

# China Policy Study Group

# BROADSHEET

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## CHU TEH

### 1886 – 1976

When Mao Tse-tung's two poems, *Ching kangshan Revisited* and *Two Birds—a Dialogue*, were published on January 1st this year Chu Teh said, 'I could not sleep for joy'. He thereupon wrote two poems of his own which show that for him, as for Mao, the struggles of the 1920s were one with those of 1976. The following lines come from the second one.

Now the spring wind brings crimson flowers,  
Fresh shoots in sturdy profusion.  
United, the old, those in their prime and the young,  
March towards their goal, following the Chairman's line.  
Class struggle is the key link;  
The key link grasped, all else falls into place.  
By mastering dialectics,  
Unifying our world outlook,  
And acting as true Marxist-Leninists,  
We shall turn the world upside down!

He remained an active revolutionary until the very end. Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and a member of the Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party and of its Standing Committee, he made a great contribution to the political work and policy decisions that underlay China's rapid transformation into a strong and rapidly developing socialist state. Throughout his life he was straightforward and open, living very simply, retaining many peasant characteristics. Young revolutionary leaders, some perhaps sixty years his juniors, must have gained immeasurably from working with so experienced a leader.

From his first meeting with Mao Tse-tung, in 1928, he remained his close comrade. They spent much time together and were often thought to be one person—Chu Mao! Chu was many times reported to have been killed but, like the revolution, he could not be crushed. He took part in the Long March and was joint founder, with Mao, of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, something unprecedented without which feudal, big capitalist and imperialist oppression in China could not have been overthrown. He always relied on the working class for leadership and made political study and propaganda an indispensable part of the programme of the Red Army. In 1958 he published an article which was an important blow against Peng Teh-huai's ideas for a Soviet-model PLA. August 1st, the anniversary of the founding of the PLA, which in China is celebrated as Army Day, is an occasion when it will always be especially appropriate to remember Chu Teh.

He is the fourth to die of the veteran Marxist-Leninists in the present Standing Committee of the CCP Political Bureau. Younger comrades, many already tempered in the complex revolutionary struggles of the last 20 years, must carry on the work. The fact that a very great, 'historic' leader like Chu could work for years so modestly, almost in obscurity, with no thought of self, should set them a standard.

More Chu Tehs are needed. The task of building up workers' and peasants' armies, in order to achieve workers' and peasants' power in many lands, has still to be done.

## THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE WANT REVOLUTION

It was not so long ago that US imperialism was plainly the Enemy Number One of the world's peoples, confident that it was too strong and too clever for the peoples of the weak and small nations it sought to dominate. At that time Mao Tse-tung spoke for the revolutionary forces:

People of the world, unite and defeat the US aggressors and all their running dogs! People of the world, be courageous, dare to fight, defy difficulties and advance wave upon wave. Then the whole world will belong to the people. Monsters of all kinds will be destroyed.

The truth of this has been demonstrated in Vietnam. Under Marxist-Leninist leadership the Vietnamese persisted for years in their struggle to win and keep their independence, showing the qualities of a truly revolutionary people. Today Vietnam belongs to its people, to transform and develop as they want. The National Assembly which met from 24 June to 3 July decided on the immediate tasks for people's Vietnam, and how they should be carried out.

### Historical experience deserves study

People, and particularly the working class, in the West cannot afford to forget the struggle in Vietnam. If they do, they will forget how vicious their ruling classes are, and how weak and decadent; they may also forget that every imperialist bid to increase its exploitation of the world's peoples and to extend its hegemony has had to use slogans of freedom and peace to fool the people. Millions of working people were mobilised all over the world on the anti-Fascist side during the Second World War. Some of them made the greatest of sacrifices believing that oppressed nations were going to be liberated. But at the first signs that the people were going to take over power on their own account from the fascists and collectively determine their own future the true face of the Trumans and Churchills was revealed. In Vietnam the people rose up in their August Revolution. The British government promptly rushed invasion forces into Vietnam, to attack the Vietnamese, and to make it

easy for the French imperialists to reconquer Indochina. The Vietnamese continued with their revolution, in spite of the treachery of their supposed allies. That was in 1945, two major resistance wars and millions of tons of imperialist bombs away from today. US imperialism then went to the aid of the French with money, arms and propaganda. Finally it took over the task of trying to destroy the will and the capacity of the Vietnamese to liberate and unite their nation and to develop it self-reliantly. The people of Vietnam proved that imperialism at its most cruel and ferocious was a paper tiger after all. In June and July this year they completed what they had begun. The capitalist-controlled press has been hiding this truth, as usual.

Ho Chi Minh's achievement does not belong just to the past of Indochinese history, but to the present worldwide struggle against imperialism and the hegemonism of the super-powers. 'Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom.' The working class was able, in unity with the courageous peasant masses and patriotic and revolutionary intellectuals, to lead Vietnam to complete independence. The petty bourgeois and bourgeois nationalists in Third World countries don't mean by 'independence' what Ho Chi Minh meant, and that may well be the case with some of them in Vietnam. The revisionists propagate a conception of independence which favours the neocolonialists' designs of imperialism, especially social-imperialism. But the Vietnamese have been clear that their people's democratic revolution will move directly, under working class leadership, to the socialist revolution in Vietnam, north and south. As Le Duan put it, in his report at the National Assembly, 'For us Vietnamese, love of country now means . . . devoting all our zeal, strength, intelligence and talent to the building of our socialist homeland. . . . Entering the new stage, the revolution in our country is developing with the following major characteristics. Our entire country lives in peace, independence and unity, under the leadership of the Vietnam Workers' Party with a tested proletarian dictatorship, with a solid worker-peasant alliance serving as basis for a national united front and for the people's revolutionary administration: our entire country is in the process of advancing from small production to socialist production without going through the stage of capitalist development. . . .'

#### Only socialism can safeguard Vietnam's future

People in the West who accepted the pretence that US imperialism and its allies were 'saving' the Vietnamese from the Marxist-Leninists must not be allowed to close their eyes to the foul mess that was puppet 'South Vietnam'. Free elections, impossible while the Americans controlled Saigon, were held in April, and all Vietnam is democratically governed. It is clear that only socialism can cleanse the Augean stables of French and US imperialism. People who are too young to remember the difference between the China imperialism 'lost' in the 1940s and China today will learn a great deal from comparing the

'South Vietnam' of Ngo Dinh Diem and Thieu with what is now being achieved, after the fantastic devastation, destruction, and corruption of the south. It is now being started under the 'collective mastery of the working people', 'the socialist collective mastery of the country', in which the struggle against the bourgeoisie, old and new, is inevitably the motive force.

Some people have been anxious about the determination and ability of the Vietnamese people and leaders to defend and consolidate the freedom and independence which they won primarily by their own efforts and always on their own initiative. In the past Soviet social-imperialism has tried to exploit the help it gave, belatedly, in order to gain an edge over its rival, US imperialism, and to infiltrate the anti-imperialist movement. There has been a great deal of discussion, in anti-imperialist circles and liberation movements, of the Soviet pressures which the Vietnamese have to withstand. It is a fact that people who have braved the bullets of US imperialism and its agents have in other countries proved vulnerable to the wiles of the newer imperialism. But it would be seriously underestimating the Vietnamese working class and its Party to think that they have not learnt from their own rich experience. They resisted Soviet pressures for compromises with US imperialism when their situation seemed most desperate and the need for material assistance most urgent. The Vietnamese revolution can be expected to follow the course determined by the actual contradictions in independent Vietnam. For the Vietnamese US imperialism is still the main danger, and they have to use the contradictions in the imperialist camp and within ruling circles in the imperialist countries to consolidate their independence and reconstruct their country into a socialist bastion.

A nation of 50 million people in Southeast Asia at the present time, cannot develop without intense struggle: against revisionism and reaction, for increased production, and for greater mastery over nature. The class struggle in Vietnam will determine which line prevails. Soviet social-imperialism is a great and rising threat to the peoples of Southeast and South Asia. Tactically it has to be taken very seriously. But strategically it must be despised. Revisionist forces have been defeated again by the working class and its allies in China in recent years; their true nature has been exposed for study. Their defeat has contributed to the rich body of revolutionary theory which is a guide to all active revolutionaries. The Vietnamese working class and poor peasantry have won the admiration of the world. With the unification of Vietnam they have taken a step forward which furthers the struggle in Southeast Asia. The socialist construction of Vietnam involves continued struggle against the revisionist line; without a deepening grasp of what social imperialism is, the dictatorship of the proletariat cannot be maintained in Vietnam. We can rely on the Vietnamese working class and its allies to maintain their independence and to persist in class struggle.

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## DANGER AHEAD FOR ITALIAN WORKING CLASS

In 1945 the forces of Hitler fascism, which had attempted to dominate the world, were decisively defeated. But the working people, who had borne the brunt of all the sacrifices of the war, did not consolidate their victory by deposing capitalist power for good, through proletarian revolution, and setting up the dictatorship of the proletariat. Instead, the working class was betrayed, whether intentionally or not, by its leaders throughout Western Europe. The leadership of the Communist parties ordered the workers to hand back their weapons, and total bourgeois rule continued.

Less than ten years later, bourgeois revisionists led by Khrushchev overthrew the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union, substituted that of the bourgeoisie, and eventually

repudiated the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Revisionism rapidly percolated through all the 'communist' parties of Europe, and one by one they too, including the Italian party, rejected the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is the real historical preface to the Italian election results which have aroused such speculation in the world's bourgeois press. At the time of writing the composition of the new Italian government is still undetermined, but the pressures acting on the various parties are fairly clear.

As leaders of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) sat down with the ruling class's major spokesmen, the Christian Democrats, to divide up the Parliamentary offices, this was lauded as the first time in Italy's post-war history that 'communists' had

been allowed to participate in government. Such gestures by the ruling class are the last act of a drama rather than its opening—a final desperate stand against historical reality.

In May this year, the Italian monopoly-capitalist class faced its deepest political and economic crisis since the last war, with the collapse of its 38th government in 33 years. The resignation of the Christian Democrat Prime Minister, Sr. Aldo Moro, came as the value of the lira sank 30 per cent below its 1975 level. Wholesale corruption was revealed with allegations that three of Italy's leading politicians had taken substantial bribes from the US Lockheed Corporation in a defence deal. Italy was in crisis in May and the crisis is still unresolved. Even though share prices on the Italian Stock Exchange rose with the results of the General Election, Italy is living on foreign credit and huge loans have to be repaid this summer. At the same time unemployment is rising, the number of homeless is an affront to decency and living standards are falling. The Italian ruling class is desperate to stave off its own execution and realises that it needs the complicity of those who purport to represent the working-class, the leaders of the PCI, if it is to succeed.

### Tool of bourgeoisie

This has been stated clearly by one of the country's leading monopoly capitalists, Sr. Giovanni Agnelli, chairman of Fiat and outgoing President of Italy's Confederation of Industry. He was quoted in *The Times'* Europa column of July as follows:

The main problem is not what is going to happen in Parliament. The main problem is the working out of an emergency plan in which the communists absolutely must take part. This emergency plan must cover a certain number of basic points: how to slow down inflation, improve the balance of payments, decrease the budget deficit with the smallest possible unemployment with particular regard for the unemployed so that they can be put to work again soon in different jobs.

In other words, the PCI is to be the means by which monopoly capital hopes to strangle the workers' movement, hold down wage demands and smash strikes. Using the PCI, it will also attempt to sabotage the efforts of genuine Marxist-Leninists to give leadership to the working people, thus maintaining the hegemony of the ruling class.

The PCI has gladly accepted its role. Before the General Election, Sr. Enrico Berlinguer, leader of the PCI, explained the absence of a party manifesto on the grounds that the PCI wanted to be fluid and pragmatic to tackle the real nature of Italy's problems once it came to power. When the 'communists' sat down with Christian Democrats in July to work out 'fluid and pragmatic' solutions, there was little to choose between them. Both advocated cuts in public spending which are bound to lead to higher unemployment, and stricter taxation. They agreed about 'sacrifices from large sections of the population' backed by parliamentary sanctions.

Whenever a capitalist ruling class faces crises its facade of unity dissolves and contradictions become obvious. The reactionary Christian Democrats representing monopoly capital and Catholic landed interests accepted the role of the PCI unwillingly. It is being forced on them by other representatives of the bourgeoisie, the Socialists, who had previously formed numerous coalitions with the Christian Democrats. The Socialists saw clearly the tactical need for the ruling class to allow the PCI to take part in bourgeois government, and have said they will not support the Christian Democrats in Parliament unless the PCI is included. These manoeuvres, together with the election results which isolated many minority parties, have led to the emergence of two major factions similar to those in the British Parliament, with the PCI taking on the role and function of the Labour Party.

### Role of the working class

But what does this situation mean for the working people and the struggle to build a genuine Marxist-Leninist party in Italy?

The Communist Parties of Europe over their half century of rise and decline failed to grasp properly that society can pro-

gress only with the abolition of classes, and that only the working class is capable of carrying out this task. They failed to understand the deep-rootedness and historical role of classes and the inevitability of proletarian revolution, and thus did not see the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat—the kernel of Marxism-Leninism.

The main purpose of the proletariat in raising itself to the position of the ruling class—as in China and Albania—is not to run the national economy efficiently but to transform and revolutionise the whole of society. This is the only platform on which the masses in Italy or elsewhere in Europe can be mobilised for revolution. The European 'communist' parties, as typified by the Italian, never had the dictatorship of the proletariat as their strategic aim. Mao Tse-tung said in 1955:

The masses have a potentially inexhaustible enthusiasm for socialism. Those who can only follow the old routine in a revolutionary period are utterly incapable of seeing this enthusiasm. They are blind and all is dark ahead of them. At times they go as far as to confound right and wrong and turn things upside down. (Introductory note to *The Socialist Uprising in China's Countryside*.)

After the Second World War the masses were demanding revolutionary change. The lack of proletarian strategy led to the betrayal of the working class, with the development of revisionism and the notion of the 'historic compromise', namely that capitalism can be changed gradually and peacefully through participation in bourgeois government, creating a state of the whole people with the dictatorship of the proletariat becoming historically irrelevant.

That 34.4 per cent of the Italian electorate voted for the PCI does not mean that the people have been totally fooled into seeing the 'historic compromise' as a solution to their problems. Obviously, bourgeois elements will vote enthusiastically for the party which seems to offer the best recipe for bungling up the holes in the sinking ship, but for many working people it is a desperate attempt to find a solution to their predicament—they do not want wholesale unemployment, inflation, bad housing, the general degeneration of society.

By its actions the PCI has revealed itself to the working people for what it is—a friend of the ruling class. Though an alliance between the Christian Democrats and PCI may bring about a short-term improvement in Italy's economic affairs, in the long term it can provide no solution. As the economy decays it will become more and more obvious to the working people that the 'historic compromise' is one-sided, with them making all the sacrifices to preserve the profits of monopoly capital, and that the bourgeois parliamentary road is a blind alley. Now is the opportunity for a Marxist-Leninist working class vanguard to provide genuine Marxist-Leninist leadership for the working people of Italy.

The danger that the collapse of the Italian ruling class would present for the rest of Europe's bourgeoisie is clearly apparent to other members of the European Economic Community. Concurrently with the Italian election results, the European Commission in Brussels announced that it was working on a Marshall Plan for Italy similar to that initiated by the US in Western Europe after the Second World War. Herr Wilhelm Haferkamp, EEC Commissioner for Economic Affairs, called for massive 'international solidarity' to enable Italy to carry out far-reaching economic, social and administrative reforms—a rallying cry for monopoly capital to help one of its sickly brothers. However, it is not by any means clear that such aid will be forthcoming.

### Superpower contention

Moreover two other predators are lurking ready to take advantage of Italy's situation—US imperialism and the even more pernicious and virulent Soviet social-imperialism. A share of power for the revisionists in the midst of Europe and in NATO's naval centre would undoubtedly increase rivalry between the US and USSR; it would give the Soviet Union the

opportunity to penetrate Europe's second most populous country. However, the US Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger, has stated that 'the consequences would be grave for the NATO alliance' if the PCI were allowed into the government. He predicted that the PCI's assumption of coalition powers would be followed by similar coalitions in France, Spain, Portugal and Greece. He even threatened to exclude Italy from NATO.

Sr. Berlinguer claims his party is independent of the 'Moscow line' and has adopted some positions which give credibility to his statement. The PCI opposed the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia; at the 25th Congress of the Soviet Party, Berlinguer took the podium and defended his party's independence; before the election he was unwilling to endorse a Soviet proposal to hold an all-European conference of revisionist parties. Nevertheless it is notable that within two weeks of the election results Berlinguer was on his way to East Berlin to attend such a conference. At that conference he, with representatives of the Rumanian Party, expressed independence of Moscow. It is interesting that, despite promises to the contrary, the official Tass reports attempted to omit such speeches.

But even if the revisionists disagree with certain Moscow policies, their rise to a position of power can only merge with overall Soviet interests. They can certainly provide no real resistance to Soviet expansion, which is trying to penetrate Europe by means of complex economic and political manoeuvres. Objectively, as an instrument of Italy's ruling class, the PCI is incapable of mobilising the support of working people against Soviet interference; even if the PCI is seen as having a certain autonomy within the bourgeois government, if it attempts to confront the Italian ruling class, its political perspective would inevitably throw Italy into the arms of Soviet imperialism. A collapse of the newly formed government in Italy could well mean that the revisionists would attempt to form a working government. If cut off from the rest of Europe through the interference of Dr. Kissinger and other agents of US imperialism, Berlinguer would not reject economic and political aid from the Soviet Union, whether he wanted his party to remain independent or not. In Portugal, such moves were actively encouraged by the revisionist party led by Cunhal.

With 4.5 million Warsaw Pact troops massed on Europe's frontiers, Berlinguer told a British newsman recently that there was nothing to prevent the Russians staging another invasion in Eastern Europe like that of Czechoslovakia, if they wanted to. Only a genuine Marxist-Leninist party at the head of the working class, whether in Italy or any other country, is capable of uniting the people to defeat aggression, whether from US imperialism or the even greater enemy, Soviet social-imperialism.

## LENIN ON POLITICS & ECONOMICS

In China, in opposition to Teng Hsiao-ping's programme of the 'three directives' (see our last issue), a mass movement developed to confirm the positive verdicts of the Cultural Revolution, allowing the revolutionaries once more to take the initiative. A specially important role in this was played by the worker-peasant-soldier students of Tsinghua University. The initiative and analytical ability displayed by these people is itself a strong affirmation of the positive achievements of the Cultural Revolution. In their big-character posters attacking the Rightist line, they pointed to a parallel with a situation in the Russian Revolution.

In the early 1920s, a struggle developed in the Bolshevik Party concerning the role of the Trade Unions, and more generally the relative importance of economic and political work. Lenin was already extremely ill, but put up a most inspiring struggle. Trotsky openly took the stand of giving primacy to production,

using the Trade Unions to make the workers work harder, and pretending that he was the only one concerned with economic work. Before the Revolution Lenin had recognised that political power was the only guarantee of the workers' economic interest, and now he saw clearly that the safeguarding of this political power was the key issue. Economics without a sense of political direction could lead to a failure of the revolution: this was obviously the most serious thing, therefore politics was undoubtedly still primary. Lenin said:

We now have a state under which it is the business of the massively organised proletariat to protect itself, while we, for our part, must use these workers' organisations to protect the workers from their state, and to get them to protect our state.<sup>1</sup>

At this point, Bukharin popped up as a supposed moderate, setting up a 'buffer' group between Lenin and Trotsky. He argued that one was talking about economics and the other politics, but since after all both economics and politics were needed there was really no argument, the two could easily be reconciled, and he was the man to do it. Lenin saw that Bukharin was really putting forward the same view as Trotsky in a different form. Since the dictatorship of the proletariat was in some danger, it was necessary to thrash out matters of principle. Lenin said:

What the political approach means, in other words, is that the wrong attitude to the trade unions will ruin the Soviet power and topple the dictatorship of the proletariat. . . . To say: I 'appreciate' your political approach, 'but' it is only a political one and we 'also need an economic one', is tantamount to saying: I 'appreciate' your point that in taking that particular step you are liable to break your neck, but you must also take into consideration that it is better to be clothed and well-fed than to go naked and hungry.

Bukharin's insistence on combining the political and the economic approach has landed him in theoretical *eclecticism*.

Trotsky and Bukharin make as though they are concerned for the growth of production whereas we have nothing but formal democracy in mind. This picture is wrong, because the only formulation of the issue (which the Marxist standpoint allows) is: without a correct political approach to the matter the given class will be unable to stay on top, and, consequently, will be incapable of solving its production problem either.<sup>2</sup>

1. 'The Trade Unions, the Present Situation and Trotsky's Mistakes' (December 1920). V.I. Lenin Collected Works (Moscow 1973) Vol. XXXII, p. 25.

2. 'Once Again on the Trade Unions, the Current Situation and the Mistakes of Trotsky and Bukharin' (January 1921). V.I. Lenin, op. cit., pp. 83-4.

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