces, the effect of which would be to preclude a united front with the national bourgeoisie, the rich peasants and revolutionary intellectuals, and play right into the hands of the pro-Japanese clique within the KMT. Mao showed that only by opening up the possibilities of unity with the broadest grouping could there be effective strength mustered to meet the onslaught of a formidable enemy. He emphasised that the CPC must play the leading role in the united front, but that the war and the revolution would be of a protracted nature and any 'closed-doorism' and undue haste, which had brought the people's cause such huge losses after 1927, would bring further losses at a most perilous time. Chairman Mao remarked that revolution and war never

follow a straight path, that the alignment of forces constantly changes with the shifting situation, and that what China needed most at the moment was to mass millions upon millions of people and '... move a mighty revolutionary army into action.' In the end, he demonstrated that the united front was a Marxist-Leninist policy, whereas 'closed-doorism' worked for the imperialist enemy.

After the Lukouchiao Incident (known abroad as the Marco Polo Bridge Incident) in July 1937, which was provoked by the Japanese imperialists and signalled the beginning of their large-scale invasion of North China south of the Great Wall, the main danger inside the Party with regard to the united front was Right opportunism, that is, capitulation of 'front' leadership to the KMT. Faced directly with attack by the aggressors and large losses of territory, Chiang Kai-shek and the KMT could not but begin to display some degree of resistance, and this evoked paeans of praise from Wang Ming and Liu Shao-chi. They called this butcher of the people 'the great banner' around which the Chinese masses should rally, and advocated that the united front meant that the struggle against Japan should be realised through the KMT as leader, with the CPC in a supporting role. Chairman Mao immediately took up the cudgels against this surrender of the CPC's independence and initiative, placing the weight of the question at its political epicentre: In the national united front will the proletariat lead or the bourgeoisie, the CPC or the KMT? Drawing examples from past history and analysing the class characteristics of the CPC and the KMT at that moment, he stated: 'We must sharply pose the question of who is to lead and resolutely combat capitulationism. . . .' (*The Situation and Tasks in the Anti-Japanese War After the Fall of Shanghai and Taiyuan*, November 12, 1937.) Just a few months earlier in his report, 'The Tasks of the CPC in the Period of Resistance

to Japan', Chairman Mao had taken up the essence of this question. He had placed the united front and resistance to Japan in the context of the Chinese revolution, that is, the present struggle should under no circumstances be fought at the sacrifice of the long-term goals of the proletariat and its Party and of the entire Chinese people. At some particular juncture compromise and concession would have to be made in the interest of mobilising the broadest political forces, but never would the ideal of socialism and communism be forfeited. Meanwhile, it had to be recognised that this goal would be attained only by first going through the stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, that it was adventurism to attempt to eliminate or leap over any intermediate stage to socialism. He wrote: 'The CPC has its own political and economic programme. Its maximum programme is socialism and communism, which is different from the Three People's Principles. Even its programme for the period of the democratic revolution is more thorough-going than that of any other party in China. But the CPC's programme for the democratic revolution and the programme of the Three People's Principles as proclaimed by the Kuo-mintang's First National Congress are basically not in conflict. Therefore, far from rejecting the Three People's Principles, we are ready staunchly to put them into practice; moreover, we ask the Kuo-mintang to implement them together with us, and we call upon the whole nation to put them into effect.' From this it can be seen that Chairman Mao looked upon the whole struggle as one in which the CPC was giving the only effective leadership, and it was utter nonsense to talk as Wang Ming and Liu Shao-chi did, that Chiang and the KMT were the 'highest leadership', when never for a moment did the latter set aside their die-hard anti-CPC, anti-people policies. 'In the present circumstances, without the political leadership of the proletariat and

its Party it is impossible to establish an anti-Japanese national united front, to attain the objectives of peace, democracy and armed resistance and to defend the motherland, and impossible to set up a unified democratic republic.' Chairman Mao thus delineated the only possible road to victory over imperialist aggression and the fascist dictatorship at home.

The policy of independence and unity within the united front, that is, neither allowing the Party to be put into an impasse, nor doing anything to disrupt the national united front, was to have far-reaching consequences. By standing unequivocally for proletarian leadership of the front, Chairman Mao prevented Wang Ming, Liu Shao-chi and others from reverting to Chen Tu-hsiu's capitulationism to the KMT. The CPC carried out a vigorous programme that expressed its belief in the masses rather than in the empty talk of Chiang Kai-shek. The result was the continuous expansion of the CPC-led Liberated Areas and the people's armed forces, both in the Areas and in the enemy-occupied regions. The leadership of the resistance to Japan was kept without deviation in the hands of the CPC, providing the basic condition for the development of the progressive forces within the country, for winning over the middle forces and isolating the die-hards. Chairman Mao pointed out later: 'Not only did this ensure our Party's ability to defeat Japanese imperialism in the period of its aggression, but also, in the period after the Japanese surrender when Chiang Kai-shek launched his counter-revolutionary war, it ensured our Party's ability to switch smoothly and without loss to the course of opposing Chiang Kai-shek's counter-revolutionary war with a people's revolutionary war and to win great victories in a short time.' (*The Present Situation and Our Tasks*, December 1947.)

Why a People's War? Whence its Power? What's its Immediate Goals?

Many problems cropped up in the interpretation and execution of the concept of a protracted war against Japanese aggression. Outside the Party the Marxist-Leninist line of organising and mobilising the masses for 'the long haul' had to combat those who were defeatist and overwhelmed by the idea of 'years' of warfare, who felt China could not sustain such a strain politically, economically and emotionally. Still others believed victory would come easily and without exerting great effort. Both views were subjective. The pessimists ignored or belittled the fact that the revolutionary force had great potential but was still in a state of growth and was only temporarily inferior. The 'optimists' did not start from the reality of the formidableness of the invaders, nor did they take into account the current, relative weakness of the resistance forces due to the KMT policy of fighting the civil war instead of defending the motherland, and of capitulating to the enemy. But gradually the masses began to grasp the meaning of the slogan formulated and propagated by Chairman Mao and the CPC: 'Our 400 million people have been making a concerted effort since the Lukuochiao Incident and final victory will belong to China!' Understanding also came about through the airing of the struggle inside the Party between the two lines in the question of how to fight the war, and from what political basis.

As described above, Chairman Mao had made obvious the absolute necessity of the broadest possible national united front, which would include various classes and political groupings. But of these, he always stressed, the most important were the masses—the workers, peasants and soldiers. In his monumental work, 'On Protracted War' (May 1938), he called attention to the fact that the reason the Japanese imperialists dared to take advantage of China was because the

Chinese masses were as yet unorganised. Then he prophesied: 'When this defect is remedied, then the Japanese aggressor, like a mad bull crashing into a ring of flames, will be surrounded by hundreds of millions of our people standing upright, the mere sound of their voices will strike terror into him, and he will be burned to death.' It was only by such a massive activation that China's inferiority in arms and other things could be counter-balanced and all difficulties in waging war overcome. 'To win victory, we must persevere in the War of Resistance, in the united front and in the protracted war. But all these are inseparable from the mobilisation of the common people,' Chairman Mao emphasised.

Concurrently, Wang Ming was proposing a policy in disparagement and contempt of the masses, one completely counter to the above. He could not estimate the KMT highly enough, designating it the largest political party in the country and hence the 'obvious leader' of the people in war. He proclaimed that all communists held the friendliest of feelings and the greatest hopes for the KMT! This shocking statement was made after the KMT had immersed its hands in the blood of millions of progressive people. Time after time it would act in the most despicable way, not to mention its worldwide reputation for the corruption that wracked its ranks from the very top to the bottom. Likewise flagrant was Liu Shao-chi's statement a few years later, by way of continuing Wang Ming's line, that in China and the world the KMT held a legal position as the leading authority and the head of a mighty army! As of then, such blustering apparently was considered a matter of ideological confusion on the part of Wang and Liu, but later events demonstrated beyond doubt that they were inveterate reactionaries, intent on sowing confusion, because in truth they rejected Chairman Mao's line, the only correct line. Objec-

tively, they promoted Chiang Kai-shek and KMT hegemony in China!

Directly related to this struggle was the question of what type of political power would ensue from the total mobilisation called for by Chairman Mao. Within the Party intense debate took place. Wang Ming, projecting his usual line, wanted a coalition government composed of the KMT and the CPC—but on the premise that Red political power should give way to KMT power! He actually prescribed the abolition of the governments set up by the CPC in the Liberated Areas! And as late as 1942, and thereafter, Liu Shao-chi was echoing this political monstrosity when he attributed undue credit to Chiang Kai-shek for the united efforts of the people in opposing the Japanese invaders. He 'forecast' that after the war the strength of the KMT would be 'invincible' and therefore it was only 'logical' that Chiang should be recognised as the leader of the New China! This could only be spoken by a true renegade. Liu's conception of a regenerated China was one in which the big bourgeoisie, the landlords and the imperialists would dominate, and China would remain impoverished and at the mercy of the imperialist powers.

Chairman Mao rebutted this traitorous programme with a Marxist-Leninist one, in conformity with the development of history. In his detailed outline for the future entitled 'On New Democracy' (January 1940) he stated: 'The first step or stage in our revolution is definitely not, and cannot be, the establishment of a capitalist society under the dictatorship of the Chinese bourgeoisie, but will result in the establishment of a new-democratic society under the joint dictatorship of all the revolutionary classes of China headed by the Chinese proletariat. The revolution will then be carried forward to the second stage, in which a socialist society will be established in China.' This perspective which Chairman Mao gave the Chinese people would take them forward, not

allow them to stagnate and become the prey of exploiters within China and from around the world.

Wang Ming and Liu Shao-chi were voicing not only their own personal sentiments; they were the covert spokesmen for the KMT within the Party. And it was precisely the time when the KMT anti-CPC die-hards were doing all in their power to prevent the setting up and expansion of the CPC organs of anti-Japanese democratic power in North and Central China and in other regions. China was in the throes of an open struggle between the KMT attempting to thwart the spread of people's power, and the masses fighting under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the CPC to extend their influence and rule as widely as conditions permitted. This struggle gained the concern of the whole country. In the inner-Party directive written by Chairman Mao and issued on March 6, 1940, he spelled out the CPC's objective: 'The political power we are establishing during the Anti-Japanese War is of a united front character. It is the political power of all those who support both resistance and democracy, it is joint democratic dictatorship of several revolutionary classes over the traitors and reactionaries. It differs from the counter-revolutionary dictatorship of the landlord class and the bourgeoisie as well as from the worker-peasant democratic dictatorship of the Agrarian Revolution (1927-37).' (*On the Question of Political Power in the Anti-Japanese Base Areas.*) It was a form of people's power that derived its organisation and content from the historical and the then prevailing conditions of China.

It was on such political foundation that Chairman Mao planned his strategy and tactics of people's war against the Japanese aggressors and the attacks of the KMT on the Liberated Areas. Verified by practice, these principles have become another of his great contributions to Marxism-Leninism, one with universal application. Based on the political awareness of an

armed population, these principles relate mobile guerilla warfare to positional warfare, and define under what conditions one form should take precedence over the other, how guerilla warfare should first support positional warfare until it can be gradually transformed into regular warfare. These laws of people's war served the Chinese people well, enabling them to inflict crippling losses on the Japanese aggressors and the KMT reactionary troops, promoting the development of the Liberated Areas so that by the end of the Anti-Japanese Aggression War they had a population of over 90 millions, a regular army of one million men and a people's militia numbering over 2.2 million. It was on this great strength that the revolutionary forces in China relied when the American imperialists propped up Chiang Kai-shek and liberally supplied him with the money and the materiel for his last counter-revolutionary effort, starting in 1946. A mere three years were needed to settle this question.

How to Purify the Party?

In the period from 1942 to 1945, there were still many important political struggles which erupted in society and particularly inside the Party. The Wang Ming line had caused almost catastrophic losses to the CPC and the Red Army. Equally important, Wang Ming's ideology, his way of thinking and analysis, had not been cleared out of the minds of many Party members, including some in positions of leadership. Therefore, if the revolution was to progress, if all the difficulties it was still to encounter were to be surmounted, if nation-wide victory was to be achieved, this stumbling block had to be cleared from the path. To do this job, Chairman Mao unfolded one of his boldest creations—a mass movement to rectify people's incorrect ideas, to enable them to elevate their understanding of Marxism-Leninism and give the whole Party the impetus by which the members

could reach new heights in the study and use of his revolutionary proletarian thought.

The theoretical basis for the initial rectification movement was laid down in a series of speeches made by Chairman Mao. These were: 'Reform Our Study' (May 1941), 'Rectify the Party's Style of Work' (February 1, 1942), 'Oppose Stereotyped Party Writing' (February 8, 1942), and the famous 'Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art' (May 1942). Although not mentioning Wang Ming by name, the content of these speeches had as their target the petty-bourgeois ideology he had dragged into the Party. To counter this sinister influence, Chairman Mao laid down a Marxist-Leninist programme, and the comparison between this proletarian line and Wang Ming's non-proletarian one was the starting point for an unprecedented campaign of criticism and self-criticism that lasted almost three years. This engendered a totally new atmosphere inside the Party, solidly putting it on a Marxist-Leninist foundation. The earth-shaking victories of the Chinese revolution gained their impetus during the rectification movement, with the end result that the most populous country in the world joined the side of socialism, in a stronger position to fight world-wide imperialism and all exploitation and oppression.

Chairman Mao concentrated on three points in devastating Wang Ming's ideology and implanting a Marxist-Leninist method of analysis and conduct of Party affairs. These were: subjectivism, sectarianism and stereotyped Party writing. He reminded the Party members that: 'Marxism is a science, and a science means honesty, solid knowledge; there is no room for playing tricks.' He elucidated that every communist had to start from an absorption of *facts*, an accurate observation of all things which exist objectively; to discover the *truth* about

them, to learn and understand their internal relations, the laws governing them, in order to avoid dogmatism and empiricism, both of which are subjectivism, but originating from opposite poles. He warned that Marxist-Leninist theory is not a dogma but a guide to action. Therefore, subjectivism had to be fought in order to rectify the style of formulating Party policy, to anchor it firmly in Marxism-Leninism and objective reality; sectarianism had to be fought in order to rectify the Party's internal and external relations, to get rid of subjectivism in organisational matters and ' . . . proceed from the principle that the Party's interests are above personal and sectional interests, so that the Party can attain complete solidarity and unity . . . ' This approach had to be applied to external relations as well, to unite with all who could be united in order to forward the interests of the Chinese people and the people of the world as a whole. Stereotyped Party writing had to be fought so that communications between the Party and its members and the rest of the population, not to mention the people of the world, could be the most effective, by proceeding from a systematic and thorough analysis of phenomena to find where the contradiction and its solution lay. The Chairman especially called upon the propagandists to develop a 'mass style', to learn from the masses in order to explain things to them in their own language.

In rousing all the Party to wage combat against subjectivism in every sphere, Chairman Mao urged propagation of materialism and dialectics. He likewise said: 'Communists must also go into the whys and wherefores of everything, use their own heads and carefully think over whether or not it corresponds to reality and is really well founded; on no account should they follow blindly and encourage slavishness.' Liu Shao-chi, who took up the crusade for subjectivism once his mentor, Wang Ming, had been defeated, assiduously opposed this instruction. In

his poisonous weed, *How To Be A Good Communist* (also referred to as 'Self-cultivation'), published in 1939, he staked out the road he wanted Party members to follow: that of introspection, divorcement from the masses and acting like 'docile tools'. In this book he omitted any reference to seizing state power by armed force, setting up a dictatorship of the proletariat, and even the waging of the war against the Japanese imperialists! He had a purpose in this: he himself had betrayed the Party, and through the years had brought into its ranks an entire network of his own kind and placed these class enemies in many important Party and state posts, commanding them to be his 'docile tools' in carrying out a counter-revolutionary programme. Through his gang he sought to influence the whole Party and thus alter the course of the Chinese revolution, to deliver it into the hands of the Chinese people's worst enemies—imperialism and Chiang Kai-shek. Allowing such persons' admittance into the Party was in violation of the policy laid down by Chairman Mao and accepted by the Party congresses and organs. Chairman Mao had made it explicit: 'As for renegades, except for those who have committed heinous crimes, they should be given a chance to turn over a new leaf provided they discontinue their anti-communist activities; and if they come back and wish to rejoin the revolution they may be accepted, but must not be re-admitted into the Party.' (*On Policy*, December 25, 1940.) But Liu constantly circumvented this directive, and even tried to make his actions legal by getting his plot adopted as policy at Party congresses. Although he never won official approval of his counter-revolutionary proposals, he continued to commit illegal acts against the Party for several decades and protected his network in one rectification movement after the other! Thus, while the rectification movement in 1942, and those that followed, were major successes which gave the world a new stand-

ard for and an effective method of truing up the activities of a revolutionary, Marxist-Leninist party, making Mao Tsetung Thought supreme in Party policies, this cancer which yet remained would fester and grow until excised during the biggest and most thorough rectification movement of them all—the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. As for the 1942-45 rectification, it provided the ideological and organisational basis for the victorious conclusion of the Anti-Japanese Aggression War and the successful transition to the Liberation War, which would free the whole country.

Whither China?

After the defeat of Japanese imperialism, a situation arose in the country which brought on new ideological struggles. In the realm of domestic politics the question was: Will China go forward to build a new-democratic society led by the proletariat, or will it remain the old China, semi-feudal, semi-colonial and under the leadership of the landlords and big bourgeoisie represented by Chiang Kai-shek? He was shouting about 'building the country', but his conception of 'building' was to invite further penetration by the imperialists, and especially the American imperialists, and the further intensification of the exploitation of the labouring masses. The Chinese people had to make their choice between the Marxist-Leninist programme as set forth by Chairman Mao and the CPC and Chiang's out-and-out reactionary line.

Making this choice was complicated by the fact that the nation was weary from war, and a tremendous job faced the people of rebuilding the war devastation. There was some market for 'building the country', but the crux of the question was: 'What kind of country?' Here was Chiang Kai-shek trying to grab all the fruits of the victory in the War of Resistance for himself, although he had sat with arms fold-

ed during most of the war years and had no 'merits' to speak of. At the same time, he had conserved his forces and the wartime aid from the United States, just waiting for this moment to throw them into a civil war, because he had never given up the plan to destroy the CPC and the Liberated Areas. As far as he was concerned, the war against Japan was a mere vehicle for the expansion of his 'encirclement and suppression' campaigns. Faced with such reality, the CPC strove valiantly to prevent the all-out renewal of civil war and to hold earnest discussions with the KMT in an effort to solve China's political problems via consultation—but with the proviso that the CPC stood on equal footing with the KMT, since the major portion of the fighting against Japan had been borne by the people's armed forces. Therefore, there could be no question of one party ordering the other about, as Chiang intended. The CPC had to formulate a correct line properly evaluating the designs of the American imperialists and the KMT reactionaries, to meet Chiang's open threats and his actual military attacks which were continuing even while he and Mao Tsetung were holding talks in Chungking in August and September of 1945.

Two lines made their appearance inside the Party over the problem of how to lead the struggle—whether by negotiations or with arms—so that the victory over Japan would be preserved and a truly new China built. Chairman Mao's proletarian line was: Mount every effort to mobilise and arm the masses ideologically and militarily under the leadership of the CPC, and to maintain the highest vigilance even though the political discussions were continuing. After all, the CPC and the Chinese people had experienced 18 years of the culpability and cruelty of Chiang Kai-shek and his clique; consequently, it was impossible to be so naive as to put full faith in a document to which Chiang had affixed his signature, and reluctantly at that. Nego-

tiations were undertaken to test in public whether the KMT would agree to a principled peace and genuine democracy. If these could be attained by talking rather than fighting, all to the good; if not, then the KMT would be exposed thoroughly as the obstacle to national unity and the reconstruction of the country. The political initiative would remain with the CPC. Meantime, the Party's policy was to fight to protect every inch of the people's territory in the Liberated Areas, and not one gun or bullet would be turned over to the KMT. Concessions could be made here or there in terms of territory or in military affairs in order to facilitate agreements, *but basically the interests of the people could not be imperilled*. The reason: while the KMT was compelled by public opinion inside the country and throughout the world to sit down and talk, yet at the same time it was fielding 800,000 troops to attack every one of the Liberated Areas or preparing to do so. The only safe course, one that displayed a deep sense of responsibility to the people, was to give 'tit for tat': negotiation when necessary, fight when necessary. This was the hard road, of course, but it was the only one that would safeguard the revolution. Chairman Mao looked at it this way: 'We must recognise difficulties, analyse and combat them. There are no straight roads in the world; we must be prepared to follow a road which twists and turns and not try to get things on the cheap.' And, 'By uniting with the entire people in a common effort, we can certainly overcome all difficulties and win victory.' (*On the Chungking Negotiations*, October 17, 1945.)

In contraposition was the bourgeois line whose chief representative was Liu Shao-chi. Just two months after Chairman Mao had presented his position, Liu made a speech and set out a policy of his own, in which he attempted to reverse the very premise and therefore the conclusions Chairman Mao had arrived at. Liu insisted that China had already entered the

period of peace and democracy, that thereafter the main form of struggle would be non-violent, a mass struggle coupled with parliamentary opposition. He even went so far as to say that struggle should be conducted within a legal framework—this at a time when Chiang Kai-shek persisted in maintaining that the CPC was 'illegal'. Only as a cultural organisation would Chiang allow it to take part in the 'political consultative conference'! Liu also spread the dangerous illusion that there was a possibility of avoiding civil war despite the very obvious reality known to every person in China that such had not ceased for one minute in the several decades since 1927. Liu sought to promote faith in Chiang's phoney promises of democratic practices to disarm the people politically, to encourage the masses to place full and unconditional reliance on political solutions. One has to ask: How could a so-called communist talk about democracy while making it void of class content? In other words, democracy for whom, for which class? Liu further cast all kinds of false hopes, appealing to people's selfish interests by alluding that it was now possible the CPC would become one of the ruling parties and send people to take part in Chiang's KMT government and ministries! He seemed unable to contain himself at the thought of serving Chiang, the landlords and the big bourgeoisie. How different was Chairman Mao's reaction to such a suggestion: 'It is no easy job to be an official bound hand and foot, we won't do it. If we become officials, our hands and feet must be unfettered, we must be free to act, that is, a coalition government must be set up on a democratic basis.' (*The Situation and Our Policy After the Victory in the War of Resistance Against Japan*, August 13, 1945.)

However, the apex of capitulation was yet to be reached. Liu was ready to surrender the very staff of life for the Chinese revolution—the People's Liberation Army! Thirty years previously he had

been responsible for disarming the workers in Wuhan and making them fair game for the KMT's counter-revolution. Now in the same vein he was openly advocating that the PLA must accede to the KMT demands that it be 'reorganised' and 'nationalised', including the elimination of its whole political system, the source of its superiority. This advocacy was made without specifying any guarantees politically and organisationally to assure the safety of the revolutionary bases and forces. It was pure sell-out, but fortunately Chairman Mao's policy prevailed. He retorted: 'We act after his (Chiang Kai-shek—GT) fashion. He always tries to impose war on the people, one sword in his left hand and another in his right. We take up swords, too, following his example.' (Ibid.) The revolution was thus saved a shattering set-back at a critical moment in Chinese and world history; Chairman Mao's ideology ensured victory for the Chinese people and placed China firmly on the road to becoming a new-democratic and then a socialist country.

Liu also catered to incorrect ideas among some sections of society, especially among the bourgeois intellectuals. At a time when the prestige of the CPC was at its height, he pandered to the fantasies some people held about the KMT being able to reform itself with the help of a 'disinterested', 'impartial' American government, which would bring peace and democracy to China through 'mediation' between the KMT and the CPC. These people did not understand the true nature of bourgeois democracy, that it is democracy for the bourgeoisie to do whatever they like in the pursuit of super-profits out of the exploitation of the vast majority of the population. Liu gave ideological support to these elements, expressing his 'faith' in the international bourgeoisie, prating that it also desired peace, and now approved of China becoming democratised—in the American style! He also lauded the huge military and monetary aid the

US government was rendering Chiang, claiming it was being given to 'China', without hinting that the US and Chiang intended to use it to destroy the PLA and the Liberated Areas, in total disregard to the losses to be borne by the Chinese people. Liu lied about this so-called aid, claiming it would result in economic construction!

Chairman Mao had an opposite view of the situation: 'I doubt very much that the policy of the US government is one of "mediation"'. Judging by the large amount of aid the United States is giving Chiang Kai-shek to enable him to wage a civil war on an unprecedented scale, the policy of the US government is to use the so-called mediation as a smoke-screen for strengthening Chiang Kai-shek in every way and suppressing the democratic forces in China through Chiang Kai-shek's policy of slaughter so as to reduce China virtually to a US colony.' (*The Truth About US 'Mediation' and the Future of the Civil War in China*, September 29, 1946.) So much for the impartiality in international politics and the showcase 'mediation mission' of General George C. Marshall in 1945-46, which as an 'aside' had equipped two million of Chiang's troops, directly transporting 540,000 of them to the fronts in US air and naval facilities! After Chiang launched his over-all attack in July 1946, Marshall and Stuart, the China-born US ambassador to the KMT, issued a joint statement admitting that 'mediation' had failed, thus giving Chiang a free hand to unleash war on the Chinese people in the name of counter-revolution. Such was the future in which Liu Shao-chi would have had the Chinese people place their hopes!

The struggle between the two lines also involved a basic internal matter, land reform, which was decisive to the future of the country. First, it had to be carried out properly and thoroughly in order to destroy the feudal economic structure. 'Properly and thoroughly' meant keeping

the target within the limited range of those economic relations upon which the power of feudalism rested, with strictly no encroachment either upon the national bourgeoisie or upon the industrial and commercial enterprises run by the landlords and rich peasants; and precisely to classify the various categories of peasants, with the objective to unite about 90 per cent of the population in the villages, that is, unite all the rural working people to establish a united front against the feudal system. Second, land reform was necessary to consolidate the Liberated Areas, to mobilise the masses of peasantry politically, to support the Liberation War, and thus provide a solid foundation for the nation-wide victory. Since the Chinese revolution was basically a question of the peasantry, land reform was the method of obtaining their liberation. At the same time, it created the conditions for the first steps into the future, to collective effort on the land—the mutual aid teams and later the lower form of cooperatives.

Chairman Mao in various documents laid down the general line for the land reform: ' . . . rely on the poor peasants, unite with the middle peasants, abolish the system of feudal exploitation step by step and in a discriminating way, and develop agricultural production.' (*Speech at a Conference of Cadres in the Shansi-Suiyuan Liberated Area*, April 1, 1948.) He stressed that it was essential to unite with the middle peasants, that the poor peasants and farm labourers must form a solid united front with the middle peasants because their numbers were not small—20 per cent of the rural population. If this was not done, the poor peasants and farm labourers would find themselves isolated and the land reform would fail.

As was his constant technique of leadership, Chairman Mao was showing how to unite the greatest number against the smallest target, thereby assuring victory. But Liu Shao-chi adopted an ultra-'Left' policy, simplistically declaring: Obey the

masses. If they demand the distribution of the middle peasants' land, then do so; if they don't, then forget it. He went on to lump the middle peasants into one category with the landlords and rich peasants, proclaiming that they were all against land reform. He thereby unreasonably enlarged the targets of the struggle. In every likelihood, it was this serious deviation that Chairman Mao had in mind when he said: ' . . . on the question of dealing with the demands of the masses, it (a conference of secretaries of perfectural Party committees—GT) failed to make a sober analysis and raised the sweeping slogan, "Do everything as the masses want it done!" With respect to the latter point, which is a question of the Party's relationship with the masses, the Party must lead the masses to carry out all their correct ideas in the light of the circumstances and educate them to correct any wrong ideas they may entertain.' (Ibid.) To illustrate his point, Chairman Mao brought up the experience of one county which had carried out well the CC's directives on land reform. There the activists from among the non-Party masses were invited to participate in the Party branch meetings where criticism and self-criticism were utilised, and through this method impurities in the class composition of the branch were discovered and persons so identified were removed from the Party organisations. Through such a style of work the land reform was highly effective and errors were righted in a timely way, enabling the Party to forge closer links with the masses.

It was with this momentum that the new-democratic revolution was carried forward to a successful conclusion. But even in the midst of this triumphant march, the two lines were struggling against each other right down to the bitter end. As late as December 1948, Liu Shao-chi was ridiculously clamouring that the revolution was developing too quickly, that it was difficult to keep pace with it, and too many problems were created!

He wanted to slow it down under the pretext of the need for better 'preparations'. In that very same month, Chairman Mao took another view. He did not dwell on the speed of the revolution, but on the more vital question of whether the Chinese people were going to pursue it to completion or abandon it half way. He indicated the path to take: 'If the revolution is to be carried through to the end, we must use the revolutionary method to wipe out all the forces of reaction resolutely, thoroughly, wholly and completely; we must unswervingly persist in overthrowing imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism; and we must overthrow the reactionary rule of the Kuomintang on a country-wide scale and set up a republic that is a people's democratic dictatorship under the leadership of the proletariat and with the worker-peasant alliance as its main body.' (*Carry the Revolution Through to the End*, December 30, 1948.) The Chinese people moved ahead in precisely this direction and less than a year later the People's Republic of China was established. A

bright, new day dawned for the Chinese and world revolutions.

This momentous victory had been won because it was based on three key principles:

'A well-disciplined Party armed with the theory of Marxism-Leninism, using the method of self-criticism and linked with the masses of the people';

'An army under the leadership of such a Party';

'A united front of all revolutionary classes and all revolutionary groups under the leadership of such a Party'.

(*On The People's Democratic Dictatorship*, June 30, 1949.)

And it was through adhering to the above three 'old reliables' that China would maintain its advance, opposing along the way further opportunist deviations in the Party, both Right and 'Left', and creating new experiences while carrying out the socialist revolution and construction, and continuing the revolution under the conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

(Continued in the next issue)

Internationalism or Cosmopolitanism?

In his Political Report, Vice-Chairman Lin Piao pointed out: 'We have always held that the internal affairs of each country should be settled by its own people. The relations between all countries and between all parties, big or small, must be built on the principles of equality and non-interference in each other's internal affairs. To safeguard these Marxist-Leninist principles, the Communist Party of China has waged a long struggle against the sinister great-power chauvinism of the Soviet revisionist renegade clique. This is a fact known to all.' The Soviet revisionists have been riding roughshod over other countries in its 'community', violating their sovereignty at will, intervening in their internal affairs and destroying recognised elementary principles of state sovereignty lock, stock, and barrel. Yet they even talk profusely of 'proletarian internationalism'! What audacity! To put it bluntly, the 'internationalism' of the Soviet revisionists is nothing but imperialist cosmopolitanism and big-power chauvinism which is aimed at conquering and enslaving other nations and establishing world hegemony. The fallacy of 'limited sovereignty' advertised by the Soviet revisionist renegade clique is exactly the same as that of arch imperialism, the United States, and is copied from it. The chieftain of US imperialism, Dulles, now deceased, was one of the most active propagandists of 'limited sovereignty'.

Chi Hsiang-yang, of the Hsiyuying Production Brigade in Hsiaoan District, Tientsin, writes in *Red Flag*, May 1969