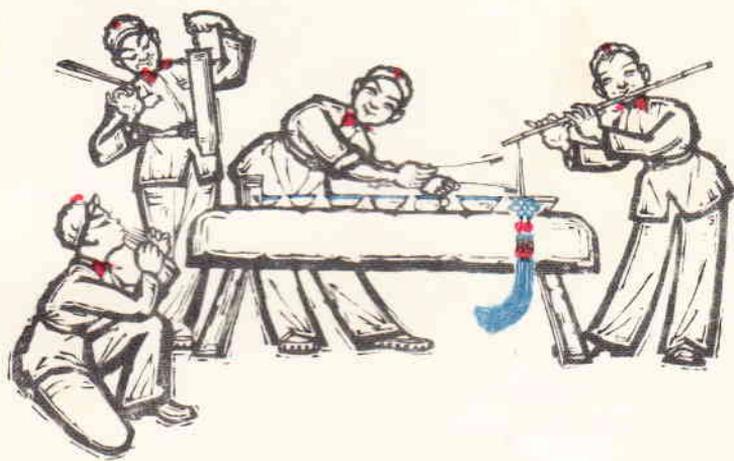


S. HARRISON

# CHINESE LITERATURE



Monthly

8

1966

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# CHINESE LITERATURE

*monthly*

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## Long Live the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution

— Editorial of the *Red Flag (Hongqi)*, No. 8, 1966

Under the direct leadership of Chairman Mao Tse-tung and the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, a great mass proletarian cultural revolution without parallel in history is swiftly and vigorously unfolding with the irresistible force of an avalanche.

Holding high the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought, the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers and the masses of revolutionary cadres and revolutionary intellectuals are sweeping away the representatives of the bourgeoisie who have wormed their way into the Party, the monsters of all kinds and all forms of decadent bourgeois and feudal ideology. An unprecedentedly favourable situation has arisen on the political, ideological and cultural fronts.

This is an extremely acute and complex class struggle to foster what is proletarian and eradicate what is bourgeois in the superstructure, in the realm of ideology — a life-and-death struggle between the bour-

geoisie attempting to restore capitalism and the proletariat determined to prevent it. This struggle affects the issue of whether the dictatorship of the proletariat and the economic base of socialism in our country can be consolidated and developed or not, and whether or not our Party and country will change colour. It affects the destiny and future of our Party and our country as well as the destiny and future of world revolution. It is most important that this struggle should not be taken lightly.

Why is it imperative that the proletarian cultural revolution be launched? Why is this revolution so important?

Comrade Mao Tse-tung has scientifically summed up the international historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat and put forth the theory of contradiction, classes and class struggle in socialist society. He constantly reminds us never to forget the class struggle, never to forget to put politics first and never to forget to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat, and that we must take various measures to prevent a revisionist usurpation of leadership, to prevent a capitalist restoration. He points out that the overthrow of political power is necessarily preceded by efforts to seize hold of the superstructure and ideology in order to prepare public opinion, and that this is true both of the revolutionary and the counter-revolutionary classes. Proceeding from this fundamental point of departure, Comrade Mao Tse-tung has called on us to launch the class struggle in the ideological field to foster what is proletarian and eradicate what is bourgeois.

Here is a great truth, a great development of Marxism-Leninism.

History shows that the bourgeoisie first took hold of ideology and prepared public opinion before it seized political power from the feudal landlord class. Starting from the period of the "Renaissance," the European bourgeoisie persistently criticized feudal ideology and propagated bourgeois ideology. It was in the 17th and 18th centuries, after several hundred years of preparation of public opinion, that the bourgeoisie seized political power and established its dictatorship in one European country after another.

Marx and Engels began propagating the theories of communism more than a century ago. They did so to prepare public opinion

for the seizure of political power by the proletariat. The Russian proletarian revolution culminated in the seizure of political power only after decades of preparation of public opinion. Our own experience is even fresher in our minds. When the Chinese proletariat began to appear on the political scene, it was weak and unarmed. How was the revolution to start? It started with the propagation of Marxism-Leninism and the exposure of imperialism and its lackeys in China. The struggle of the Chinese proletariat for the seizure of political power began precisely with the May 4th cultural revolution.

In the final analysis, the history of the seizure of political power by the Chinese proletariat is a history of Mao Tse-tung's thought gripping the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers. As the masses have aptly put it: "Without Mao Tse-tung's thought, there would have been no New China." By integrating Marxism-Leninism with the practice of the Chinese revolution, Comrade Mao Tse-tung, the great revolutionary standard-bearer, changed the whole face of the Chinese revolution. Historical experience shows that Mao Tse-tung's thought enabled us to gain the increasing support of the masses, to have armed forces and guns, to set up one revolutionary base area after another, to seize political power bit by bit and finally to take over political power throughout the country.

Having seized political power, the proletariat has become the ruling class and the landlord and capitalist classes have become the ruled. The landlord class and the reactionary bourgeoisie will never be reconciled to being ruled or to their extinction. They are constantly dreaming of a restoration through subversion of the dictatorship of the proletariat, so that they can once again ride on the backs of the working people. They still have great strength. They have money, extensive social contacts and international links, and experience in counter-revolution. In particular, the ideology of the exploiting classes still has a very big market. Some unsteady elements in the revolutionary ranks are prone to be corrupted by this ideology and consequently become counter-revolutionaries. Moreover, the spontaneous influence of the petty-bourgeoisie ceaselessly engenders capitalism. Having seized political power the proletariat still faces the

danger of losing it. After being established the socialist system still faces the danger of a capitalist restoration. Failure to give this serious attention and take the necessary steps will end in our Party and our country changing colour and will cause tens of millions of our people to lose their lives.

Bourgeois and feudal ideologies are one of the most important strongholds of the overthrown landlord and capitalist classes after the socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production has been effected. Their efforts at restoration are first of all directed at getting their hold over ideology and using their decadent ideas in every possible way to deceive the masses. The seizure of ideology and the moulding of public opinion are the bourgeoisie's preparation for the subversion of the dictatorship of the proletariat. And when the opportunity is ripe, they will stage a coup to seize political power in one way or another.

After the establishment of socialist relations of production, the Soviet Union failed to carry out a proletarian cultural revolution in earnest. Bourgeois ideology ran rife, corrupting the minds of the people and almost imperceptibly undermining the socialist relations of production. After the death of Stalin, there was a more blatant counter-revolutionary moulding of public opinion by the Khrushchov revisionist group. And this group soon afterwards staged its "palace" coup to subvert the dictatorship of the proletariat and usurped Party, military and government power.

In the 1956 Hungarian counter-revolutionary incident, the counter-revolutionaries also prepared public opinion before they took to the streets to create disturbances and stage riots. This counter-revolutionary incident was engineered by imperialism and started by a group of anti-communist intellectuals of the Petofi Club. Imre Nagy, who at that time still wore the badge of a Communist, was "fitted out with a king's robe" and became the chieftain of the counter-revolutionaries.

International historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat shows that this dictatorship cannot be consolidated, nor can the socialist system be consolidated, unless a proletarian cultural revolution is carried out and persistent efforts are made to eradicate bourgeois ideology. Bourgeois ideas spreading unchecked in-

evitably leads to the subversion of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the emergence of such representatives of the bourgeoisie as Khrushchov, who will seize political power through a "palace" coup or a military coup, or a combination of both. If the dictatorship of the proletariat is to be consolidated, if a country under the dictatorship of the proletariat is to advance in a socialist and communist direction, a proletarian cultural revolution is imperative; proletarian ideology must be fostered and bourgeois ideology eradicated and the ideological roots of revisionism must be pulled out completely and the roots of Marxism-Leninism, of Mao Tse-tung's thought, must be firmly implanted.

Socialist revolution and socialist construction demand energetic efforts in many fields of work. Running through this work there must be a red line, which is nothing other than the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the struggle between the socialist and the capitalist roads, and the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie in the field of ideology.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung teaches us:

**The class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the class struggle between the different political forces, and the class struggle in the ideological field between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie will continue to be long and tortuous and at times will even become very acute. The proletariat seeks to transform the world according to its own world outlook, and so does the bourgeoisie. In this respect, the question of which will win out, socialism or capitalism, is still not really settled.**  
*(On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People.)*

The purpose of the proletarian cultural revolution is to settle the question of "who will win" in the ideological field between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. It is a protracted and difficult historical task that runs through every field of work.

Some comrades regard the debates in the press between the proletariat and the reactionary bourgeoisie as "trivial, paper polemics" of literary men. Immersed in their work, some comrades are not concerned with the struggle on the ideological and cultural fronts and pay no heed to the class struggle in the field of ideology. This is absolutely wrong and most dangerous. If bourgeois ideology is

allowed to run wild, the dictatorship of the proletariat will become the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and the socialist system will become a capitalist system, or a semi-colonial, semi-feudal system. We must shout to these people: Comrades! The enemy is sharpening his sword, he wants to cut off our heads, he wants to overturn our state power. How is it that you see it and hear it and take no notice?

Both the seizure and consolidation of political power depend on the pen as well as the gun. If we are to safeguard and carry forward the revolutionary cause, we must not only hold on firmly to the gun but must take up the proletarian pen to blast and sweep away the pen of the bourgeoisie. Only by sweeping away all bourgeois ideology can we consolidate proletarian political power and keep an ever firmer hold on the proletarian gun.

A good look at the class struggle on the ideological and cultural fronts makes one stirred to the soul.

The struggle on the ideological and cultural fronts between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between Marxism and anti-Marxism, has never ceased for a moment since the founding of the Chinese People's Republic. After the establishment of socialist relations of production this class struggle in the ideological field has become ever deeper, ever more complex and acute.

In 1957 the bourgeois Rightists launched a frenzied attack against the Party and socialism. Before the alliance of the reactionary politicians headed by Chang Po-chun and Lo Lung-chi came out into the open in this offensive, bourgeois Rightist intellectuals had already scattered a good many poisonous weeds around; one after another, there emerged a number of counter-revolutionary notions, political programmes and films and novels. These were obviously efforts to prepare public opinion for the bourgeois Rightists to seize political power.

Under the wise leadership of the Party's Central Committee and Chairman Mao, the Chinese people repulsed this wild offensive of the bourgeois Rightists and won an important victory on the political and ideological fronts.

Then in 1958, under the great red banner of the General Line for socialist construction, the Chinese people embarked with boundless

enthusiasm and energy on the great leap forward in every field of work and set up the people's communes in a big way. At the same time, the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers zealously took to studying Chairman Mao's works and applying his thought in a creative way. A revolution also began on the ideological and cultural fronts.

From 1959 to 1962, China suffered temporary economic difficulties as a result of sabotage by the Soviet revisionists and three successive years of serious natural calamities. But difficulties could not intimidate the revolutionary Chinese people. They worked hard and courageously forged ahead under the wise leadership of the Party's Central Committee and Chairman Mao. Within a few years they had overcome the difficulties and brought about an excellent situation. However, in these few years of economic difficulties, monsters had come out of their hiding places one after another. The offensive of the reactionary bourgeoisie against the Party and socialism reached a degree of utmost fury.

In the field of philosophical studies, Yang Hsien-chen blatantly spread the fallacy denying the identity of idea and being in an attempt to hold back the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers from bringing their subjective initiative into play and to oppose the great leap forward. Subsequently, he came out with the theory of "two combining into one," thus providing philosophical "grounds" for the extremely reactionary political line which advocated the liquidation of struggle in our relations with imperialism, the reactionaries and modern revisionism, and reduction of assistance and support to the revolutionary struggle of other peoples, as well as the extension of plots for private use and of free markets, the increase of small enterprises with sole responsibility for their own profits or losses, and the fixing of output quotas based on the household. The so-called "authorities" representing the bourgeoisie who had wormed their way into the Party wildly brandished the three cudgels of "philistinism," "over-simplification" and "pragmatism" to oppose the workers, peasants and soldiers from studying Chairman Mao's works and applying his thought in a creative way. Moreover, exploiting their positions and powers, they forbade the press to publish philosophical articles written by workers, peasants and soldiers. At the same time, under

the guise of studying the history of philosophy, certain bourgeois "specialists" widely propagated the ideas of "liberty, equality and fraternity" and lavished praise on Confucius, making use of this mummy to publicize their whole set of bourgeois ideas.

In the field of economic studies, Sun Yeh-fang and company put forward a whole set of revisionist fallacies. They wanted to put profit and money in command to oppose putting Mao Tse-tung's thought and politics in command. They vainly attempted to change the socialist relations of production and turn socialist enterprises into capitalist ones.

In the field of historical studies, a pack of bourgeois "authorities" launched unscrupulous attacks on the revolution in historical studies which began in 1958. They opposed putting Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse-tung's thought, in command in historical research and spread the notion that historical data are everything. They used what they called "historicism" to counter the Marxist-Leninist theory of class struggle. They bitterly hated those revolutionary research workers in history who made critical appraisals of emperors, kings, generals and prime ministers and gave prominence to the peasants and the peasant wars. They lauded the emperors, kings, generals and prime ministers to the skies while energetically vilifying the peasants and peasant wars. They were the bourgeois "royalists" in the field of historical studies. Among them, some were inveterate anti-communists. These include Wu Han and Chien Po-tsan.

In the field of literature and art, the representatives of the bourgeoisie spared no effort to propagate the whole revisionist line in literature and art to oppose Chairman Mao's line, and vigorously propagated what they called the traditions of the 1930s. Typical were their theories on "truthful writing," on "the broad path of realism," on "the deepening of realism," on opposition to "subject-matter as the decisive factor," on "middle characters," on opposition to "the smell of gunpowder," on "the merging of various trends as the spirit of the age," and on "discarding the classics and rebelling against orthodoxy." Under the "guidance" of these theories, there appeared a wave of bad, anti-Party, anti-socialist operas and plays, films and novels, and histories of the cinema and of literature.

In the field of education, the representatives of the bourgeoisie did their utmost to oppose the educational policy advanced by Chairman Mao, which is aimed at enabling the educated to develop morally, intellectually and physically and become socialist-minded, cultured working people. They spared no effort in opposing the part-work, part-study educational system and propagating the educational "theories" and systems of Soviet revisionism. They made desperate efforts to win the younger generation away from us in the vain hope of training them into heirs of the bourgeoisie.

In the field of journalism, the representatives of the bourgeoisie exerted themselves to oppose the guiding role of journalism, and advocated the bourgeois conception of "imparting knowledge." They vainly attempted to strangle the leadership of Marxism-Leninism, of Mao Tse-tung's thought, in journalistic work, hoping to give free currency to bourgeois contraband and wrest from us our journalistic base.

The most reactionary and fanatical element in this adverse current was the anti-Party "Three-Family Village" gang. They had many bases — newspapers, magazines, forums and publishing organizations. Their long arms reached out to all corners of the cultural field and they usurped some positions of leadership. Their nose for anything reactionary was extremely sharp and their writings showed extremely close and prompt co-ordination with anything reactionary in the political atmosphere. Under direction, organized, acting according to plan and with set purposes, they prepared public opinion for the restoration of capitalism and the overthrow of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Playing the main role in this adverse current were the representatives of the bourgeoisie who had sneaked into the Party. They waved "red flags" to oppose the red flag and donned the cloak of Marxism-Leninism, of Mao Tse-tung's thought, to oppose Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tse-tung's thought. Dressing themselves up as "authorities" on Marxism, as "authorities" clarifying the Party's policies, they wantonly spread poison and deceived the masses. They took advantage of their positions and powers, on the one hand to let loose all kinds of monsters, and on the other hand to suppress the

counter-attacks of the proletarian Left. They are a bunch of schemers who put up the signboard of communism behind which they actually peddled anti-Party and anti-socialist poison. They are a most dangerous bunch.

We have constantly fought back against the attacks launched by the bourgeoisie from 1959 onwards. Especially since last November, when Comrade Yao Wen-yuan published his article "On the New Historical Drama *Hai Jui Dismissed from Office*" and sounded the clarion of the great proletarian cultural revolution, a mass counter-offensive against the bourgeoisie's attacks has opened up.

In this counter-attack the political consciousness of the broad masses of workers, peasants, soldiers, revolutionary cadres and revolutionary intellectuals has risen to an unprecedented level and their fighting power has enormously increased. The battles fought by the masses have shattered and uprooted the "Three-Family Village" anti-Party clique. And its roots lay nowhere else than in the former Peking Municipal Party Committee. A black anti-Party and anti-socialist line ran through the leadership of the former Peking Municipal Committee of the Communist Party. Some of its leading members are not Marxist-Leninists, but revisionists. They controlled many bases and media and exercised a dictatorship over the proletariat. They are a clique of careerists and conspirators. Their plots were exposed and they were defeated. The Central Committee of our Party reorganized the Peking Municipal Party Committee and established a new one. This decision was very wise and absolutely correct. It was a new victory for Mao Tse-tung's thought.

From the moment we launched this large-scale counter-attack last year, the representatives of the bourgeoisie who wormed their way into the Party and waved "red flags" to oppose the red flag, were thrown into utter confusion. They hurriedly invoked five "talismans" to support and shelter the bourgeois Rightists and suppress and attack the proletarian Left.

One of these "talismans" was raised in the name of "opening wide."

The representatives of the bourgeoisie, who wormed their way into the Party and waved "red flags" to oppose the red flag, tried

their best to distort the Party's "opening wide" policy by removing its class content and twisting it into bourgeois liberalization. They allowed only the bourgeois Rightists to "speak out" and did not allow the proletarian Left to enter the contest. They allowed only the bourgeois Rightists to attack and did not allow the proletarian Left to counter-attack. They let the Rightists "open" as wide as they could while they either shelved the counter-attacking manuscripts sent in by those of the Left or compelled the authors to rewrite them in the light of their ideas. They said that *Hai Jui Dismissed from Office* should not be criticized from a political angle, otherwise this would affect the "opening wide" and people would not dare to speak up. We would like to ask these lords: Did you just "open" very slightly? Haven't you attacked the Party politically in the manner of a warrior brandishing his sword or drawing his bow? Why did you prohibit the proletariat from "opening wide" to counter-attack the bourgeois Rightists politically? In fact, your "opening wide" gave the green light to all the bourgeoisie and the red light to hold back the proletariat.

Another "talisman" went by the name of "construction before destruction."

Pretending to be "dialecticians," the representatives of the bourgeoisie, who wormed their way into the Party and waved "red flags" to oppose the red flag, set up a clamour about "construction before destruction" when the proletariat countered the bourgeois attack. And on the pretext of "construction before destruction," they would not allow the proletariat to destroy bourgeois ideology, to attack the reactionary political citadel of the bourgeoisie. "Construction before destruction" is opposed to dialectics and Mao Tse-tung's thought. Comrade Mao Tse-tung constantly teaches us that there is no construction without destruction. It is precisely destruction that we want to come first. Destruction means revolution, it means criticism. Destruction necessarily calls for reasoning, and reasoning is construction. Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse-tung's thought, has all developed in the struggle to destroy bourgeois ideology, Right opportunism and "Left" opportunism. Historical dialectics is nothing other than destruction before construction and construc-

tion in the course of destruction. Is not Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse-tung's thought—the greatest truth ever known since time immemorial—construction? We would like to ask those bourgeois lords, what is it you want to construct? Obviously, only bourgeois, reactionary ideology and not proletarian, revolutionary ideology. When the proletariat, employing Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tse-tung's thought, irresistibly countered the bourgeois attack and set to work to destroy bourgeois ideology, the clamour you set up about “construction before destruction” was precisely for the purpose of protecting the Rightists and preventing the Left from counter-attacking. It was opposition to the proletarian cultural revolution.

A third “talisman” came under the head of opposing and holding back the growth of “Left scholar-tyrants.”

Whenever the proletarian Left countered bourgeois attacks, the representatives of the bourgeoisie, who wormed their way into the Party and waved “red flags” to oppose the red flag, on the pretext of wanting to be “meticulous” and “profound,” condemned the Left as being “crude” and acting like a “cudgel.” During the present great counter-offensive against bourgeois attacks, they again invoked the “talisman” of opposing and holding back the growth of “Left scholar-tyrants” in a vain attempt to hold the proletarian Left down and suppress it. This would never do. We say that the tag of “scholar-tyrant” fits you bourgeois representatives and “academic authorities” perfectly. You lords who wormed your way into the Party and shielded and backed the bourgeois scholar-tyrants are the big Party-tyrants and scholar-tyrants—tyrants who do not read the newspapers and books, who are divorced from the masses and devoid of knowledge, and who try to overwhelm others by the use of your power. The proletarian Left always insists on the truth of Marxism-Leninism, the truth of Mao Tse-tung's thought, and relies on scientific contention and evidence in criticizing bourgeois ideology. The proletarian Left has nothing in common with “scholar-tyrants.” We shall enter the lists against the bourgeois “scholar-tyrants” with colours flying and denounce you, the small handful of big Party-tyrants and scholar-tyrants. We tell you lords, who malign the

Left as a “cudgel,” that the Left is the steel cudgel, the golden cudgel, of the proletariat. And we shall use this cudgel to smash the old world to smithereens, defeat your handful of big Party-tyrants and scholar-tyrants and destroy your underworld kingdom. This is what is called the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Another “talisman” went by the name of “purely academic discussion.”

In order to cover up the bourgeois Rightist attacks on the Party and socialism and, at the same time, to suppress the counter-attacks of the proletarian Left, the representatives of the bourgeoisie, who wormed their way into the Party and waved “red flags” to oppose the red flag, described the class struggle in the realm of ideology as a “purely academic discussion.” We would ask these lords: Is there really anything academic about Wu Han's “Hai Jui Scolds the Emperor” and *Hai Jui Dismissed from Office* and the anti-Party and anti-socialist double-talk of Teng To, Liao Mo-sha and company? The so-called “purely academic discussion” is a fraud the bourgeoisie often plays. There is nothing “purely academic” in class society; everything academic is based on the world outlook of a given class, is subordinate to politics and serves the politics and economy of a given class in one way or another. In the course of our present full-scale counter-offensive, the representatives of the bourgeoisie held up the “talisman” of so-called “purely academic discussion” and opposed putting politics first in order to cover up the vital political issue concerning the anti-Party “Three-Family Village” or “Four-Family Village” gangster inns, to put bourgeois politics first and oppose putting proletarian politics first, and to drag this great struggle to the Right and divert it on to a revisionist course.

Still another important “talisman” of theirs was what they called: “Everybody is equal before the truth,” “everyone has his share of erroneous statements” and “it is all a muddle.”

In the course of the proletarian counter-offensive against the bourgeoisie, the representatives of the bourgeoisie, who wormed their way into the Party and waved “red flags” to oppose the red flag, invoked this “talisman,” on the one hand to get their own men to

hang on to their positions and not retreat an inch, and on the other hand to create confusion so that they could fish in troubled waters and await an opportunity to counter-attack.

The out-and-out bourgeois slogan of "everybody is equal before the truth" is thoroughly hypocritical. There can be no equality at all between opposing classes. Truth has its class nature. In the present era, the proletariat alone is able to master objective truth because its class interests are in complete conformity with the objective laws. The reactionary and decadent bourgeoisie has long been completely divorced from the truth. Its so-called "truth" can be nothing more than a fallacy that runs counter to the tide of the times and the objective laws. There can be no equality whatsoever between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, between proletarian ideology and bourgeois ideology, between proletarian truth and bourgeois fallacy. The only question involved is whether the East wind prevails over the West wind or vice versa. Can any equality be permitted on such basic questions as the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, the dictatorship of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie, the dictatorship of the proletariat in the sphere of the superstructure including the various fields of culture, and the continual cleansing of the proletarian ranks of representatives of the bourgeoisie who have wormed their way into the Party and wave "red flags" to oppose the red flag? The old social democrats in the decades gone by and the modern revisionists in the past decade and more have never permitted the proletariat to enjoy equality with the bourgeoisie. In bringing up the slogan "everybody is equal before the truth," the representatives of the bourgeoisie who wormed their way into the Party wanted to bolster up the anti-Party and anti-socialist elements while suppressing the counter-attacks of the Left. We would like to ask these lords: Weren't you prating about equality with your tongue in your cheek? Why did you withhold from publication articles by the Left, while you permitted the Rightists alone to publish their numerous poisonous weeds? What equality was this? We have to tell you bluntly, we absolutely will not permit you any equality with the proletariat. Our struggle against you

is one of life and death. With regard to your kind of anti-Party and anti-socialist gangs, dictatorship is the only thing.

The argument that "everyone has his share of erroneous statements" and "it is all a muddle" was a great conspiracy. We consider that first of all a line of demarcation must be drawn between classes, between revolution and counter-revolution. In the course of understanding objective events, the revolutionary Left may commit one error or another, but these cannot be mentioned in the same breath as the anti-Party, anti-socialist and counter-revolutionary speeches and actions of the bourgeois Rightists; the two things are radically different. In the present great cultural revolution the principal contradiction is the antagonistic one between, on the one hand, the broad masses of the workers, peasants, soldiers, revolutionary cadres and revolutionary intellectuals, and, on the other hand, you the handful of anti-Party and anti-socialist representatives of the bourgeoisie. This is a contradiction between revolution and counter-revolution, an irreconcilable contradiction between the enemy and ourselves. As for your counter-revolutionary speeches and actions, we must subject them all to merciless criticism and sound the call for attack. Bourgeois academic ideas in general must, of course, come under criticism, but that is different from the treatment befitting anti-Party and anti-socialist elements such as you are. In dealing with ordinary bourgeois scholars, we shall go on providing them with suitable conditions of work and let them remould their world outlook in the course of their work, provided they do not oppose the Communist Party and the people. When we hit back at the attacks by the bourgeoisie, the bourgeois representatives who sneaked into our Party set up the clamour about "everyone has his share of erroneous statements" and "it is all a muddle" with no other aim than holding the Left in a tight grip, of revenging themselves by creating a great muddle. This was just a waste of effort. We go by Chairman Mao's guidance and make a distinction between the Left, the middle and the Right; we rely on the Left, combat the Right and win over, unite with and educate the majority so as to carry the great proletarian cultural revolution through to the end.

All these "talismans" of the bourgeois representatives who sneaked into the Party and waved "red flags" to oppose the red flag, were all directed at one goal — the subjection of the proletariat to their dictatorship. They already usurped some leading positions and applied dictatorship over us in various fields of culture. We have to recapture all these positions and overthrow these bourgeois representatives.

A striking feature of the bourgeois representatives who sneaked into the Party is their opposition to the red flag while waving "red flags."

How can we recognize them? The only way is "to read Chairman Mao's works, follow his teachings and act on his instructions."

Mao Tse-tung's thought is the acme of Marxism-Leninism in the present era, it is living Marxism-Leninism at its highest. The theory and practice of Comrade Mao Tse-tung may be likened to the ceaseless movement of the sun and moon in the skies and the endless flow of the rivers and streams on earth. Comrade Mao Tse-tung's works are the highest directives for all our work. The watershed between Marxism-Leninism and revisionism, between revolution and counter-revolution, lies in whether one supports Mao Tse-tung's thought and acts in accordance with it or whether one rejects it and refuses to act in accordance with it.

We endorse and support all that is in keeping with Mao Tse-tung's thought. We shall fearlessly struggle against and overthrow anybody who opposes Mao Tse-tung's thought, no matter how high the position he holds and how great the "fame" and "authority" he enjoys.

The representatives of the bourgeoisie who wormed their way into the Party look like a "colossus." Yet in fact, like all reactionaries, they are only paper tigers.

Mao Tse-tung's thought is the steering gear, and the workers, peasants and soldiers are the main force in the proletarian cultural revolution. This being so, we can certainly defeat every kind of monsters and win victory after victory in the proletarian cultural revolution.

Maliciously and gleefully, the landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements and Rightists at home and the imperialists and revisionists abroad think that they can gain some advantage while we are unmasking and criticizing the anti-Party "Three-Family Village" gang. We have to tell the reactionaries at home and abroad that they are as stupid as a donkey. The exact purpose of unmasking the anti-Party "Three-Family Village" gang, subjecting them to criticism and sweeping away all the monsters is to eliminate your agents within our Party and our country and remove the "time-bomb" on which you place your hopes. As the great proletarian cultural revolution develops in depth, we shall implant Mao Tse-tung's thought still more firmly among the people all over the country and completely dig out the roots of revisionism and of the restoration of capitalism. History will ruthlessly deride you silly donkeys.

The reactionaries at home and abroad have spread the lie that we are attacking all intellectuals. This is nonsense. China's great proletarian cultural revolution is directed against a handful of evil men who put up the signboard of communism behind which they peddled their anti-communist wares; it is directed against a handful of anti-Party, anti-socialist and counter-revolutionary bourgeois intellectuals. With regard to the great number of intellectuals who came over from the old society, our policy is to unite with them, educate and remould them. And the ranks of the proletarian intellectuals are steadily growing in the course of the great cultural revolution.

Revolutionary people, let us all unite still more closely on the basis of Mao Tse-tung's thought!

Holding high the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought, and the great red banner of the proletarian cultural revolution, let us go forward in triumph!

Long live the great proletarian cultural revolution!

## China in the Midst of High-Tide of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution

A high-tide of the great proletarian cultural revolution has been unfolding vigorously throughout China for several months, in response to the great call of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and Chairman Mao Tse-tung. This is a great revolutionary movement aimed at consolidating the dictatorship of the proletariat and advancing the cause of socialism.

Hundreds of millions of workers, peasants and soldiers, revolutionary cadres and revolutionary intellectuals, armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought, have been writing articles, holding discussions and putting up posters written in big characters to sweep away the monsters of all kinds entrenched in ideological and cultural positions, and to foster proletarian ideology and liquidate bourgeois ideology with great vigour. Those who echo the imperialists and the reactionary bourgeois "specialists," "scholars" and "authorities"

have been routed, one group after another, with every bit of their prestige swept into the dust. The reactionary strongholds controlled by members of the sinister anti-Party and anti-socialist gangs have been breached, one after another. The magnitude, impact, intensity and strength of this great proletarian cultural revolution are without precedent in history. The whole of China is a vast scene of seething revolution.

Chairman Mao Tse-tung has all along taught the Chinese people that the socialist revolution on the economic and political fronts alone is not enough. It is necessary to carry out thoroughgoing socialist revolution on the ideological and cultural fronts as well. Chairman Mao has pointed out that, with the deepening of China's socialist revolution, the issue of the proletarian cultural revolution would inevitably come to the forefront. The proletarian revolution demands the complete destruction of the old decadent culture of the capitalist and feudal classes and the creation of a brand-new socialist culture which serves proletarian politics and the workers, peasants and soldiers. The overthrown capitalist class and other exploiting classes, however, are stubbornly entrenched in ideological and cultural positions and spread the cultural viruses of capitalism and feudalism so as to serve bourgeois politics, pave the way for the restoration of capitalism and prepare public opinion for subversion of the proletarian state power. As a result, class struggle in the ideological and cultural fields between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie has become inevitable, and at times is even very sharp.

Shortly after the socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production was basically completed in 1956, the bourgeois Rightists mounted attacks in 1957, and a sharp class struggle took place. These attacks were repulsed by the Chinese people under the leadership of the Communist Party.

Between 1959 and 1962, anti-China waves were stirred up by the imperialists and modern revisionists who took advantage of the temporary difficulties resulting from sabotage by the Khrushchov revisionists and serious natural calamities in China. In co-ordination with the imperialists and modern revisionists, the reactionary bourgeois forces within the country availed themselves of this opportunity to

unleash another series of frantic attacks against the proletariat. The representatives of the bourgeoisie entrenched in academic, educational, journalistic, literary and art, publishing and other cultural fields unleashed frenzied attacks on the dictatorship of the proletariat, the socialist system, and leadership by the Communist Party and Chairman Mao Tse-tung.

These anti-Party and anti-socialist criminal activities of the bourgeoisie aroused strong indignation among the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers, revolutionary cadres and revolutionary intellectuals. The revolutionary masses have waged uninterrupted struggle against them. The signal for the counter-offensive in full force by the proletariat against the reactionary bourgeoisie was given by Yao Wen-yuan's article "On the New Historical Drama *Hai Jui Dismissed from Office*" carried by the Shanghai *Wen Hui Daily* on November 10 last year, which raised the curtain on the current upsurge of the great cultural revolution.

Between publication of Yao Wen-yuan's article last November and April of this year, the revolution revolved mainly around criticism and exposure of Wu Han's anti-Party and anti-socialist crimes. Wu Han served U.S. imperialism as a cultural servant. He was personally groomed by the reactionary politician Hu Shih and consistently worshipped the U.S. and was pro-Chiang Kai-shek and anti-communist. He wormed his way into the revolutionary ranks on the eve of the country's liberation and later became Vice-Mayor of Peking. Posing as a revolutionary cadre while engaged in counter-revolutionary dealings, Wu Han is in fact a lackey of U.S. imperialism.

Starting in 1959, Wu Han wrote a series of reactionary articles and drama to attack the Communist Party, the socialist system and the dictatorship of the proletariat. In his drama and his articles on Hai Jui, he used the story of the dismissal from office 400 years ago in the Ming dynasty of this Chinese feudal bureaucrat to distort history, satirize the present and complain about the "injustice" done to the anti-Party and anti-socialist Right opportunists who were "dismissed" from office by the Chinese people in 1959, and to encourage them to stage a come-back.

Yao Wen-yuan's article of last November and "The Reactionary Nature of 'Hai Jui Scolds the Emperor' and *Hai Jui Dismissed from Office*" written by Chi Pen-yu and "'Hai Jui Scolds the Emperor' and *Hai Jui Dismissed from Office* Are Two Big Poisonous Weeds Against the Party and Socialism" by Kuan Feng and Lin Chieh, both published early in April this year, exposed Wu Han's reactionary political character, thus bringing the struggle in criticizing Wu Han to the key issue of the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie and between the road of socialism and the road of capitalism. Numerous articles were also published by most newspapers and periodicals in the country, unfolding further criticism of Wu Han. The history of Wu Han's anti-communist and anti-popular true colours as a servant of U.S. imperialism has thus been more clearly revealed.

The secrets of the Three-Family Village were unmasked more fully from the beginning to the end of May this year. The Three-Family Village represents an anti-Party and anti-socialist clique which includes Teng To, Wu Han and Liao Mo-sha. Teng To is a renegade who insinuated himself into the Party once again and is a Rightist who was not caught but slipped through in 1957. Over the last few years, he usurped the post of member of the Secretariat of the Peking Municipal Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. Liao Mo-sha is a bourgeois representative who wormed his way into the Party and usurped the post of Director of the United Front Department of the Municipal Party Committee over the last few years. Using as their instruments the fortnightly *Frontline*, the *Peking Daily* and the *Peking Evening News*, sponsored by the Municipal Party Committee, Teng To, Wu Han and Liao Mo-sha wrote large numbers of miscellaneous articles starting in 1959, releasing a whole series of anti-Party and anti-socialist poisonous arrows to prepare public opinion for the restoration of capitalism.

On May 8 this year, the *Liberation Army Daily* published "Open Fire at the Black Anti-Party and Anti-Socialist Line!" by Kao Chu and the *Kwangming Daily* brought out "Heighten Our Vigilance and Distinguish the True from the False" by Ho Ming, exposing the plot of *Frontline* and the *Peking Daily* to make a bogus criticism of Teng To's anti-Party and anti-socialist crimes while in fact covering them

up and to wage a bogus struggle against him while in fact shielding him. At the same time, the two papers mentioned above published material under the title "Teng To's *Evening Chats at Yenshan* Is Anti-Party and Anti-Socialist Double-Talk."

The *Liberation Daily* and the *Wen Hui Daily* in Shanghai on May 10 published "On 'Three-Family Village'" by Yao Wen-yuan which made a systematic and comprehensive exposure and criticism of the sinister Three-Family Village gang, dealing it vital blows. The article pointed out: "The course of events from the criticism of *Hai Jui Dismissed from Office* to that of Three-Family Village has been one of stirring class struggle. It is a great revolution in the political, ideological and cultural fields. Faced with so arduous and militant a task, we must dare to make revolution." It said: "All those who oppose Mao Tse-tung's thought, obstruct the advance of the socialist revolution, or are hostile to the interests of the revolutionary people of China and the world should be exposed, criticized and knocked down, whether they are 'masters' or 'authorities,' a Three-Family or a Four-Family Village, and no matter how famous they are, what influential positions they hold, by whom they are directed or supported, or how numerous their flatterers are."

On May 11, the magazine *Hongqi* (Red Flag) printed the article "On the Bourgeois Stand of *Frontline* and the *Peking Daily*" by Chi Pen-yu, which revealed that these two publications and the *Peking Evening News* themselves for a long time had been instruments of Teng To, Wu Han and Liao Mo-sha in their frantic attacks on the Party and socialism.

*Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily) on May 14 printed "Expose Teng To's Anti-Party and Anti-Socialist Features" by Lin Chieh; it pointed out that Teng To and company had followed a black anti-Party and anti-socialist line and actively worked for the restoration of capitalism.

When the Three-Family Village gangster inn was exposed, the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers, revolutionary cadres and revolutionary intellectuals began holding discussions and writing articles indignantly condemning the criminal activities of the handful of anti-Party and anti-socialist elements.

Since early June this year, it has been further revealed that the sinister Three-Family Village gang had its roots in the former Peking Municipal Committee of the Chinese Communist Party.

Starting on June 1, the *People's Daily* published a series of editorials entitled "Sweep Away All Monsters," "A Great Revolution That Touches the People to Their Very Souls," "Capture the Positions in the Field of Historical Studies Seized by the Bourgeoisie," "Tear Aside the Bourgeois Mask of 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity,'" "To Be Proletarian Revolutionaries or Bourgeois Royalists?" and others. These editorials analysed the current situation in the great cultural revolution, refuted the absurd views of the reactionary bourgeoisie to resist the proletarian cultural revolution and put forward the fighting tasks of developing the great cultural revolution even more profoundly.

The editorial entitled "Sweep Away All Monsters" pointed out that this great proletarian cultural revolution is aimed at exposing thoroughly the black anti-Party and anti-socialist line that runs through all Three-Family Villages, big and small, and at "demolishing all the old ideology and culture and all the old customs and habits, which, fostered by the exploiting classes, have poisoned the minds of the people for thousands of years, and creating and fostering among the masses an entirely new ideology and culture and entirely new customs and habits—those of the proletariat."

A poster in big characters written by Nieh Yuan-tzu and six others at Peking University was broadcast on June 1, exposing the plot of members of the sinister Three-Family Village gang who tried to put up a last-ditch fight through their control at the university.

In a commentator's article entitled "Hail the Big-Character Poster at Peking University," the *People's Daily* on June 2 called on the proletarian revolutionaries to rise up in a thoroughgoing revolution and crush all the sinister anti-Party and anti-socialist gangs and organizations and their discipline completely.

Waving the black flag of "liberty, equality and fraternity," members of the sinister anti-Party and anti-socialist gangs are countering the line for the proletarian cultural revolution of the Central Committee of the Party headed by Chairman Mao Tse-tung. In the editor-

ial entitled "Tear Aside the Bourgeois Mask of 'Liberty, Equality and Fraternity,'" the *People's Daily* made a systematic criticism of the deceptive, hypocritical and reactionary nature of this bourgeois slogan and revealed the real purpose of these elements of the sinister gangs which is to oppose the dictatorship of the proletariat and to carry out the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Two items of news were released on June 3: The Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party decided to reorganize the Peking Municipal Committee of the Party and appointed new secretaries; and the new Peking Municipal Committee decided to reorganize the Party Committee of Peking University. In its editorial the following day entitled "New Victory for Mao Tse-tung's Thought," the *People's Daily* pointed out that the roots of the counter-revolutionary Three-Family Village clique were in the former Peking Municipal Committee of the Party. Shot through with a black anti-Party and anti-socialist line, it was not an instrument of the proletariat to exercise dictatorship over the bourgeoisie but an instrument of the bourgeoisie to exercise dictatorship over the proletariat. The decision of the Central Committee of the Party to reorganize the Peking Municipal Committee was a historic victory in China's great proletarian cultural revolution, a new victory for the great thought of Mao Tse-tung.

The masses of workers, peasants and soldiers, revolutionary cadres and revolutionary intellectuals in Peking and all other parts of the country, full of revolutionary enthusiasm, joy and inspiration, have warmly supported the decision of the Central Committee of the Party to reorganize the Peking Municipal Committee and warmly hailed this new victory.

At present, this great proletarian cultural revolution is, with the power of a thunderbolt, becoming ever more profound, and it is developing with the momentum of an avalanche, pounding with great power to smash all the decadent ideological and cultural positions still in the hands of the bourgeoisie and the feudal remnant forces and sweeping away the reactionary ideological and decadent cultural influences of imperialism.

This great proletarian cultural revolution is taking place under the direct leadership of the Central Committee of the Party and Chairman Mao Tse-tung. Four brilliant works of Chairman Mao — *On New Democracy*, *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*, *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People* and *Speech at the Chinese Communist Party's National Conference on Propaganda Work* — are an important part of the great Mao Tse-tung's thought, which represents the summit of the contemporary Marxist-Leninist world outlook and theories of literature and art and is the supreme guide for China's great cultural revolution.

The masses of workers, peasants and soldiers and revolutionary cadres, who are armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought, have become the main force in storming and shattering the old bourgeois culture. Large numbers of excellent articles written by workers, peasants, students and cadres have appeared in the press in all parts of the country. In this struggle, the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers have displayed to the full their talent and wisdom and a younger generation of Marxist-Leninists is growing up. Gone for ever is the historical period in which culture was monopolized by bourgeois "scholars," "specialists" and "authorities."

Revolutionary proletarian culture is growing rapidly in the struggle to overthrow bourgeois culture. China's ancient Peking opera, the most stubborn of strongholds, was taken by storm in the past few years with the emergence of Peking operas on contemporary revolutionary themes like *The Red Lantern*, *Shachiapang*, *Taking the Bandits' Stronghold* and *Raid on the White Tiger Regiment*. Foreign classical art forms like the ballet, symphonic music and sculpture have undergone a revolutionary transformation with the emergence of the ballet *The Red Detachment of Women*, the symphony *Shachiapang* and the sculptures *Compound Where Rent Was Collected*, etc. These fine works of art have been approved by the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers, and enthusiastically acclaimed by Chinese and foreign audiences. With the development in depth of the great proletarian cultural revolution, all departments in the cultural field of our country will inevitably appear in an entirely new light, bringing forth an increasing number of works that are excellent both in ideological content and artistic

form, and an increasing number of highly scientific and revolutionary theses.

The great proletarian cultural revolution is in essence aimed at safeguarding the dictatorship of the proletariat. Imperialism and modern revisionism seek to subvert the political power of the proletariat both by force of arms and by cultural infiltration and ideological poisoning. Every counter-revolutionary restoration starts in the realm of ideology so as to mould public opinion. This is what happened in the usurpation of the leadership of the Soviet Party and state by the Khrushchov revisionist group and in the 1956 Hungarian counter-revolutionary riots. The great victory of our great cultural revolution is also a great victory in chopping off the claws of imperialism, digging out the roots of revisionism and preventing a capitalist restoration.

All the revolutionary peoples of the world are watching with great attention and warmly acclaiming the great victory of our great cultural revolution. However, a small handful of terror-stricken imperialists, modern revisionists and reactionaries of various countries are babbling about it.

Some reactionaries gloatingly take a malicious delight in this, as if the rule of the proletariat in China had hit some snag and they could profit by it. The illusions of these "lord-masters" are soon smashed to smithereens by facts. By sweeping away monsters of all kinds, we are digging out the social foundation of imperialism and modern revisionism within our country. The political power of the proletariat is now firmer than ever.

Some reactionaries slanderously allege that we are "destroying culture." Well, we want not only to destroy but to eradicate the decadent culture of imperialism and modern revisionism. Only by destroying and eradicating such things is it possible really to draw benefit from the fine culture created in the course of history and to develop the new culture of the proletariat to the full.

Some reactionaries vilify us by saying that the spearhead of our struggle is "directed against all intellectuals." This is sheer nonsense. The spearhead of our great proletarian cultural revolution is directed against a small handful of anti-communist villains who have donned

the cloak of communism and a small handful of anti-Party, anti-socialist and counter-revolutionary bourgeois intellectuals. The policy of the Communist Party towards the mass of intellectuals coming from the old society is one of uniting with, educating and remoulding them. The ranks of the proletarian intellectuals are growing with each passing day in the great cultural revolution.

An excellent situation prevails throughout China, with an all-round rise in the national economy and a steady, healthy development of the upsurge in economic construction. Through the great cultural revolution, Mao Tse-tung's thought has taken deeper root in people's minds, the revolutionary spirit of the masses of the people has been brought into full play and the leadership of the Party and the dictatorship of the proletariat have been consolidated and strengthened. This great cultural revolution will ensure the triumphant advance of the Chinese people along the road of socialism and communism.

The unprecedented great revolutionary change now taking place in China, which accounts for a quarter of the world's population, will inevitably have an immeasurably profound world-wide bearing on the history of mankind.

*("Hsinhua News Agency," June 11)*

## The Song of Ouyang Hai

The first instalment of this novel published in the previous issue of this journal gives an account of the hero Ouyang Hai's unhappy childhood and the poverty and hunger his family suffered in the old society. Then came the liberation of his district in 1949, and the people who had lived like beasts of burden became the masters of their country. Ouyang Hai longed to join the People's Liberation Army, but being under age he was not accepted. Not until 1959, at the age of eighteen and after repeated requests, was he finally enlisted.

Ouyang Hai joined up with the ambition to become a combat hero, sure that the leadership would at once give him a gun and send him to a frontier post to defend the country against any possible invasion our enemies might dare to launch. Contrary to his wishes, however, he was issued only an axe with which to participate in the construction work his company was engaged in at the moment. He could see no sense in this and kept begging to be sent to where there was fighting. The company commander Kuan Ying-kuei and the political instructor Tseng Wu-chun knew what was going on in his mind. They patiently talked with him to make him see that the construction work also served the revolution. Finally Ouyang Hai realized the truth. The excerpts published in this issue start at the point where Ouyang Hai plunged whole-heartedly into the strenuous construction work.

## The Road Forward

Sunlight, filtering through the leaves in thousands of milky rays, slanted down upon the damp earth and turned the dew into mist which rose slowly like fine gauze. A new day had begun.

With the first song of the birds, the sound of timber felling rang through the forest. A young soldier was swinging his axe with both hands and shouting: "Wipe out the reactionaries, support the Tibetan people," each time his blade bit into a large tree. It toppled to the ground with a mighty crash. He smiled, tight-lipped, as he gazed at the prone giant. Then he spat on his hands, picked up his axe and walked towards another tree.

The young soldier was expressing his rage against the Tibetan reactionaries, as well as a strong desire to earn glory, in his timber-felling work. His name, Ouyang Hai, appeared frequently on the work site bulletin board. His comrades said he had the true spirit of a boy born in the year of the "tiger."

At "lights out," he collapsed listlessly on his bed. As soon as he stretched out, his joints seemed to melt. He didn't even have the energy to scratch an itch on his leg. Then he remembered a body-building pact he and Wei had made — every night they would do twenty push-ups before going to sleep. He hadn't fulfilled his quota for tonight. He whispered to his friend:

"Have you done your push-ups, Wei?"

"No."

"Well, hurry up. Come on, I'll count and we'll do them together."

"I can't. I'm too tired. Besides, I have to go on guard duty at midnight." Wei groaned as he painfully rolled over.

"This is a test of our will-power," Hai reminded him.

"At the moment, the last thing I'm interested in, the absolutely last thing, is push-ups. I'm calling our pact off for tonight. You'd better get some sleep, too. It doesn't matter if we skip a night. Will-power has to be built up gradually."

"I'm really tired today," Hai thought. "I'll do an extra twenty tomorrow to make up for it." He heard the sound of a blade being whetted outside. "The squad leader is sharpening our axes. He must be tired, too.... This is a time for revolutionary soldiers to test their will-power." Hai turned over, gritted his teeth and did twenty-five push-ups. Then, he was able to relax. But no sooner had he closed his eyes than he seemed to see felled trees all over the mountain. "They're short-handed on the transport team. Right. I'll make a suggestion." He got up and walked softly through the doorway.

Chen, the squad leader, was just coming in to sleep.

"I've got a suggestion, squad leader," Hai hailed him.

"It's been 'lights out' for some time. What are you doing up? If you've anything to say, say it tomorrow."

"If I don't make this suggestion now, I won't be able to sleep."

"Well ..." Chen led him over to the side. "Let's hear it, then. But keep your voice down."

"The transport team doesn't have enough men. We ought to shift people from other teams. Otherwise, the work of the whole company will be affected."

"The leadership is thinking about the problem right now. They can't find anybody to transfer."

"Put in the proposal for me, squad leader. Let them transfer me."

"That work's too heavy for you."

"Why is it?" Hai didn't agree. "Hasn't the political instructor called on all Party members and Youth Leaguers to seek the hardest jobs? I'm a candidate for the Youth League. Why shouldn't I answer the call?"

Liu Wei-cheng, who was on roving sentry duty, heard them talking and came over.

"Aren't you asleep yet? You're on the timber-felling team — that's not bad for a little fellow like you. We transporters have got iron shoulders, every one of us. You'd never be able to carry timber."

"Who says I wouldn't?" Hai thought. "I'm a revolutionary soldier, the same as you. If you can do it, why can't I? Anyhow, if

it's something that has to be done, we do it, able or not." He made no reply to Liu and ran to company headquarters.

Kuan and Tseng were working on how to allocate labour. When they heard footsteps outside the door, Tseng raised his head and avowed:

"That must be Ouyang Hai with another suggestion." Before the words were out of his mouth, Hai entered the room.

"I have a suggestion, company commander."

The two cadres looked at each other and laughed.

"What is it?"

"I request a transfer to the transport team."

Kuan gazed at Hai's slim frame. "Aren't you afraid some big log will flatten you to the ground?"

"You shouldn't underestimate people, commander. 'Neither men nor horses should be judged by their size.' I could carry a load of forty catties on my shoulder when I was eight years old."

"Even if you're strong, you can't do this job."

Hai was hurt. "Liu doesn't think much of me, and neither does the commander," he said to himself. Angrily, he turned to Tseng.

"When I wanted to go to Tibet, political instructor, what did you say? You said this work is important, that construction is also a kind of battle. But now that the transport team needs men, you won't let me join it. I've really got a beef against you two."

Tseng could see how put upon the boy felt. "I accept your criticism," he said. "Let us think your request over. Go back to sleep."

"What's there to think over? The company commander is here. If you must think it over, both of you do it now. I'll be waiting at the door. After you've thought it over, I'll sleep." Hai did indeed take a stand outside the door. He refused to leave.

"The 'tiger' in him is coming out again," said Kuan, blinking comically. "I've never seen such a thing."

Tseng rubbed his unshaven chin and shook his head. "I have. He's as stubborn as you once were." The political instructor pointed towards the boy outside the door. "Let him join the transport team, Old Kuan. What do you say?"

"All right. I must tell the leader of Squad Four to keep a closer eye on him. The way Hai throws himself into his work, he's liable to hurt himself." Kuan walked to the door.

"What are you hanging around here for? Go back to sleep." Hai didn't budge.

"We've accepted your suggestion. You can work on the transport team."

"Yes, sir." Hai shouted. He turned and ran, his feet pattering on the rain-soaked yellow earth.

"That boy!" said Tseng. "He came here barefooted again."

Hai raced down the mountain with a hundred and eighty catty log on his shoulder. He invariably took the shortest and steepest paths to gain time for extra trips. Hai had been in the army less than three months, but he'd already split the soles of his brand-new shoes away from their uppers, exposing his toes to the open air. Most of the time, he simply went around in his bare feet, shouting as he worked. "Step it up, boys, to wipe out the reactionaries. . . . Pitch in hard, and support Tibet. . . . Hey, Big Fellow, Shorty is challenging you."

Every day the bulletin board bore items in praise of Hai. This pleased Chen, but it worried him as well. The squad leader had been in the army for several years, but he'd rarely seen a soldier like Hai. The boy was certainly competent, but the tigerish way he rushed at things was more like fighting for his life than doing a job. It would be very bad if he strained himself. Chen suggested to the company leaders that they stop paying him compliments before the company, and that the club quit posting commendations of him on the bulletin board. He thought the squad ought to keep a tighter check on Hai. More criticism and less jobs — that was the way to handle him.

One day at lunch time, Hai came limping home on bare feet. Chen knew something was wrong. He examined him and found a two-inch gash on his right foot.

"How did you do that?"

"I don't know."

"You cut your own foot and you didn't know it?"

"If I'd known, I wouldn't have cut it. I sort of felt it . . . tickle a little."

"Where are those shoes I gave you?"

"In the locker room."

Chen was angry and upset. "The company commander and the political instructor have told you time and again — you're not to work barefoot. It's a company regulation. Don't you know that either?"

Hai knew he was wrong, but he mumbled nevertheless: "I always went barefoot at home. We're not used to working in shoes back there."

"This is the army. . . . All right, you can rest this afternoon. Don't go back to work."

"It doesn't hurt."

"You'll have to rest just the same." Chen ran off to get the company commander.

A few minutes later Kuan arrived, followed by a medical orderly. The commander took off his rubber-soled shoes and tossed them at Hai's feet. He sat down and watched, his visage dark, while the medical orderly bound the boy's wound. Hai stole a glance at Kuan and thought: "This is it. He's sure to raise the roof."

The leader of the kitchen squad, Li Hsiang, happened to be passing by with a load of boiled water. Kuan hailed him:

"Didn't you say you wanted someone to help you boil water? You can have Ouyang Hai. He's only to feed the fire. Keep an eye on him for me. Don't let him go running around."

"Yes, sir." Li smiled.

Kuan called him aside and whispered: "Make him rest. That young fellow drives himself too hard. He works like a madman. Watch him closely."

The commander started off towards First Platoon. Hai was much relieved. "I got through that all right," he thought. "I was afraid you were going to bawl me out," he said in a low voice.

"What are you muttering?" Kuan hadn't gone more than a few steps, when he turned around and glared. "Let me tell you — we'll settle accounts tonight."

Hai sat docilely by the kitchen stove on the slope, tending the fire. He wondered how the commander would carry out his threat. Not far behind him, Kuan was giving instructions to the leader of Squad Four.

"... I've just been inspecting. The timber on the mountain has all been cleared. After lunch, get three strong young fellows to carry those few dozen logs in the ravine to the road. Take good safety precautions. Tomorrow, we start regular construction."

"What does the commander mean — 'settle accounts?'" Hai was thinking. "I'll bet he'll keep me out of the construction work and make me boil water all day. Or maybe he'll put me on barracks duty. That's what I get for not being careful and cutting this damned foot." He stamped his right foot irritably. "The least that I'll get is a reprimand."

He leaned forward and looked around. Most of his comrades and the company commander were already taking their nap, a few were playing cards in the shade of a tree. The leader of the kitchen squad was concentrating on a water bucket he was repairing. "There's so much to be done. How can I sit here idly? I've got it — while they're resting, I'll go down to the ravine and carry out those logs. The commander will never know — we're switching over to construction tomorrow. Right." Hai put some more branches in the stove and, crouching to avoid being seen by the kitchen squad leader, slipped quietly away to the ravine.

Fifty or sixty logs which had been slid down from the mountain lay in a disorderly pile. Stripped to the waist, Hai started with the top-most one. He made trip after trip, going and returning at a trot. "Faster," he urged himself. "As soon as I've finished I can get back to boiling water."

He worked and worked, he didn't know how long. Only half the logs remained. "I'd better go back," he thought. "It won't do to be any later." But his legs wouldn't listen to him. "Just one more log then I'll go. I'll definitely leave after one more."

Hai went on working. In the distance, he thought he heard the whistle ending the noon-time rest. "Oh, if I don't go back now it will really be too late." But there were only ten or so logs left.

"My foot doesn't hurt. Why shouldn't I finish? The commander is going to 'settle accounts' with me anyhow. I might as well get the whole job done. We can put it all on the same 'account.'"

He gritted his teeth and increased his speed, lengthening his stride. When the last log was pressing down on his shoulder, he felt the joy and satisfaction of a job completed. Hai remembered the political instructor saying that working for the Party gave the greatest happiness. "That's right. Labour is really good. You work, you sweat, and you feel light as a feather." He hummed a ditty that they sang at home.

Suddenly, he stopped, the tune stuck in his throat. Ten yards away, Kuan stood glaring at him, hands on hips. His mouth was tightly compressed — due to strong emotion, no doubt.

Hai dumped his log and offered the company commander a tentative smile. He quickly wiped it off when there was no response, and stood with lowered head.

Kuan was furious. Never had he met such a disobedient soldier. But when he looked along the road and saw the logs neatly piled by the side, his anger dissolved. He gazed at Hai — stripped to the waist, no sign of a bandage on his bare feet, the edges of his wound white from being immersed in muddy water. An afternoon's work for three men, Hai had done alone during the noon rest period.

To cover up the fondness he felt, Kuan barked: "So you're still playing the 'tiger,' are you?"

"I..."

Kuan squatted down and controlled himself for a full minute before he blared: "Get on my back and I'll carry you home. We'll settle accounts later."

"But, commander —"

"Stow the gab. How can you walk? Your feet are soaked to mush. If sand gets into that wound it'll become infected." Kuan's neck stiffened. "What are you standing there for? Get on my back."

Hai did as he was told, his heart overflowing with warmth. He wanted to say: "I can't let a commander carry me." He wanted to jump down. But he dared not speak, he dared not move.

After Kuan handed the boy over to the medics, he returned to the work site. Three comrades were just starting for the ravine to clear out the logs. Kuan stopped them.

"There's no need for that. You can go back to your squads."

"How come?" Tseng walked over and asked.

"I give in," Kuan said with satisfaction. "I feel much more confident with a few workers like him around, Old Tseng, now that we're going into construction. He didn't boil any water, after all. He went to the ravine and moved that whole pile of timber out by himself."

"Ouyang Hai, again?"

"Who else? He's a 'tiger.'" Kuan nodded repeatedly. "A company needs a few 'tigers' like him."

"Why only a few? Every man in the company should become a 'tiger.'" Tseng, pleased, also nodded. "But tigerish energy alone is far from enough." He rubbed his chin again, as if his mind was on something else.

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When the company formally began taking part in construction work, it found itself confronted with a problem. Holes for dynamite charges were drilled by driving steel spikes into the rock with twelve pound sledge hammers. Each blow had to land flush on the spike head. Hitting lightly had no effect, but it was difficult to be accurate with a full armed swing. There were a lot of new comrades in the company, and many of them were a bit timid of the sledge hammer. Whether they could be brought up quickly to the same skill as more experienced men would determine whether the company could complete its job ahead of time. It was decided to put on a demonstration of sledge hammer technique. This would dispel the new comrades' reservations while showing what the veterans were capable of.

In the free period after supper, Wei Wu-yo was alone in the club room working out an army chess problem. Hai came in and said: "Let's go, Wei. Let's go to the demonstration."

"I can't." The boy pointed at the chess pieces. "I've made up my mind not to rest till I've figured this out."

"It's going to start any minute."

"You go first." Wei's eyes didn't leave the board. "My worst headache, my absolutely worst headache is coping with a 'triangular landmine' defence."

"Forget it. Your most important duty, your absolutely most important duty," Hai mimicked, "is switching your interest to a sledge hammer." Hai pulled the young soldier outside with him.

Spectators ringed an open space in front of a building where experts with a sledge hammer were demonstrating their skill. Sparks flew as steel rang on steel and the hammer swingers chanted rhythmically. The new soldiers were impressed. "Those veterans really are something," they said. "A revolutionary army can train all kinds of talent."

Company Commander Kuan asked whether any of the new comrades would care to try their hand.

"Count me in." said Hai, bounding forward.

"You?" The comrade holding the spike hastily rose to his feet. "Have you done this before?"

"No." Hai spat on his hands and gripped the sledge hammer.

"Well..." The other soldier was rather embarrassed. Everyone in the company knew how energetic and fearless Hai was. But swinging was different. If he landed on the hands of the man holding the spike, that would be the end of them.

Yes, Hai was willing enough, but who dared to hold the spike for him? The comrades looked at each other. No one came forward. Wei laughed.

"Hai was born in the year of the tiger. If there was another man like that in our company, they could team up."

Kuan glared at him. "What about you?"

"I was born in the mouse year," Wei said, shrinking back. "We don't go well together."

The company commander thought of something. He got a long pincers and held the spike with that. He told Hai to go ahead.

Hai swung mightily at the spike, and missed it three times in a row. Though the spike remained unscathed, the pincers were badly bent. Not very friendly laughter rose from the spectators.

"It looks as if force isn't enough," Kuan said to Hai. "You'd better watch for a while. Who's next?"

Liu Wei-cheng swaggered forward. "I haven't done this for a long time, but I'll give it a try." He picked up the hammer and began swinging. Liu rang a few dozen steady blows on the spike, then stopped. The men applauded.

"Not bad. You're as good as the veterans," Kuan commended him.

"I'm a little out of practice, commander. I worked in a quarry for two years. A hundred blows at one go was nothing then," Liu said with a laugh.

Hai, standing on the side, bit his lip and said to himself: "I'm stupid, I can't do anything well. He makes that spike ring. I can't even hit it. Our company needs men who are good with the sledge hammer. I've got strength, but I can't use it." He looked admiringly at Liu. "I wish I could be like him — just pick up the hammer and go to work. That's how a soldier ought to be. I've got to catch up. If he can do it, so can I — and better, too." His eyes flashed as he made up his mind. But how could he get so skilful?

Practice, that was the answer. But no one dared to hold his spike. Anyhow, he shouldn't be wasting other people's time. Hai decided to learn from Liu. The big fellow wasn't very helpful, and his proud attitude annoyed Hai no end. "It's a special talent," Liu explained loftily. "You can't pick it up overnight. I was three months at the quarry before I got the hang of it."

But Hai swallowed all this. What's more, he made a point of teaming up with Liu and holding his spike so that he could study his technique at close quarters. After several days of observing in silence, Hai felt he was getting the idea.

Chen, the squad leader, noticed that recently Hai's bed was always empty in the noon-rest hour, nor was there any sign of him on the playing field during the recreation period after supper. The reason was that Wei had invented a training method for him. On a tree

stump behind the barracks, Wei had made a white chalk spot, and Hai had borrowed an eighteen-pound hammer from the storehouse. Whenever Hai was free, he practised swinging the hammer against the little white mark. This both strengthened his arms and improved his accuracy. Each time, he practised till he couldn't raise his arms, ignoring Wei's urging to rest. His arms grew red and swollen. At night, when he was in bed, they burned like fire, aching so that he sweated with pain. Hai had to quit the twenty push-ups he was supposed to do every night. He put a cool wet towel on his swollen muscles at night and bit his lips to prevent himself from groaning aloud.

Once, during a meal, Chen observed that Hai kept dropping his chopsticks. At drills, Hai didn't swing his arms properly. Although Chen corrected him several times, he still did it wrong. Chen was sure Hai had been up to something. But it wasn't until the men were bathing that Chen saw how red and swollen his arms were. He called Hai out of the water and pointed at his arms.

"What's all this?"

Hai smiled awkwardly. "I've been practising." He told the squad leader about what he had decided and his training method. "I wish you'd hold the spike for me," he pleaded. "I guarantee not to hit your hands."

"With your arms so swollen, doesn't it hurt?"

"Just let me try a couple of swings."

Chen was moved by his determination, and he agreed. Hai began raining down blows of the hammer. It wasn't until Chen shouted several times that he quit.

"If we form another shock team in our squad, put me on it," Hai requested. "Or maybe you and I could be a team. We'll challenge the whole company."

"What for?"

"Doesn't battalion want us all to learn to use the sledge hammer in a hurry? The battalion commander says there's nothing very hard about it. We're going to get all the new and old soldiers together at a meet to exchange pointers and improve our technique." Hai thought a moment. "Who's going to represent our company?"

"Probably Liu Wei-cheng."

"Put my name up, squad leader. Let me have a try, too."

"You?"

"I promise not to disgrace our company or our squad. The aim of the meet is to encourage everybody to learn, isn't it? If Liu can do it, so can I. It will be more encouraging if a short fellow does as well as a big one."

"Wait till your arms are better, and we'll see. If you don't rest, I'll report you to the company commander. He was just asking about you."

"Don't tell him, squad leader, whatever you do. I'll rest, I promise. No more practice. If I don't take a nap after lunch, you can report me or do anything you like."

Chen smiled, lips pressed together.

The meet was held at the work site. Men of the various companies of the battalion gathered in a big circle. The battalion leaders also were there.

Eighteen-pound hammers were used that day. Chang of First Company started off. He gave a few pointers and told something of his experience. Then he began swinging. He hit a hundred and fifty. The audience murmured its approval.

Second Company's representative wasn't bad either. He did over a hundred and thirty.

Liu Wei-cheng of Third Company entered the arena next. He wore a white sleeveless top with the word "Award" emblazoned in red across his chest. On the lower part of the garment, also in red, was inscribed "presented by the Quarry." Liu halted, legs apart, in the centre of the field, surveying the spectators with a broad grin. He described with gusto his approach to hammer wielding. From his confident air, it was obvious he had no doubt of his ability to surpass the men of First and Second Company. Someone told the battalion commander that he was a new soldier. The battalion commander nodded, pleased, indicating that Liu should commence.

Liu first took a stance and flexed his arms like an athlete. He twisted his torso left and right, he bent his legs. Then he started wielding the sledge hammer, evenly, unhurriedly.

"... fifty-six, fifty-seven..." the score-keeper intoned. "... ninety-nine, one hundred..."

At a hundred and fifty, some thought he was reaching his limit. Others said he still had a bit left.

"... one ninety-eight, one ninety-nine, two hundred."

Liu lowered his hammer. His forehead beaded with sweat, he returned to the ranks, to the accompaniment of applause, laughter and cheers. The representatives of First and Second Company ran over to shake his hand and congratulate him. "An old quarry worker," one of the watchers said in a low voice. "Who can beat him?"

The battalion commander was about to summarize the strong points and weaknesses of the three demonstrators. Hai whispered to Chen:

"Propose that I have a try, squad leader."

"He did two hundred."

"I know. It doesn't matter."

But Chen wasn't sure of Hai. To play safe, he remained silent.

"Should I do it?" Hai wondered, when he saw Chen's reaction. "Yes, I should. Just now someone said: 'An old quarry worker. Who can beat him?' That shows some of our men don't have much confidence that they can learn to do well with a sledge hammer. I must try."

"Report." Hai jumped out of the crowd. "Count me in, commander." He paused, realizing that he hadn't expressed himself very courteously. "I don't have any experience to talk about," he explained. "I only would like to try."

"If you hit well, people can learn from watching you," said the battalion commander. He nodded. "Go ahead."

"Yes, sir," Hai exclaimed. He rushed over and picked up the sledge hammer.

The onlookers were startled. Would the young "tiger" make a fool of himself again? Chen's heart was in his mouth.

When the comrade who was to hold the spike saw that it was Hai who would be wielding the hammer, he set the spike down and walked away. Everyone laughed. Hai didn't know what to do. Flushing scarlet, he stood with the hammer in his hands.

"Count me in, too." Kuan strode forward and set the spike firmly in place on the rock. He raised his head and gazed confidently at Hai as if to say: "Come on, 'tiger,' I'm with you."

Hai looked at him thankfully. Without waiting for the battalion commander to give him the signal to start, he began swinging the sledge hammer. Stroke after stroke landed heavily on the spike. "He's strong," a spectator remarked, "but he's putting too much into it. He won't get past fifty."

"... forty-nine, fifty, fifty-one..." Hai was still swinging, each blow harder than the one before. "He really is a bit of a 'tiger,'" another man said. "But a hundred is about the best he can do."

"A hundred and one, a hundred and two..." Now, not only was Hai driving hard, he was working faster. The palms of Kuan's hands tingled with each blow as he gripped the spike. The shock hurt the tendon between thumb and forefinger.

When he passed a hundred and seventy, Hai felt himself weakening. The eighteen-pound sledge hammer seemed several times its weight. He had to exert all his force in every swing. "This is where it really counts," he exhorted himself. He continued wielding the hammer but his energies flagged. Gradually, he slowed down.

"Step on the gas, Hai," Young Wei shouted from the crowd. "The most important thing, the absolutely most important thing, is not to slacken."

"Right. Put out a bit more and set an example for the new soldiers who've never swung a sledge hammer," someone urged. "Only ten more strokes and you'll have passed Liu Wei-cheng."

This reminder, this encouragement, gave him strength. He had to beat Liu, he had to be worthy of Company Commander Kuan who was holding the spike, he had to stick it out and spur on the new comrades.

"... one hundred and ninety-nine, two hundred, two hundred and one..." The watchers grew excited. "I'd never have believed it," said one. "He must have known what he was doing," said another, "since he had the nerve to try."

Chen's heart moved back from his mouth to its original location.

A hush fell on the crowd when the score-keeper said "two hundred and thirty." Everyone was gritting his teeth and driving himself with Hai. Many counted along with the referee in low voices, unaware that they were doing so: "... two hundred and thirty-five, two hundred and thirty-six..."

Kuan, who had long since been straining in sympathy with the young soldier, suddenly was astonished to realize that the "tiger" in Hai had again been aroused and his blows were more powerful. Afraid that the boy would over-exert himself and injure his health, Kuan tried to signal him with his eyes. Hai misunderstood, and hit harder, again picking up speed.

When he passed two hundred and fifty, both Kuan and the battalion commander urged him to quit. But Hai felt full of strength. The eighteen-pound sledge hammer seemed much lighter. All he had to do was swing it mechanically.

"Stop," Kuan shouted, twisting his neck.

"The last thirty strokes." Hai couldn't bear to let up.

Ding-dong, ding-dong, the hammer blows rained in rapid succession, shaking the open-mouthed, wide-eyed spectators. Many of them shouted enthusiastic encouragement with each of Hai's swings. When the score-keeper announced two hundred and eighty Hai finally ceased. His spirits were still high.

The fighters of Squad Four surged around him. Chen gave him a canteen of water. Wei handed him a towel and fanned him with a plantain leaf he ripped from a tree. New soldiers animatedly discussed his feat.

"It proves there's nothing so hard about using a sledge hammer."

"Ouyang Hai is the same as us. If he can do it, so can we."

"Quiet down, everybody," the battalion commander called. Turning to Ouyang Hai, he said: "You can't say you haven't any experience. Tell us your approach."

"Think of the sledge hammer as a weapon, and the spike as Chiang Kai-shek's head," said Hai. "That puts strength in my arms. No matter how much I hit, I still feel I haven't hit enough."

"Good. An excellent approach," said the battalion commander. "No wonder he was able to do 280 at one go. He keeps the enemy

in mind. This is something all the comrades in the battalion, old and new, should learn.”

“Right, learn from Comrade Ouyang Hai,” cried the soldiers.

But Hai himself wasn't satisfied. He had hit that chalk mark on the tree stump over three hundred times. Today, he still hadn't given his all.

As he fanned Hai, Wei swept the crowd with his eyes, looking for Liu. “How about it, quarry worker?” he said softly. “We short fellows can do anything you can do.”

Hai sighed deeply.

Only then did he feel the energy drain from his body.

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In the south, the sun is like fire in August. By noon, it curls up the leaves on the trees. The long shrilling of the cicadas makes the oppressive heat all the more irritating.

Hai was alone in the barracks. He sat chewing on the end of his fountain pen, his bright eyes roving. He was trying to write an analysis of his thinking. Everyone else had gone to work, but the company commander had ordered him to watch the house for another day and mull over his shortcomings. What had happened was this:

The day before it was Hai's turn to be on barracks duty. This meant guarding the place and cleaning it up, inside and out. Hai was an active boy; he had little interest in this kind of work. Besides, the demolition team, of which he was the key member, was having trouble — they needed him. Many of the charges were not blowing deeply into the blast holes. What's more, after Liu was transferred to First Platoon, the demolition team he joined there began improving fast. It was doing excellent work and had come out on top in several competitions. Furthermore, it had challenged Hai's team. How could he stay at home? He had tried to convince his squad leader that it really wasn't necessary to have anyone on barracks duty, but without success. Hai went to company headquarters.

“Commander, I have a suggestion.”

“Where do you get all those suggestions? Every few days you pop up with another,” Kuan blustered. “I've no time today. Come around with it tomorrow.”

His face taut, Hai fixed his eyes on the commander. He didn't reply.

Kuan was surprised. “That boy could never stop himself from speaking out,” he thought. “Have I scared him?”

“What's the matter?” he asked. “Just because I said that, aren't you going to make your suggestion?”

“Who says I'm not?” Hai countered hotly. “If you won't let me speak, I'll go to the battalion commander, to the commander of the regiment.”

“That's right.” Kuan was pleased. “That's how a soldier ought to be — any proposals he's got, he ought to raise with the organization. That's taking a responsible attitude towards our work. Now, let's hear it.”

Hai realized that the company commander had been teasing him. “There's a roving sentry in the barracks area,” he said pleadingly. “What do we need anyone else for? My suggestion is that I be allowed to go along and work with the others.”

“Nothing doing. That's a suggestion I can't accept,” Kuan said sternly, putting on his protective work helmet. “This is the army. We've got to be vigilant at all times. We can't get sloppy just because nothing unusual has cropped up. Take this work helmet for example. It's safer to wear it, though a rock won't necessarily fall on my head. If I waited till that happened and then put it on, I'd be too late. Doesn't that make sense?”

“Well . . . then let somebody else do barracks duty. All right?”

“I know you can't sit still. Now see here, Hai. I still haven't settled accounts with you over the last time. Don't you forget it.” Kuan hurried off to the construction site.

Hai had no choice but to return to the barracks. He cleaned the inside, swept the outside, and polished the rifles of all his squad mates. Then he wove some ropes out of rice straw and tied them to a framework that was used for drying clothes in the yard to secure it. But

when he looked at the sun, it still hadn't reached its noon hour peak. He had a whole afternoon to kill.

He sat in the doorway idly toying with a piece of straw rope. Suddenly he thought: The dynamite didn't blow inward in some of the bore holes because there was water in them. This slowed down the job. Now, if straw ropes were put in the holes, they would sop up the water, and the blasts would have their full effect. If correct, this method would solve a big problem. He stood up and dashed to the construction site.

On arrival, he immediately went into action. He discussed his idea with his comrades and the team leader. He pushed barrows, drove spikes. His whole mind was on trying out the experiment. He was so busy, he forgot everything else. He forgot his barracks duty, he forgot the company commander's threat to "settle accounts."

The experiment succeeded, and everyone congratulated him on inventing a "clean hole demolition method." Happily, he helped the others wind up for the day, then returned with them to camp.

He sought out Liu, intending to discuss with him ways of improving the method further. They had just started to talk when a messenger trotted up.

"The company commander wants to see you at headquarters, Hai."

Hai supposed it was about the process he had invented. He hurried to headquarters. No sooner had he set foot in the door than Kuan shouted at him:

"Go back and bring me your rifle. I want to inspect it." He clamped his lips together.

"Does he have to fly into such a temper to inspect a weapon?" Hai thought to himself. He returned calmly to the barracks. Nothing was ever wrong with his rifle. It was the cleanest gun in the squad. But when Hai got to the weapons rack, although all the other rifles were there, gleaming darkly in a neat row, his rifle, "5608874," was gone.

"Squad leader, have you seen my rifle?"

"How would I know anything about it? I wasn't the one here on duty today." Chen's words contained a hidden meaning.

Hai anxiously searched the room, even looking behind the door and under the beds.

"Have any of you seen my gun, comrades?" Hai's voice was alarmed. "5608874. Has anybody seen it?"

"No." All the boys kept a straight face.

"A soldier's most important, his absolutely most important piece of equipment, is his weapon. I've never heard of a soldier losing his rifle." Wei couldn't repress a grin. He hastily turned his face away.

"Never mind. The man on barracks duty is responsible. Why not ask him about it?" Huang suggested.

"But... but..." Hai stood non-plussed by the rifle rack.

Chen walked over. "Losing a weapon is a serious thing, Hai."

"I know. It's a key question." Hai gazed, large-eyed, at the squad leader, hoping to see in his face a sign of consolation, encouragement or, better still, laughter. That would mean the whole thing was only a joke. But there was not the trace of a smile on Chen's darkly sun-burnt visage.

"You are a queer one. Why stand here looking at me? You'd better hurry to company headquarters and report this."

"Reporting to the commander. My rifle is missing."

"Tell your comrade on barracks duty to come here."

Hai didn't stir.

"Get going."

"I was on duty today."

"Oh, fine." Kuan bounded a step forward and bellowed: "I ask you. What is the responsibility of the soldier on barracks duty?"

"To watch the barracks, take care of the arms, ammunition and equipment, and observe the safety of the area."

Hai's prompt reply only increased Kuan's fury. "And how did you carry out your duties?"

"Badly."

"Be specific."

"I lost a weapon. When you come right down to it, I left my post without permission."

"You asked permission but your leaders refused it. Why did you still leave your post?"

"Weak vigilance, low sense of responsibility."

"Anything else?"

"That's all."

"All?" Kuan's compressed lips twisted. He thought: "Lack of discipline is an old question with Ouyang Hai. According to the leader of Squad Four, he discovered they were missing a new soldier the first day that boy was in the army. No sooner had the train stopped than Hai decided to run to the top of a hill to look for the island of Quemoy. Next, he demanded to be sent to Tibet to put down the reactionaries. He packed his knapsack and wouldn't go to sleep. . . . I wasn't able to deal with those problems adequately at the time. Today, he again left his post to try out some sort of 'clean hole demolition.' The team leader tells me it's very good. It's put an end to dud blasts. I thought Hai would offer this as an excuse, but he hasn't. . . . Good for him."

Kuan unlocked his lips and sighed. The anger had left him. He took "5608874" from behind the door and placed it on the table.

"A comrade from the kitchen squad was passing your barracks door on his way to the construction site with food. He noticed that no one was there, so he asked another comrade to deliver the food and took over your post for several hours. As he was leaving, he picked out a rifle. Just by luck, it happened to be yours. His idea was to throw a scare into the comrade who was supposed to be on duty. Of course, this isn't a very good educational method. But if he hadn't taken over your post and some bad egg had sneaked in, who knows what the loss might have been? Go back and think it over. I'll come around later and settle accounts."

At evening roll call, Kuan addressed the assembled company. He first, on behalf of the construction site headquarters, commended Ouyang Hai for his enthusiasm. He said Hai's blasting method was of great benefit to the work. Next, he severely criticized him for being so lacking in discipline as to leave his post. In conclusion Kuan said: "But Ouyang Hai did not try to offer the fact that he invented

a 'clean hole demolition' method as an excuse for his dereliction of duty. That was good. In this respect we should learn from him.

"That's all for today. Ouyang Hai remain. The rest, dismissed."

Hai waited uneasily for the company commander to "settle accounts." Kuan led him to the edge of the drill field and pulled him down to sit beside him.

"What do you think of your sense of discipline, Hai?"

"Weak."

"I'd say very weak indeed. It's an old problem with you, but you've never given it much thought. I'm at fault, too. I haven't talked things over with you promptly, when you got into trouble. Tonight, I'd like to tell you a story."

Hai looked at the company commander attentively.

"It happened during the war in Korea. A detachment was ordered to slip up close to the enemy in the darkness and hide. This was so that they could strike suddenly and take a certain height, while a general attack was being launched the next day at dusk."

"How long did they have to stay under cover?"

"Nearly twenty hours. It was a long time, but if they could do it successfully we'd be assured of victory. If one man exposed himself, it would give the game away. The comrades agreed among themselves that even if one of them was hit by an enemy bullet, he wouldn't move. And so, a detachment of several hundred men concealed themselves in front of the enemy position. One hour, two hours, ten hours dragged by. Not a man stirred. The enemy didn't know there was a 'time-bomb' hidden right under their noses.

"It must have been nearly noon when an incendiary bomb burst beside one of our soldiers and set fire to the branches he had covered his legs with for camouflage. The flames were very small at first. If he rolled just once he could have put them out. But he remembered what they had agreed, and thought of how any move might influence the attack. So he continued to lie perfectly still while the flames spread over his entire body. He didn't stir an inch, right up until the moment he died. With fighters like that on our side, how could the enemy discover our concealed detachment? When the

attack started, we took the height in twenty minutes. That splendid soldier was —”

“Chiu Shao-yun,” cried Hai.

“That’s right. It was an act of complete loyalty to the Party and the cause of the people, a demonstration of an extremely high sense of discipline. We ought to consider how far we are from measuring up to him.”

Kuan saw that Hai was thinking with lowered head. “No need to whip a fast horse, no need to strike a good drum hard,” the company commander said to himself. “All a fighter like Hai needs is a couple of taps, and he gets the idea.”

He stood up to leave. Hai grasped his arm. “I understand what you’ve been saying, commander,” the boy exclaimed. “From now on, I’ll definitely change. . . . The only trouble is, I can’t be still. I like to keep moving. What shall I do?”

Kuan laughed. “That’s easy. I’ll put you on barracks duty for another day, tomorrow, to develop your patience. Tell the squad leader I said so when you get back.” Seriously, he added: “The main thing is to solve the thing ideologically, to understand its necessity. Tomorrow you’ll have time to think it over carefully. When you’ve got it straightened out in your mind, write down your analysis and give it to me.”

In a nearby tree, a cicada shrilled incessantly. Hai put down his pen, picked up a stone and flung it at the tree. It landed with a thud, and the cicada was still. But even before Hai could again take his pen, the insect resumed its droning, louder and more irritatingly than before.

“Go on, go on,” the boy said angrily. “I’ve nothing else to do but sit here and listen to you all day.”

The leader of the kitchen squad, Li Hsiang, came by with a pair of empty buckets. He was returning from the construction site. When he saw Hai’s aggravated expression, he said teasingly:

“They’ve got no drinking water at the site, Hai. Take a couple of bucketfuls out for me.”

“You mean it?” The boy stood up.

“Naturally.”

Hai suddenly remembered. He sat down again righteously and resumed chewing on the end of his fountain pen.

“Are you going or not?” Li asked with a smile.

“Get away from me.” Hai threateningly picked up a little stool. “Let me tell you. My key problem, when you come right down to it, is a sense of discipline. I’m not going anywhere without the approval of the company commander. I’ve sunk roots here. I’m not budging an inch.”

“Good, very good. That’s much better than yesterday.” Li held up an approving thumb, and returned to the kitchen.

Was the sun nailed to the sky? It seemed to Hai that the day was several times longer than usual. “That’s wrong,” he said to himself. “I’m not going at it from the angle of ideology and understanding. Chiu Shao-yun only thought of winning the attack. He didn’t think they were lying in hiding too long. If I understood barracks duty in the right way, even if a day was a year long, I’d stick it out.”

His contemplations were broken by the clash of cymbals in the distance. He listened. It sounded as if peasants on the opposite slope were shouting something. Because they were far off, Hai couldn’t hear them clearly.

“Now, if this were yesterday,” he mused, “I’d rush over and see what it was all about. . . . Today, I’m not leaving my post, no matter what.”

“Help . . . help. . . . The canal . . . is broken. . . .” Snatches of the peasants’ cries came in on the wind. The cymbals clashed more urgently.

“What? The canal’s broken?” Hai bounded to the door. He could hear more clearly here. The canal on the opposite slope had burst a bank. The peasants were shouting for help.

“What would Chiu Shao-yun do in a case like this? Or Tung Tsun-jui? Would they stay here? No, they’d go to the rescue. I’ve got to go, even if it’s wrong.”

Hai ran to the kitchen and yelled to Li: “Keep an eye on the barracks for me, squad leader.” Without waiting for Li’s reply, he flew off in the direction of the trouble.

Water was gushing from the break in the canal and pouring over a bluff. The saturated earth of the bluff was in imminent danger of collapse, menacing a dozen homes below. They'd be wrecked if the breach couldn't be blocked. Unfortunately, everybody except these few old men was away in the fields. When Hai got there, he leaped into the gap without pausing to remove his clothes. With the bundles of rice straw and rocks the old peasants handed him, plus his own body of a hundred and some catties, Hai stemmed the flow of water. After the breach was repaired, he and the old peasants scraped away the soaked earth from the edge of the bluff. The danger was averted.

The sun was in the west when Hai, with weary steps, finally returned home. "I didn't write my thoughts analysis, and I left my post again," he said to himself. "Maybe Li didn't look after the barracks for me. Maybe my rifle is missing again. I'm sure to be criticized. I'll probably be punished, too." But when he looked back at the canal and the homes below the bluff, he felt better.

"Even so, it's worth it," he muttered.

"What's worth it?" a voice like a bronze bell boomed in his ear.

Hai turned around. A few paces behind, Kuan was standing with his hands on his hips, the political instructor was rubbing his chin. Both men were gazing at him.

"Commander, political instructor, I'm ready to be punished."

"What for? What did you do?" Kuan asked.

"I left my post. I broke discipline again."

"So all I said to you last night was in vain," Kuan exploded. "What was the use of telling you about Chiu Shao-yun?"

"I... I thought maybe I shouldn't go."

"Why not?" Kuan cried furiously. "Of course you had to go. You did the wrong thing yesterday, and you thought you were right. Today you did the right thing, and you thought you were wrong."

"I was right?" The boy's eyes shone.

"Of course. There's no contradiction between discipline and protecting the people's interests. The purpose of discipline is to enable a soldier to serve the people better, more purposefully, not to tie him hand and foot so that when he ought to move, he doesn't."

Hai chuckled. "That's what I thought, too."

"Don't laugh." Kuan's lips tightened. "This proves that you don't really understand the spirit of Chiu Shao-yun yet. I'll have to tell you the whole story all over again."

"Forget it. Let him go back and get ready," said Tseng, who had remained silent until now. "He should be packing his gear and waiting for orders."

"What's up, political instructor?"

"Haven't you asked for a punishment?" Tseng queried, smiling. He couldn't conceal how pleased he was with the young soldier.

"Any punishment will do. Except... except if I have to leave our company, I won't agree. I can't accept it."

"Next year our detachment will be engaged in regular military training. Company has decided to let you take part in a special preliminary training session. Can you accept that?"

Hai and the company leaders laughed together. "Are you really going to let me join a special training session?"

"Yes. Tomorrow morning you'll move to new quarters. Tonight I'll come and have another chat with you. You'd better go back and get ready."

"Yes, sir." Hai saluted. He turned and ran, his clothes flapping behind him in the breeze.

Kuan and Tseng gazed with satisfaction at the boy's retreating figure as it vanished gradually in the evening mist.

"Now, that's what I call a good soldier," said Kuan. "Just brimming with energy. He can't sit quietly, he can't bear to be idle. Whenever there's work, he pitches in. Whenever there's danger, he rushes to it."

Tseng nodded. "True, but his steps still aren't very steady," he said significantly.

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When Ouyang Hai returned from the special training course he was made leader of Squad Four. Although he had not been in the army very long, his headlong attack on problems rallied his men around him. They did the squad's duties well.

The provincial government announced that it was about to convene a conference of activists in the militia. Battalion decided to send a good squad leader from Third Company to attend as an auditor and to demonstrate skill with the bayonet. The company Party branch committee discussed the matter. Most of the committee members favoured Hai. He was the best bayonet fighter in the company. He was second if not first among the squad leaders in tactics, shooting, grenade throwing, and physical exercises. One of the members proposed Liu Wei-cheng. While he wasn't as good with the bayonet as Hai, he'd been making rapid progress lately, and he was somewhat steadier.

"Ouyang Hai is too brash," said Liu's supporter. "And he's always criticizing. If he behaves like that at the conference, it might have a bad effect."

"There's nothing wrong with criticism," said Tseng. He was secretary of the company Party committee. "A man who criticizes a lot, as long as his intention is to help the leadership and improve the work, shows a responsible attitude to the revolution."

"All right then. I agree to Ouyang Hai."

Tseng asked if the others had any further comment. Then he stood up and said:

"My idea is that we send Liu. His work has been good all along, and recently his ideological progress has also been very good. He's done especially well in conquering his conceit. As to Ouyang Hai, I've given him a lot of thought. True, he's a fine comrade, but he rather overdoes wanting to excel. I don't think giving him this honour now would help him. When he rants and demands to go to Tibet, we shouldn't lose sight of his positive side. When he does things well, we shouldn't overlook his shortcomings. Even his little faults we shouldn't let slip by, especially now that he's applied to join the Party. If we're really to take a responsible attitude towards his progress, we have to demand a bit more of him than of others."

"He's pretty good already," said Kuan. "He not only wants to excel — he does excel. That's not easy. To tell you the truth I can't stand the kind of soldier who does a sloppy job but doesn't care, who ambles along even after you criticize him. I say we should send Ouyang Hai. 'No need to strike a good drum hard.' Just give him a

couple of taps and he'll understand. We'll blunt his enthusiasm if we let someone else go."

"Enthusiasm also needs a correct ideological basis. Old Kuan, Old Kuan. On the surface you're very tough with Ouyang Hai. You glare and bawl him out for the least little thing. The fact is you rather spoil the boy. The better a soldier is, the more we should ask of him. That way, he'll progress rapidly. 'No need to whip a fast horse, no need to strike a good drum hard' is not necessarily a correct saying. If you strike a good drum hard, doesn't it boom out even louder?"

Kuan laughed. "You mean to say I'm not tough enough on him?"

"You are to his face, but behind his back you're soft. At meetings you rarely mention his faults or shortcomings."

"You've got a point there." Kuan nodded.

"This is only my personal opinion. You can all give it some thought," Tseng continued. "Ouyang Hai acts according to his natural class instincts. On the whole, he knows now why he's joined the revolution. But to become a real revolutionary, to become the kind of person Chairman Mao teaches us to be — for that he's got to work hard, and our Party branch should put more effort into helping him."

Kuan thought a moment. "I agree with Old Tseng. We should send Liu to the militia conference. Whether this will blunt Hai's enthusiasm —"

"— will depend on how we do our job." Tseng completed the sentence for him. "If we do it well, we won't blunt it at all, in fact we'll take him a big step forward. Chen Yung-lin is away," he said to a committee member from Squad Four, "so your Party group had better work on Hai. Talk with him more."

The comrade nodded. All the other committee members also agreed with Tseng's proposal.

"That's how it will be, then," said Kuan. "Hai's applied for Party membership. His reaction to this will be a test of how he's coming on."

Hai was being put to the test.

When Kuan announced that Liu would attend the militia conference, Hai lowered his head and was silent. The matter was later discussed at the regular squad meeting. Hai, who was usually so full of comment, simply announced: "The meeting is open." That was all he said.

Yells rang out on the drill ground. Kuan was giving Liu and a few other soldiers bayonet practice. Liu wasn't going to the militia conference in the provincial capital just to acquire knowledge. He had to show the militia activists some real skill with the bayonet. After all, he was supposed to be putting on an "expert demonstration."

The brawny Liu, dressed in protective clothing and helmet, was an impressive sight as he successively defeated each of his opponents. Kuan waved a signal pennant, while Young Huang, the recreation committeeman who had appointed himself announcer, bawled the results:

"One to zero."

"Two to zero."

"Three to zero. Another man down. Who's next?"

"Company commander. Take him on personally, company commander."

Kuan waved a hand in refusal. "I'm no good at this."

"Comrades," shouted a platoon leader, "get the company commander to take him on. In the Kaiyuan campaign, he killed three of the enemy with his bayonet. Haven't you ever noticed," he pointed at the scar on the back of Kuan's head, "his 'honourable wound'?"

"Who told you that?" demanded Kuan, red in the face. "I nearly got spitted myself, that day. If it weren't for our—"

"I saw the whole thing," Tseng interrupted. "Only it wasn't three of the enemy he killed, but three and a half. He carved open one enemy's belly. The fellow ran away holding his guts."

"Come on, commander, come on, commander," the men chanted, clapping in rhythm.

"Liu is always leaving his left side open," Kuan thought. "I've reminded him several times, but he hasn't changed. If I tickle him there once or twice, he'll pay more attention to it."

Kuan put on the protective clothing. "I'm not at all sure I can beat him," he said to Tseng, who was standing by his side.

He levelled his rifle and took a stance, his eyes boldly fixed on his opponent, waiting for Liu's first move.

Liu knew how skilled the commander was. He pondered a moment, then lunged. Kuan had been expecting this. He parried and thrust, striking Liu on the left side of the chest.

"One to zero," sang out Huang.

"Old ginger is hotter than new," cried the watching soldiers.

"One veteran is worth two recruits."

Kuan didn't find the next round so easy. After a couple of skirmishes, Liu tagged him.

"One to one. What a battle. This last round will tell the story," said Huang.

Neither of the contestants could get started in the third round. Eye to eye, their gun tips revolving in tiny circles, both men sought an opening. This went on for several moments. The commander suddenly let out an earth-shaking roar, startling Liu into immobility. He followed immediately with a stab at Liu's left. Though big, Liu was very fast. He twisted quickly, and the blow went by. But no matter how Liu parried and fended, advanced and retreated, he couldn't gain the initiative. Necessity is the mother of invention. Liu also let out a wild yell, and lunged. Kuan saw that he couldn't escape, so he thrust, too. Both men were struck at the same instant.

The spectators cheered and applauded.

Young Huang was dismayed. "How do you score this? I know— one and a half to one and a half. A tie."

Kuan removed his protective mask. "No. I should be the loser. We advocate taking the initiative against the enemy on the battlefield. That's why we encourage it during training. The big fellow had the initiative in this last exchange. He should be the winner. He thrust harder and more boldly than I. He was quick without being wild, he planned his charge. Though he has a weakness, I couldn't take advantage of it. But let me tell you, if our political instructor hadn't been wounded that year, he'd be able to show you a thing or two with the bayonet. The whole division praised his bayonet fighting

during the Kaiyuan campaign. My head wouldn't be sitting here on my shoulders, if it weren't for him. Even now, I'll bet he still could take Liu on."

"Are you trying to make me look silly, Old Kuan?" Tseng demanded.

"The big fellow has really learned fast," one of the soldiers said.

"Nobody's going to beat Liu in a hurry," commented another. "Even the commander lost to him."

"Wait a minute. I'll find somebody who can lick the big fellow," said Kuan. He ran to the barracks and dashed into the room where Hai was reading.

"Come on. I want you to do some bayonet practice with the big fellow."

"I'm no good at it." Hai's eyes were still on the book in his hand.

"What sort of attitude is that? He needs your help. He's always leaving his left open. You've got to clip him there a couple of times so he won't forget it. Come on."

"But commander—"

"Stow the gab. Let's go."

Just as the men on the field were speculating as to who would be bold enough to vie with Liu, a soldier in practice dress came trotting after Kuan. He advanced through the crowd and planted himself in the middle of the arena. Although he was short, there was power in his stance. Because of the protective mask covering his face, the spectators at first didn't recognize him.

"Who is it?"

"He's brave, anyhow."

"He must know a lot about it, since he's willing to compete."

"That's right. Beyond the mountain, there's always a bigger mountain. Above the sky, there's always still higher sky."

"Get ready," Huang shouted. "Begin."

Liu stood like a stone monument. He looked absolutely unshakable. As he was choosing the best spot for his footwork and seeking out his opponent's weak point, the short soldier abruptly lunged. The thrust hit Liu, swift and hard.

"Oh," cried Huang. "One to zero."

Before the sound of his voice had faded, Liu charged. The short fellow stood coolly. His parry and thrust were as rapid as a machine-gun burst. It was as if two different bayonets were darting at the same time. Liu again was hit on the left side of his chest.

"Two ... two to zero." Huang's voice broke with excitement.

The clean, smooth manner in which his opponent had won the first two rounds had taken Liu completely by surprise. Before he could figure out the reason, the short fellow attacked again. Liu took a stance, determined to win this one. Shorty feinted, then, without waiting for Liu to respond, twisted his gun so fiercely that the big fellow's palms went numb. The left side of his chest again felt a stab.

"Three to zero. Wonderful. Among the strong there's always a stronger," Huang shouted happily.

"Marvellous," exclaimed Wei. "Those were the most marvellous, the absolutely most marvellous bayonet thrusts I have ever seen."

Kuan called to the two contestants. "All right, come over here and we'll do a little analyzing. Big Fellow, each of those three hits were on your left side. That shows..." Before he could finish his sentence, the stubby soldier was gone.

Political Instructor Tseng, like the rest of the spectators, had been intrigued by the short fellow's skilful handling of the bayonet. But when the boy slipped through the crowd and disappeared, leaving Liu alone on the field, Tseng said to himself: "Blast. Our ideological training has fallen behind."

Hai returned to the barracks. He had just taken off the protective mask and clothing, when Tseng came in.

"Your bayonet work isn't bad, Hai."

The boy chuckled drily. It was hard to say whether he agreed with the political instructor or not.

"But it's not the sort of thing we're in favour of," Tseng said angrily. "We have bayonet practice to learn from each other and improve together, not simply to see who can beat whom. Who is Liu Wei-cheng? He's your comrade, a man the company is sending as its representative. He represents the whole company, including you."

If he has weaknesses, should we point them out and help him improve, or should we stick him three times, as you did, and walk off without a word?"

"I—"

"True, he isn't as good with the bayonet as you. But should we adopt your attitude in dealing with a comrade whose bayonet technique has flaws? He's going to that conference as the company's representative, as our army's representative, to work. Helping him is helping his work, is helping the conference of militia activists. Your annoyance at not being chosen is preventing you from realizing this. Maybe I'm treating the question too seriously, Hai, but it seems to me that your behaviour today shows you don't really understand what 'representative' means. You see it too much as an honour. That's why it didn't occur to you that you ought to help Liu correct his weaknesses in bayonet fighting. Suppose it is an honour? As revolutionaries, it isn't the sort of thing we should hanker after. We should compete with each other in being loyal to the Party, in whole-heartedly serving the people. We shouldn't compete with our own comrades for honours."

Hai had never seen the political instructor so worked up. Never had he been so severely criticized. He could tell from Tseng's words that the problem was serious, but for the moment he didn't know how to come to grips with it.

"During the battle of Kaiyuan our company commander — he was a new soldier then — and another comrade turned in a heavy enemy machine-gun. At that time, this warranted a major merit. The battle was very intense, and when it was over they didn't remember which of them had grabbed the gun first. Each insisted that it was the other. Neither would accept the citation. Do you know why, Hai? Because 'push on to Nanking and capture Chiang Kai-shek,' because liberating all of China meant more to them than ten major merits. It was for these aims that they had joined the army, fought, were wounded, and went back to the fray before their wounds were fully healed. Today, except for Taiwan Province, our country has been liberated, we've entered upon a socialist society, the great

goal of communism beckons us. We ought to stand higher and see further than the young soldiers of those days."

When Hai, his head lowered, did not reply, Tseng continued:

"I've urged you before — think more when you run into trouble, try to see the whole picture. If doing a good job with your squad gives a lead to the rest of the company, won't warm-heartedly helping comrades who aren't quite your equal be an even bigger stimulus to our work? When a comrade decides to fight for the cause of communism to the end, he ought to govern his every word and deed by that noble ideal. Nothing he says or does should be unworthy of the Party. Think it over: You knew Liu's technique had weaknesses. But instead of pointing them out to him in detail, you fought him three rounds and left him. Was that right? How should you behave to benefit our work more?"

During his bout with Liu, Hai had stabbed the big fellow three times. Although he hadn't been very clear where he hit him, Hai now knew exactly where he himself was struck, for the political instructor's every word pierced his heart. And in his pain he was deeply aware: "I made a mistake. I was wrong. The company commander told me very plainly to practise bayonet fighting with Liu. The political instructor has told me very plainly to think over what I've done. Why did I leave after three rounds? Why didn't I wonder, when I was walking away, whether what I was doing was right? I'm really a muddle-head! If a fellow does a few small things well, he ought to raise his eyes to higher goals. But I..."

Hai frowned. "Never mind," he consoled himself. "I'll think more when I meet a problem. I can still improve." Slowly he raised his head. He wanted to express his regrets to Tseng. But the political instructor was gone.

The company clerk came in. "Where's the political instructor? Wasn't he just here talking to you?"

Hai was puzzled. "Yes. He was here a minute ago."

"Playing hide-and-seek with me at his age." The clerk waved a sheet of paper. "Battalion wants all cadres to fill out this form, but the political instructor refuses to write anything in this 'awards and

decorations' column. I asked the company commander, because he knows him well. The commander's impression is that he won at least five major merits, but he said I'd better ask the political instructor himself, to make sure. Yet every time I try to ask him, he runs out and disappears."

Hai's heart suddenly leaped. All the blood in his body seemed to rush to his brain and his heart began racing. As he stared at the form in the clerk's hand, he said to himself: "That other hero who snatched the machine-gun in the battle of Kaiyuan was our political instructor. They wouldn't accept honour even when it was offered to them. What a fool I've been."

Hai was still tossing unhappily on his bed, unable to sleep, when the roosters crowed for the third time. He thought of each occasion when he had competed with Liu in the past year or more — their arm wrestling, the sledge hammer contest, cutting fodder for the pigs, the three rounds with bayonets the day before — and wondered what sort of path he had been following. Because he had joined the Youth League, won some merits, been named various kinds of model soldier and received a number of awards, he had thought he was on his way to becoming a hero. Actually, he had committed a whole series of errors.

He trembled. "It's really frightful. Chairman Mao wants us to be noble and pure; to be people of moral integrity and above vulgar interests. But how do I measure up?" Hai felt he had let down the company commander and the political instructor. And he'd let Comrade Liu Wei-cheng down as well. He took a book out from beneath his pillow. On the cover was a picture of Tung Tsun-ju holding a packet of dynamite. Questions surged into Hai's mind: "What do you have to do to be a real hero? What sort of a person is he? Should you want to become one?" Hai wasn't sure of the answers. But one thing he was positive of — he should tell all of his thoughts to the Party, and request the Party's criticism and help.

The young soldier sat up quickly and spread a sheet of paper on his knees. He felt quite ashamed. In the light of his electric torch, he began a letter of self-criticism to the Party branch.

Today I've discovered that I'm a far, far cry from what a Communist ought to be....

Twice more the roosters crowed. Tseng, the political instructor, hadn't been sleeping either. He sat by his table reading the brief summaries Hai had written from time to time about his ideological progress.

"The boy's only nineteen," Tseng thought. "It's not reasonable to ask him to take an over-all view of problems. Of course he tries too hard to excel, but that's only to be expected. The commander told him to practise bayonet fighting with Liu. He didn't help voluntarily — that's all he did wrong. Was it right to criticize him so strictly — a boy who's been in the army only a little over a year? Can he take it? Will it crush his 'tiger' spirit, blunt his enthusiasm? Will it make him lose confidence?" Tseng had not finished working out the answers to these questions.

From the drill field outside came the sound of blows. The political instructor looked. In the pale morning light, two silhouettes were fencing with bayonets. The smaller of the pair frequently stopped to explain something, then the battle went on. Although Tseng couldn't see them clearly, he recognized their familiar figures. The question that had been troubling him all night had, on the whole, already been settled.

"It's dawn," Tseng remarked in surprise. He switched off the lamp and stood up. As he watched the two on the drill field, a sense of comfort crept over him. A political worker's primary responsibility is to correctly carry out Party aims and policies, to realize Party purposes in the course of the job. His greatest happiness is to see his comrades, guided by the Party, continually and rapidly progressing. Tseng slowly walked to the window and breathed in the moist morning air. With deep feeling he gazed at the short soldier who was bounding about like a small tiger.

"Now, that's what I call a good, thinking fighter." The words came from Tseng almost without his knowing it.

## Hard Bones and Loyal Hearts

A scorching sun beat down upon the earth, and the cicadas hid beneath the leaves, shrilling weirdly. Summer had arrived. It was Hai's second summer in the army. It was then that the Chinese people were faced with a new battle.

All of China's six hundred million — the people and their army, went into action with courage and determination. They were responding to the call of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and Chairman Mao: Be self-reliant; work hard for the prosperity of the country.

One morning, Kuan was leading the company on a hill-top in a "combined attack" exercise. This was in preparation for a full division manoeuvre in which all the companies would co-ordinate. He held a signal flag high above his head, his eyes fixed on his wrist watch. When the second hand reached the agreed time, Kuan snapped the flag down. Three red flares soared into the sky and sappers rushed forward. Explosions quickly followed, smoke spread, the bugler blew the call to charge, and the men swarmed out of their trenches with levelled bayonets.

Hoofbeats pounded a rapid tattoo at the foot of the hill. A mounted messenger, while still far below, cried: "Commander Kuan, you're ordered to stop the exercise. Return at once to camp."

"What's that?" Kuan shouted.

By now the rider was before him. Man and horse were drenched with sweat. The messenger, dismounting, shoved the order into Kuan's hand, then leaped on the animal's back. He galloped away, the hoofbeats fading into the distance.

As Kuan read the order, his eyebrows drew into a single line, his lips tightened. He yelled to the bugler:

"Stop!"

The boy gazed at him, confused. He raised the bugle to his lips, hesitated, then lowered it again.

"Aiya! Order the company to halt the advance and return immediately to the starting point," Kuan exclaimed angrily, waving his signal flag.

An urgent assembly call from the bugler startled the entire company.

As Third Company marched back to camp, the soldiers looked at their squad leaders, the squad leaders watched the platoon leaders, and the platoon leaders kept glancing at the commander, each hoping to read in the others' faces the reason for this sudden change. What had happened?

Kuan took the order out and read it twice more. It was brief: Halt all exercises and manoeuvres, get ready for an urgent assignment. . . . From the order, there was no telling what the reason was. "Why this sudden halt in the normal yearly training?" Kuan wondered. Of course, quick changes were common in the army. "When the enemy changes, we change too." But this was extremely sudden. That same morning he had received a notification from regiment, directing him and the rest of the Party branch committee to prepare the next stage of the political and ideological work in the company. And now this change, so quick, allowing so little time. It seemed to Kuan that only in war did such things occur. "It must be very serious," he said to himself.

A command car raced towards the marching company. When it was almost upon them, it stopped.

"Third Company?" a grey-haired commander asked.

"Yes, sir." Kuan hurried forward. "Commissar! We. . . ."

"Cool down, Kuan. And don't make any wild guesses. There'll always be time for training exercises. This doesn't affect your company alone. We have to draw forces from our entire army to meet this emergency."

Hai stared. "Emergency! . . ."

"We have to build a railway line to a defence plant that's just gone into construction. Certain foreign 'experts' have walked out on us, taking the blueprints with them. So you see, this is no ordinary task — it's a battle. But tell the comrades there's nothing so terrible about it. The sky won't fall. Every Communist, every revolu-

tionary, must keep a stiff backbone. Because. . . .” The commissar paused, then went on softly: “Because we now have to rely solely on our own hands to construct that defence plant. Well, what of it? If they don’t send us equipment, we Chinese can build it anyhow. . . . That’s all I know. Our superiors haven’t told me any more. You and the comrades should treat this as a battle assignment.”

From the commissar’s short explanation, Kuan understood more clearly the urgency of the situation. He thought of what the commissar just said, “The sky won’t fall! . . . Every Communist, every revolutionary must keep a stiff backbone. We have to rely on our hands.” He jumped on a rock by the side of the road and turned on the full power of his bronze bell of a voice:

“Forward, on the run!”

The company was soon packed and ready to march. Kuan was snowed under with written statements of determination from the men, of guarantees to do the job thoroughly. Hai walked into company headquarters with Squad Four’s statement of determination and his third application to join the Communist Party.

“You’ve come just at the right time,” said Kuan, taking his application. “Is everything ready?”

“Ready.”

“Tomorrow, there’s a car going to the hospital. You go along. The Party branch hopes you’ll listen to orders and get yourself cured. Take a good rest.”

“Commander,” Hai exclaimed.

“Obey orders,” Kuan roared. In a quieter voice, he went on: “You’re an old soldier now, a squad leader. We’ve made a study of your condition with the medics. Your chronic inflammation of the intestine can’t be neglected any longer. Go into the hospital, cure it, then come back. We’ll be waiting for you at the construction site.”

As Hai opened his mouth to speak, Kuan picked up a sheaf of papers and started for the door.

“I’m very busy. No time to jaw. Think it over. If you can get it straight, climb into the car tomorrow and go. If you can’t get it straight, I’ll have you tied up and delivered to the hospital in a

bundle. Anyhow, you’re going to the hospital.” Kuan was already out of door by the time he finished his announcement.

“Is the most vital thing for me right now to stay in a hospital?” Hai asked himself. He shook his head. “I’ve got to take part in this emergency duty. Besides, I’m not doing my job as a squad leader well enough. That new soldier, Kao Yi-chung, who was assigned to us a few days ago, is pretty moody, and we have no assistant squad leader at the moment. If I go into the hospital, who’ll look after Squad Four? What about Kao?” Hai hated to leave the squad. He felt it needed him. But the company commander had been so firm. What could he do?

He went to the medical orderly and pleaded his case. The orderly said he couldn’t decide. Hai tried the doctor next, offering all his reasons. The doctor only said there were several comrades going to the hospital tomorrow; he was putting Hai in charge. . . . Hai had seen everyone there was to see, he had said everything there was to say, all in vain. Dejectedly, he returned to the squad.

“Squad leader, I have a complaint,” were the words that greeted him the moment he entered the door. Kao was sitting on his packed knapsack.

“Spill it.”

“When exactly are we leaving? Don’t we have any planning at all?” Kao slapped the knapsack beneath him. “We’ve had these packed for hours. In the noon rest period, we didn’t get any sleep. They’re deliberately making things hard for us.”

Hai had been full of suppressed fire, and these remarks were like oil on the flames. He sizzled right up to the tips of his hair.

“When exactly we leave will be decided by our leaders,” he retorted curtly. “We’ve packed our gear because the assignment requires us to. As to the nap you missed — don’t expect the revolution to make it up to you.”

“Don’t get sore, squad leader. They say it’s only when a fellow runs into a problem he can’t solve, or can’t convince others he’s right, that he loses his temper. It’s a sign of weakness,” Kao commented airily.

Wei had been sitting to one side. This was more than he could bear.

"What are you trying to do, Comrade Kao?" he demanded. "Can't you feel how tense things are? If our superiors tell us to prepare, we prepare. That's the very least, the absolutely very least, political awareness we expect in a soldier."

Kao gave him a glance. "Political awareness?" he scoffed.

Hai ran out of the door. He was afraid that he would tear into Kao. Hai was more convinced than ever: He couldn't leave Squad Four, he had to go with it to the work site. Even if he was criticized, punished, he simply had to take part in this emergency task.

At dusk it began to rain. Thunder rolled, lightning flashed, and raindrops as big as beans pelted down on the roofs. Lightning scalded everything in a blaze of white. The clouds were pressing directly on the hill-tops.

As soon as the order to march came, the detachment set out in the storm.

At about midnight, after they had been travelling for four or five hours, a dark figure rushed up to Kuan from behind.

"Commander," the figure called.

"Who is it?" Kuan also had to shout, for the wind and rain muffled their voices.

Lightning flashed, and he saw that the soldier walking beside him was Ouyang Hai.

"You!"

Hai kept wiping the rain from his face. "You can criticize me, punish me, commander, anything. But let me go with our detachment to the work site. With this battle going on, I can't stay in the hospital."

Kuan did not reply. "He's caught up with us, in spite of this heavy rain," he thought. "He wants so much to help, how can I send him back? But who knows what hardships lie ahead? Should I let him come along? He's ill. Will he be able to take it?"

"I won't be any trouble, commander. When we get to the work site, you can put me on barracks duty every day.... If you really

want me to go back, I... I'll obey orders and go... go to the hospital."

Although Kuan couldn't see him in the darkness, he could tell from the sound of Hai's voice that there were tears in his eyes.

"I think, Old Kuan... that we ought to let him come with us. When we get to the work site, we can ask the doctor to try and treat him there," Tseng said quietly.

"I'll settle accounts with you at the work site."

"Yes, sir." Hai stamped with joy, splashing mud. He ran towards his squad.

"Hey, Huang," Kuan called out. "This march is too silent. Start up a song."

"I've got one," said Tseng, stepping to the side of the road. He faced the moving column and sang:

Arise, ye prisoners of starvation,  
Arise, ye wretched of the earth.

For decades, this proletarian battle song has stirred thousands of fighters for the cause of communism. In dangerous assaults, in the face of the slaughter knives of the enemy, in any difficult situation, it has enkindled our hearts, and strengthened our conviction that in the struggle against the old world we will be victorious.

As the detachment boldly advanced towards the new battlefield, its militant song shook the night sky and made the surrounding hills tremble. The soldiers slogged forward through the mud. A flash of lightning illuminated Hai's smiling face. Following closely in Tseng's footsteps, he was confidently looking ahead.

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After pouring for two days, the rain finally stopped. But the sky was still overcast. Not a thread of blue could be seen.

The detachment forded a stream and continued along the road. The men were exhausted from marching through mud at a fast pace in the rain. Diarrhea was sapping Hai's strength, and each step was more of an effort than the last.

A roan horse galloped towards them, and a messenger delivered an order from headquarters: All company commanders were to attend a meeting further down the road; the detachment should rest and await instructions.

The soldiers found places to sit by the roadside, caring little whether these were muddy or wet. Hai immediately began checking on the members of his squad. The packs of some had been soaked through, making them twice as heavy. Nearly everyone had developed blisters. When Wei observed Hai approaching, he shoved his blistered feet under his raincoat.

Hai saw through his clumsy attempt at concealment. "Pretty rough, eh?" Hai said.

"I'm all right," Wei replied with a forced smile. "In my year or more in the army, this has been my easiest, my absolutely easiest march. You'd better look after the other comrades."

Hai was moved by Wei's simple action. How quickly the boy had developed. Not so long ago, his interest had flitted from one thing to another — reading, army chess, whatever struck his fancy at the moment. Now he was enduring discomfort because the revolution required it, sharing hardships for the sake of the collective. It was army tradition to march on, blisters or no. But Wei's behaviour showed plainly that everyone wanted to share the country's burdens in this time of difficulty. Everyone took on their emergency task militantly.

Silently, Hai picked up Wei's rice sack and hung it on his own shoulder. As a squad leader, he was happy if he could lighten the load of one of his men. They probably still had a distance to go.

"Can you tell me," new soldier Kao held up his foot and asked Wei, "how a person's feet get blistered?"

"On a long march the worst thing you can wear, the absolutely worst thing, is new shoes. Both of us ignored this rule, so of course we've got blisters. It's our own fault for not thinking of this in advance and preparing properly."

"It's not a question of new shoes or old," Kao retorted mischievously. "What causes it is too much friction between the soles of your feet and the earth. When this goes beyond a certain limit, the

skin and the flesh part company. The space between becomes what we call a blister."

Wei grinned. "Now there's a high-school graduate for you. Can't say anything without going all around the mulberry bush."

"That's science. Everything has a limit. No one can eat more than 0.132 gallons in one meal — the stomach won't hold any more. In marching, you can't walk too far at one stretch. When you exceed a limit, you're violating science, and you have to suffer for it."

"I don't agree," said Hai, coming over. "Your science doesn't apply to us. According to your logic, the Long March was unscientific. Where could a man find 0.132 gallons of rice when the Red Army was in the marshlands? They ate wild herbs, grass roots, even leather belts, yet they fought and won. All Red Army men had blisters on their feet. But they marched twenty-five thousand *li* in spite of them."

"Well . . . well . . ." Kao had no answer.

"A few blisters can't stop us," Hai continued. "If our legs were broken we'd crawl forward, should the struggle require it. That's also a branch of science — revolutionary science. The old Red Army won victory with that science, and we still need that science to win today."

"Right. I concede. Your science is more scientific than mine." Everyone laughed.

Hai took a small piece of soap from his kit and handed it to Kao.

"Knock the sand out of your shoes and rub a little of this on their inner edges and on the soles of your socks. It may not be very scientific, but it'll probably work. Just complaining about too much friction with the earth, and the skin and the flesh parting company, won't do any good," smiled Hai.

Ahead, the signal to march sounded. The men stood up and got ready. Kuan came hurrying back. He waved his hand and shouted: "Comrades, we've already arrived. This is our destination."

Everyone was surprised. They examined their surroundings — a depression between two mountains, not a home or village in sight, a dirt road that accompanied a stream into the hills. Was it in this

barren place that the detachment was to strike roots? Where would they live?

"Headquarters has assigned this section to our company," Kuan said to Tseng. "They want us to build a high railway embankment over the low-lying land. There isn't much time. Military region headquarters had just sent word that they hope we'll get the line open ahead of schedule."

A passing truck halted while the driver climbed down to get water for his radiator from the stream. Kuan and Tseng, followed by Hai, walked over.

"What are you hauling, comrade?" Kuan queried.

"Look for yourself." The driver seemed to be in a bad mood.

Kuan raised the oilcloth cover. There were a number of machines inscribed with foreign words.

"Why are you taking them away?" asked Hai. "Aren't they any use?"

"Certain people have walked off with the blueprints, and they refuse to ship us the key parts, so why should we leave this junk lying around?" said the driver, his anger rising. "It only takes up space in the plant."

Hai frowned. Tseng and Kuan asked no more. That made matters clearer.

The driver got back into the cab and stuck his head out of the window. "Just wait, PLA comrades," he grinned. "Before very long I'll be back with machines we've made ourselves."

"Right, brother worker," said Tseng. "While we're finishing this railway ahead of time, we'll be watching for you to show up with new Chinese machinery."

Kuan remembered what the old commissar had said. He shouted after the rolling truck:

"The sky won't fall."

The army company settled down in the wilderness. Young workers and the sons of poor and lower-middle peasants, wearing the uniform of the PLA, brought to the battle only their strength and honest red hearts. All they would be building was only the embankment of a

small section of a railway line. Compared with the nation-wide drive for self-reliance in conquering difficulties, compared with the magnificent socialist construction going on throughout the land, their contribution would be small indeed. But to the company the burden was heavy and the hardships were many.

Even before the work started, troubles arose.

It was necessary to remove the mud and loose soil from the gullies and flats prior to laying a foundation of rocks. But not all the tools had arrived. There weren't enough shovels. The company quartermaster looked glumly at the small pile of tools. When squad leaders came to draw equipment, he was only able to issue two shovels to each. He asked everyone to make the best of it, for the time being. Hai was on his way back with the last two shovels, when he met Liu, leader of Squad One.

"Hey, Tiger, where do you pick up the tools?"

Hai knew they were all gone. "Where've you been, Big Fellow? I was just bringing these for you." He handed Liu the shovels.

"Oh, thanks." Liu shouldered the tools and walked away.

That left Hai with only two picks, which weren't of much use for this stage of the job. He conferred with a few of the squad's hardest workers and explained the situation. Putting their heads together, they thought out a solution. Soon the squad was scraping away with wash basins, tin cups and bowls.

But progress was slow. Hai jumped into a soft patch and began scooping out mud with his hands. Those hands had held a stick for beating off landlords' dogs, they'd cut fuel, fired a kiln, gripped a hoe. Because the homeland required it, the boy's callused hands had taken up a gun, swung an axe. Today, when the modern revisionists — traitors to the communist camp — were trying to force us to go along with them, those two hands did not touch palms in a gesture of servile obeisance, but plunged deep into the mud and laboriously dredged water and earth so that the red flag of the proletarian revolution could be raised on high.

Grime clogged his finger-nails, his hands swelled from soaking, but he kept on. In this way, handful by handful, basin by basin, load by load, the squad removed a layer of mud and got rid of the water

on one section of land. Their methods were a bit backward, but their thinking was the most advanced, the most noble, since they were labouring to uphold truth, labouring for the revolution. Those slender-fingered youths who listen to electronic jazz, dance rock'n roll — how can they compare with our gallant heroes of today? To some, happiness is ease and pleasure. In order to stay alive, they treat enemies as friends and sell out the interests of the proletariat. To others, happiness is work and struggle. Though it means more hardship for them, they willingly devote their lives to fighting for all oppressed people under the sun.

"Raise the revolutionary red banner high! Work!" Hai's shout became the slogan for the whole construction site. Squad Four yelled it, the company yelled it. All over the site rang the cry:

"Raise the revolutionary red banner high! Work!"

During the break, Liu came over to Squad Four's section to pick up some pointers. He saw that Hai was scooping mud with his hands, and that there wasn't a shovel in the entire squad. Now he understood. He pulled Hai to one side.

"Listen, Tiger, what have you been up to?" He pointed at Hai's muddy hands.

"Nothing. Nothing at all."

"Here." Liu thrust his shovel at him. "There's a challenge between our two squads. If we won this way, we wouldn't feel right about it."

"That's no way to talk, Big Fellow." Hai said hotly, pushing the shovel back at Liu. "What's the difference? If we don't dig with our hands, your squad will have to. When you come right down to it, there aren't enough tools. The quartermaster says a big batch is coming in a couple of days."

"Right, right," nodded Liu, extremely moved. He grasped Hai's hands in his and wouldn't let them go. Whether in hand wrestling, carrying logs, wielding the sledge hammer or in bayonet practice, never had those two pairs of hands met in such a tight, warm clasp. The situation helped both soldiers to see their past shortcomings, and gave them a deeper understanding of the purpose of contests, mutual aid, competitions and challenges. They realized why, even with an

"opponent," it was necessary to go into battle shoulder to shoulder and hand in hand.

For our responsibility was heavy, our aims the same. We were going to show what could be built through self-reliance and hearten revolutionary people the world over.

At dusk, the men knocked off. Wei ran up to Hai and reported that one patch of their section hadn't been scraped clean.

"Who was working there?" asked Hai.

"Kao. He hasn't done this kind of job before," Wei mumbled. "We don't have proper tools and he was trying to work fast, so..."

Kao hung his head and didn't speak.

"We can't do things this way," Hai said to him. "This railway is meant to last. Quality counts."

"Well, what are we going to do?" asked one of the soldiers.

"Do it over again," Hai snapped.

"There's no time, today. We'll have to re-do it tomorrow."

Hai looked at the sky. It was getting dark. "I'll have to report this to company," he said.

"The work figures are already in for the day, squad leader," the soldier said in a low voice, taking Hai by the arm. "They'll be comparing the scores tonight. Don't say anything about it. We can work through one of the breaks tomorrow and make it up."

"What's your idea, Kao?" Hai asked.

"I think... I think you ought to report it," Kao said morosely. "It's all my fault for spoiling our record. I thought — these first few days, our squad's got to come out on top. Since we aren't working with regular tools, I thought it wouldn't matter much if I left a little mud. That way of looking at things is... is not scientific."

"Right. We're building socialism, we can't do sloppy work. More important, that kind of glory-seeking is wrong." Though Hai said this to the others, actually he was criticizing himself as well.

Without pausing to eat, he hurried to company headquarters. He told the commander and political instructor what had happened. Lastly, he said:

"We'll make it up during a break, tomorrow."

Kuan pointed at a chart. "Then, what score should we give your squad for today?"

"Give us a zero. Squad Four should get the lowest rating. That will be a lesson to us, and will teach the whole company to be careful."

"Liu's squad cleared over thirty cubic metres. There's a challenge between his squad and yours," Tseng said with a smile.

"We've thought of that, political instructor. What's right is right. A man has to be honest and down to earth when he works for the revolution. He can't take credit he doesn't deserve. If you gave us a mark of even half a cubic metre, we'd feel we were cheating socialism."

Hai's serious manner pleased the political instructor. The boy had evidently given up wanting glory for himself or his squad, and was advancing along a correct road. The young soldier was pure through and through. This marked a new stage for him. Like a small boat that has navigated the shoals and rapids of a twisting gorge and now emerges upon a broad lake, Hai could raise sail and journey far.

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Dark rolling clouds gathered. They hung so low, they seemed ready to touch the earth. The whole sky was like an overturned iron cauldron pressing down. Wind whipped up straw and fallen leaves and sent them flying. Heavy thunder rumbled in the distance. A big storm was brewing.

The railway embankment was already over a dozen metres high. Inch by inch the soldiers raised it, as they anxiously watched the turgid waters of the stream, and the clouds piling up in the sky. Would anything go wrong? By four in the afternoon, the light began to fade. The surrounding hills were only dimly visible. The men quickly knocked off and returned to camp. It was completely dark before five.

In a temporary shed on the side of the stream some machinery and meters which had just come in by boat were awaiting relay to the plant. The Party branch hurriedly summoned everyone to block holes in the walls with straw mats and raincoats. The men strengthened

the shed by tying the four corner posts to stakes driven into the ground beside them with ropes and the straps of their knapsacks. By the time they finished and went to bed, it was eleven o'clock.

Perhaps it was fatigue, but Tseng's right arm was especially painful. It was always like that in overcast, rainy weather. "You've got to stick it out," he told himself. "This is a crucial period. You can't go and rest just because of a little ailment."

Although the wind had died down, thunder kept booming in the distance. From time to time, silvery lightning streaked across the night sky. But still the rain did not fall. Hai peered out of the window from his bed. When he finally slept, his dreams were troubled.

At two o'clock in the morning, it started to rain. It fell in drops, at first. The soldiers on night duty could hear the patter of the rain against the yellow earth. But the sound quickly grew louder. The heavens seemed to open, and the rain poured down in water-falls. Startled from their slumbers, the men found over a foot of water on the floor of their make-shift barracks. Shoes had floated off and disappeared.

Then there was a tremendous roar, like ten thousand galloping horses — the mountain torrents were raging. Swiftly, the stream rose and battered a gap in the railway embankment. The soldiers fought the waters, unable to see or hear. Water, rain and thunder were all one howling cacophony.

Hai stood knee-deep in water, tying down floating quilts and mosquito nets. He couldn't see in the darkness, but he grabbed whatever he could, trying to cut the state's losses, even if only a little.

He heard shouts in the distance, but they were blurred by the wind and rain. Hai dropped the clothing he was holding and ran outside. It was the political instructor, calling from the bank, his voice coming through claps of thunder:

"... Communists, Youth Leaguers ... the storage shed ... Communists..."

"The storage shed? That's bad." With a responsive cry, Hai waded through the water towards the shed.



Deluging rain and the mountain torrents had caused the stream to flood its banks. Swirling water battered the shed. It was listing to one side. Some of the supporting stakes had been uprooted and the ropes had snapped. One more big wave and the shed and the machinery inside it would be swept away.

When Hai got there, the water was chest high. It was a crucial moment. With all his might, he shouted towards the make-shift barracks:

“Comrades, the shed’s in danger.”

A moment later, Kuan and the men of the company came running. They rushed into the shed and began carrying out crates of meters.

Staggering through the deep rapid water, they advanced slowly with their burdens to higher ground.

The flood continued to rise. The shed was listing more heavily, its framework cracking.

“This is too slow, comrades. Form a line and pass the crates along from hand to hand,” called Tseng. “I’ll be the first. Come with me, quick.”

Hai was accustomed to hearing the political instructor speak slowly and softly. But now his shout rang out above the storm. Hai realized with astonishment that it was the kind of shout a hero grabbing a heavy machine-gun from the enemy in the battle of Kaiyuan might have given, a shout that could have frightened an American stiff in Korea. At last Hai saw Tseng’s tall stalwart body and bushy brows, and his customary slow quiet speech, as belonging to the same man. He thought of the political instructor’s not very dexterous right arm, of the long nights Tseng spent reading in the light of an oil lamp documents and instructions on political work. . . . Right, it was he. Of course it was he. The hero Hai had been thinking of day and night, had been with him all along.

Hai took a stand beside Tseng and cried:

“I’m second.”

“I’m third,” shouted another soldier.

“I’m fourth. . . .”

The men quickly took their positions.

Crates of machinery and meters flew along the line to places of safety.

Several times, Hai was rocked by big waves. He wished he could nail his feet to the ground and remain rooted in the swirling waters.

“Careful, this is heavy,” he said as he passed on a large crate.

“It’s rough out here for a ‘light weight’ like you, Tiger,” said Liu, taking the crate over.

“So it’s you, Big Fellow.” Hai recognized his voice. “No problem at all. With the political instructor on one side and you on the other, I don’t have to worry about being swept away. Even if the sky fell, we could push it back up again.”

It was true, neither water nor any other force could budge this line of PLA soldiers so stubbornly rooted in the flood.

But the crates were heavy, and the men were tiring. They could feel the weariness in each other as they passed the burdens from hand to hand. Gradually, they slowed down. The pain from Tseng's injured right arm was like an awl in his heart. It was as if the arm had been fractured again. He knew he couldn't last much longer. To encourage himself as well as the others, he shouted:

"How about a song, comrades?"

"Good."

Huang led them in one song after another. In the rain and inky blackness they raised their voices above the howling waters, their courage and confidence growing in their battle against the elements. To the rhythm of their songs, the crates moved swiftly along the human conveyor belt to dry land.

Only a few crates remained. From afar came a roar. The crest of another mountain torrent was hurtling towards them.

Kuan, at the end of the line, heard it first. He knew it was bad.

"Clasp hands, comrades," he yelled. "Move off."

Liu immediately seized Hai's left hand with his right. Hai could feel the strength in it, as he had that day on the train when they hand-wrestled. When he extended his own right hand for Tseng, he caught nothing. The political instructor was not there.

"Move off, comrades," called a towering voice from the shed.

In a flash of lightning, Hai saw it all: Tseng the Communist, using his injured right arm, using the whole strength of his body, was propping up the sagging building. The last few men in the shed with him had just got out and seized the hands extended to them when a huge wave passed over everyone's head.

As the lightning faded, the shed and Tseng's big figure vanished with it.

"Political instructor," Hai yelled into the storm.

"Political instructor," the men shouted.

There was no response.

"Political instructor," Hai cried with all his might. But the only other sound was the wind and rain and the howling waves. Neither Tseng's towering cry nor his slow gentle voice could be heard.

"Quick, comrades. He's over here."

The soldiers hastily rallied round. Many hands raised the frame of the collapsed building from the political instructor's unconscious form and lifted him out. Not a minute could be spared. He needed medical aid immediately.

"Put him on my back," said Kuan. With the help of the men, he carried Tseng through the deep current and groped back towards camp in the darkness.

At daybreak, the rain stopped and the water receded. A thirty metre gap had been smashed in the railway embankment and the storage shed was destroyed. But most of the machinery had been saved. Except for the political instructor, no one else in the company had been hurt.

Tseng lay on his bed. He was still unconscious.

Hai went out with his squad to look for clothing that had been washed away. When they returned, they saw a crowd gathered outside company headquarters. The doctor, a nurse, and the regimental commander were inside. It was plain from the expression on everyone's face that Tseng's injuries were serious. The doctor came out and said to the regimental commander in a low voice:

"His right arm is broken, and he's been hurt internally. He's started to spit a lot of blood. An artery in the lung has probably been torn."

A cold shiver ran up Hai's spine. His whole body felt cold. Wringing the cap in his hands, he muttered: "Political instructor, oh, political instructor."

Emergency treatment managed to stop the blood spitting. The regimental commander ordered that an ambulance be sent for immediately. Everyone left so that Tseng could get some rest.

Again the sky darkened. Hai couldn't eat or drink. He waited anxiously outside the company headquarters door. In the room

Tseng, very pale, reclined half-lying, half-sitting on his bed. Kuan was agitatedly pacing the floor.

"You should have known a torrent crest was coming when you heard that sound, Old Tseng. You shouldn't have...." Kuan was so upset, he didn't know what to say.

"It was a dangerous moment. Could I have left those comrades to be crushed while I ran out?" Tseng forced some spirit into his voice. He sounded quite normal.

"I mean your right arm had been broken before. It wasn't very strong."

"What of it? Put yourself in my place, Old Kuan. Think of all the organization has done for me since I was wounded. They gave me medical treatment, taught me to read and write. Because my health was poor, I wasn't allowed to take part in any physical labour. Because it wasn't easy any more for me to carry a gun, I was transferred into political work. Everything was done to help me recover, to allow me to do a bit of work for the revolution. What are a man's hands and arms for, if not to work for the revolution? Today, in the revolution's time of need, if I don't use all the strength that's in them, why did I get cured in the first place? What do I need that right arm for now?"

Kuan didn't say anything, but he was thinking: "Right. He did the right thing. Anyone would have done the same. These last few years, Old Tseng has been the leading spirit in our Party branch. When he was wounded, with only his left hand and a loyal heart to sustain him, he went right on charging, killing, fighting and hacking, he still captured prisoners. Ever since he was transferred into political work, he's been a model, always taking the lead, rallying the members of the branch to work as one. How often he's said: 'There are still too many suffering people in this world. The revolution must go on. We must push our communist revolution on to victory as quickly as possible!' How lucky I've been to have had such a good fighter and comrade by my side for over ten years. Again today, in rescuing the machinery, he was an example for the whole company. But I'm afraid it won't be possible any longer to work and battle together...." Very upset, Kuan hastily turned away.

Tseng sensed his distress. "Don't worry, Old Kuan," he said. "These little injuries can be cured. I'll do my best to get better quickly. I'm coming back to Third Company. We'll go on working side by side. And when the fighting starts, we'll charge into battle together and capture some more machine-guns." He laughed to lighten the atmosphere, then quickly covered his mouth to smother his coughs.

Kuan gave him a drink of water. After resting a moment, Tseng continued:

"Of course, I'm prepared for the other possibility. Maybe I can't be cured. But that won't matter. Thousands of things have to be done for the revolution. There's bound to be work for me. Watching a forest, tending a lighthouse — aren't they all revolutionary jobs? As long as a man's devotion isn't crippled, he can still do plenty of work with one arm."

Tseng's breathing was growing more rapid. Kuan raised up his pillows. The political instructor had to exert great effort to control himself, but his voice was cheerful.

"Even if it turns out that I've 'done my revolutionary bit,' what of it? Everyone has to die. Seventy or eighty years of life isn't long, twenty or thirty years isn't short. To tell you the truth, Old Kuan, only one thing is bothering me. Ever since I was switched over to political work, because my cultural level is low and my political development is slow, I haven't been able to catch up, no matter how I studied. I haven't done very well with this job of political instructor the Party's given me. So I can't step out of the picture just yet." Tseng's tone was confident. "I'll definitely come back to the company. I haven't fulfilled my assignment. I can't 'withdraw.'"

Hai, at the doorway, was overcome by emotion. He began weeping quietly.

"Is that Ouyang Hai?" called Tseng. "Come in."

Hai softly pushed open the door. What he said expressed the sentiments of the entire company:

"We're waiting for you at the work site, political instructor."

"What's wrong with you today, Tiger? Does a revolutionary fighter shed tears so easily?" smiled Tseng. "Tell me, did we get

everything back that was washed away? Is anyone hurt in your squad, or sick?"

"We're all fine, political instructor. Just concentrate on getting well. We're going to work twice as hard and finish the railway ahead of time."

"Good. That's the way it ought to be."

The horn of the approaching ambulance blew, and Kuan got up and went out.

From beneath his pillow, Tseng took with his left hand an application to join the Communist Party. His eyes shining, he said to Hai:

"The Party has approved you as a probationary member. I've been asked to tell you officially. The year of probation starts from the date of approval by the general Party branch meeting. You can now take part in Party affairs."

"Political instructor," Hai solemnly raised his right hand. "Communist Ouyang Hai gives this guarantee to the Party: I shall do my utmost to serve the people as long as I live. I shall fight for the cause of the Party till my dying day."

The ambulance was heard pulling up to the door. Tseng said:

"Our Party branch wanted me to have a long talk with you, but now there's no time. Remember, every moment of his life a Communist should struggle for the Party's cause. When he dies, that too should be for the cause of the Party. The acute and complicated battles of our times require this of us. The older generation fought all their lives. Our own generation, and the next ten generations to come, must continue the struggle. We're not interested in so-called 'personal happiness' or 'material comforts.' A Communist can't think only of himself. The whole country, the entire world, should be his concern. The liberation of the proletariat needs millions of such men. Only when he undertakes this responsibility does he deserve to be called a Communist, only then can he become the hope of mankind. Certain cowards in the world today don't deserve the name of Communists, they're not fit to represent the Communist Party."

His eyes on the political instructor, Hai listened intently.

Tseng leaned forward and pointed at some books on the table.



"These three volumes of the *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* are my present to you on joining the Party. What the Party branch wanted me to say to you is all in here. Study Chairman Mao's works carefully, Hai. They'll give you clear vision and help you to understand the world. I hope you'll work and battle according to Chairman Mao's teachings."

Hai took the volumes which the political instructor handed him. He gazed at the gold-lettered title with deep emotion. Tseng went on:

"You're always wanting to go where the fighting is hottest, to earn the title of 'hero in battle.' I think there will be battles to be fought, Hai. As a Communist, you should of course fight bravely on the battlefield, and I'm confident you will." Tseng's voice became graver.

"But even more important is what you do today, before the fighting has started. Just think. We have to oppose imperialism, oppose all sorts of bourgeois ideas, and struggle against our shortcomings. In order to do all this, we have to stand firmly, see clearly and, first and foremost, win victory in our own thinking. This certainly isn't any easier than the fight on the battlefield."

"In our Party class that day, you said it takes a fierce struggle to foster proletarian ideology and eliminate bourgeois ideology," Hai recalled.

"That's right, a very fierce struggle." Tseng pointed at the *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* in Hai's hands. "Mao Tse-tung's thought is the precious guide which will bring us to victory in these battles. The comrade who bears Chairman Mao's teachings constantly in mind, who thinks always of the interests of the Party, who diligently serves the people, who never forgets the sufferings of the oppressed people of the world, who always matches his deed to his word — that comrade is today's hero. When we learn from Tung Tsun-juí we shouldn't just notice how many merits and decorations he earned. We should learn the thinking that gave him the courage to be blown to bits for the cause of communism. On the Long March, Chang Szu-teh\* quietly went about working for the Party. Although he was not killed in battle but in a collapsing kiln, the Party rated his death an equally great loss. Why? Because what is most important in a revolutionary is not whether his contribution has been large or small, not how many honours he has received, but his whole-hearted devotion to the service of the people. The most vital thing for you right now, Hai, is to form a correct appreciation of Tung Tsun-juí and Chang Szu-teh."

Kuan came in with two nurses. They carefully carried Tseng to the ambulance. Tseng's voice was steady and strong:

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\*A soldier in the Guards Regiment of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. He joined the revolution in 1933, took part in the Long March of 1934—1936 and was wounded in service. A member of the Communist Party, he loyally served the interests of the people. In 1944, when making charcoal in the mountains of northern Shensi, he was killed by the sudden collapse of a kiln. Comrade Mao Tse-tung made a speech at a memorial meeting for him which has been published under the title *Serve the People*.

"Repair that break in the embankment soon, Old Kuan. We must finish the job ahead of schedule."

The ambulance started off. Hai gazed after it, holding the *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* which Tseng had given him. Thoughts tumbled through his brain like waves in the sea:

"You're going, political instructor, but you've left me something I can never study enough, never use enough. A revolutionary, a Communist, ought to be like you. Today, we're building socialism. It's not like the war years, when a man could give his life to blow up an enemy bridge fort, or block a machine-gun aperture with his chest. But every unit needs good Communists like you — selfless, generous, unstinting workers for the Party. A comrade like you, though he may not have any medals on his chest or have won any merits, is also a true hero."

The ambulance carrying the political instructor was already out of sight, but Hai saw clearly marked out before him the heroic revolutionary road which Tseng the Communist had trod so resolutely.

\*

A high straight embankment with dark gleaming rails ran across the boggy land between the two mountains into the distance. It soon would be open to traffic.

Hai walked the tracks alone. From time to time he stopped and felt a place where the rails had been joined, or jumped to a side and stamped the earth hard — for fear that the embankment wasn't strong enough. Then he laughed at his childishness. Still, it was hard to blame him. Trains were about to start running on the railway he had built with his own hands. Materials and machinery weighing thousands of tons would be rolling along it to a national defence plant we had constructed solely by our own efforts. How could he help being a trifle anxious in the midst of his excitement?

Not far ahead, a railway worker was digging near the embankment. Hai hurried over.

"What are you doing, grandpa?"

"Digging a hole for a signpost."

"I'll do it." Hai took over the crowbar. When the sign was planted, he stepped back and read it:

Grazing stock on the embankment is forbidden.

"What's the idea?" Hai pointed at the sign.

"We don't want people grazing cows or horses," the old worker replied.

"Oh, afraid they'll eat the small saplings?"

"It's not only that. Cows and horses have tough, slippery hides that an engine can't crush. They can cause serious accidents if they're hit."

"Serious accidents?"

"They can derail a train."

Hai shook his head and laughed. "Don't kid me, grandpa. I wasn't born yesterday."

"Who's kidding? I'm serious. Before liberation, I was a rail checker at a small station on the Canton-Hankow Line. An express train that had just left the station hit a water buffalo. The engine and seven cars jumped the tracks. Hundreds of people were killed and injured."

"That probably was just a freak." Hai was still sceptical. It didn't seem possible that the hide of a cow or horse could have such an effect on an enormously heavy locomotive.

"Freak, nothing. I've been working on the railway over forty years. I've seen it happen with my own eyes only once, but I've heard about it at least seven or eight times."

"Oh?" From the old worker's expression, Hai realized it was a serious matter. "Then people really have to be careful," he said.

"That's right. This is the first railway they've ever had in these parts. The peasants don't understand, and animals are easily panicked. If they don't watch them, an accident could happen." The worker pointed at the sign. "We're putting up a lot of these, and we're going to ask the communes to call meetings and explain about it to their members."

"Come along," said Hai picking up the other signs. "I'll help you."

"Don't bother. A lot of our people are working further on."

"Squad leader," the voice of Wei called from behind. "Ouyang Hai."

Hai said goodbye to the old worker and walked back. "Imagine a locomotive not being able to crush the hide of a cow or a horse," he thought. "Building a railway is a hard job. And then after it's built many people have to work very hard to maintain it." He looked gratefully at the retreating figure of the old railway man.

"The commander's been looking all over for you, squad leader," said Wei, running towards him.

"What's up?"

"I'm not sure. I think he said he wants to settle accounts."

The night when Hai caught up with the company in the storm Kuan had promised to settle accounts when they got to the work site. Hai hadn't been very responsive to the doctor's efforts to cure him, or to the leadership's insistence that he rest. Now, after several months' delay, it was time for the "account" to be "settled." Hai sighed, and trotted back to camp.

Kuan was waiting for him at the door of the temporary barracks. "Pack your things. You're going to the hospital."

"Yes, sir." Hai went inside without another word and started packing.

"Come out here," Kuan barked. He had been all prepared for Hai to try to bargain. When he complied so promptly, Kuan was surprised. "Do you have any objections?"

"No, sir."

"Any requests?"

"Well..." Hai hesitated, then said positively: "No, sir."

"Good. You're making progress." Kuan smiled. "I'm putting in a request for you — to wait till after the railway's opening ceremony before going to the hospital. How about that?"

Hai peered suspiciously at the company commander's tight-lipped face, not at all sure he wasn't being teased.

"I wouldn't dare to make that request, commander," he said.

"This is on the level. I've never seen you so well-behaved, you young imp. I'm telling you — the first train will come through tomorrow morning."

"Tomorrow? Really?" Hai asked excitedly.

"Really. Headquarters just telephoned."

Hai leaped for joy. He rushed into the barracks, shouting: "We're starting traffic ahead of time, comrades, we're starting ahead of time."

Everyone dropped whatever he was doing and jumped and cheered. The barracks rang with exultant cries.

The following morning the whole detachment went to the embankment. Pennants were strung up by the club, drums beat, cymbals clashed. A large gate of cypress boughs, erected on instructions from regimental headquarters, arched the tracks. Signs on either side bore a couplet:

Self-reliance and going all out are steel rollers that smooth the way,  
Raise the red flag high, revolution forever, everything for the people,

On the top of the arch ran the words:

Hard bones and loyal hearts

But though the drums and cymbals rumbled and crashed, there was no sign of the train. Everyone waited restlessly. Wei pressed his ear to the rail, claiming he could thus detect sound a long way off.

"Can you hear anything?" the impatient ones demanded.

"Quiet! The worst thing you can do, the absolutely worst thing, is make noise when I'm listening," Wei, the great inventor, rebuked them sternly. "Get back a bit, all of you."

Several of the boys complied. "This method of yours," they queried anxiously, "does it really work?"

Wei gestured for them to be silent, while continuing to glue his ear to the track, his brows locked in a frown. After several tense minutes, he suddenly yelled:

"Attention. It's coming, it's coming."

All craned their necks and looked east. Five minutes, ten minutes, passed, but there wasn't the shadow of a train.

"Well, where is it?" the others demanded.

"That's odd. I heard it plainly," Wei answered, starting to run. "A big station-master was waving a small flag and shouting: 'Let her roll.' It was as clear as day."

"Oh," the others exploded. They knew they'd been fooled. "So you not only heard the train but the station-master's words and the wave of his flag as well? Grab that imp Wei and give him a drubbing."

Kuan took Hai aside and they sat down together.

"Don't you really have any objection to going to the hospital, Hai?" Kuan asked.

"Really I don't, commander."

"That's fine. The commissar ticked me off several times for not sending you for treatment. I got so busy after the political instructor left, I forgot about your ailment. You know what I'm like — not much on details. But never mind about me." Kuan's voice changed. "Have a good rest and get back into shape. There's a lot of revolutionary work waiting to be done."

"Yes, sir."

"Take a complete rest this time. Don't think about the company. And don't come back till you're fully cured. You hear?"

"Don't worry, commander. I'll concentrate on getting better. I'm taking the three volumes of Chairman Mao's works the political instructor gave me. I can be learning literacy and culture while studying them thoroughly at the same time."

"Right. Do a good job of it. It isn't enough simply to be determined to fight for the cause of communism, you also have to know how to fight. How to wage a revolution, how to struggle — Chairman Mao sums up all these things in his writings. Learn them well, and there'll be no obstacles in your revolutionary path. Learn them poorly, and you won't even qualify as an ordinary soldier."

"Yes, sir."

"When..." Kuan started to say something and stopped. After a long pause, he mumbled: "When you get to the hospital, ask about... the political instructor. Find out whether or not he'll ever be able to come back to our company."

Tseng had been gone over two months, and the whole company missed him. Some time ago they'd heard that his injuries had not yet healed. Recently, representatives of the company had gone to the hospital to visit him. They were told by the doctor in charge that Tseng would need a long period of recuperation. Even after he re-

covered he wouldn't be able to go back to army work, at least not to working in the company. His health could no longer stand the excitement and tension life in a fighting company entailed. But his comrades refused to give up hope. They were still longing for the day when the political instructor would leave the hospital and return to them.

"I nearly forgot to tell you, Hai." Kuan changed the subject, obviously to ease the atmosphere. "The company Party branch has decided to award a third class commendation to you individually, and another to your shock team collectively. They've been approved by the battalion Party committee and will be formally announced in a couple of days."

"Commander." Hai jumped to his feet. "I—"

"When the good news is released, I'll notify your family."

"No, don't, commander. Please don't."

In less than two years in the army, Hai had been commended three times. The first two times, he was delighted. He had thought himself pretty good, well on his way to becoming a "hero in battle." But now he felt uneasy. "What have I done to deserve these commendations?" he thought. "Why should the Party honour me so, time after time? I can't compare with the political instructor, the company commander, or the other cadres. All the comrades — Wei, Big Fellow, all of them — are working hard to finish the job. Everyone wishes he had another pair of arms and legs so that he could carry a bigger load for the revolution. It takes an awful lot of people and an awful lot of sweat to build a railway. I've only toted a few loads of earth and pushed a few stone blocks into place, the same as the others. Working alone, I couldn't have laid even half a rail. To say nothing of the fact that I haven't done too well as a squad leader and haven't helped Comrade Kao enough. I still have to improve a lot more, measuring myself by a Communist's standard."

He was deeply aware that meritorious service wasn't proven by the red rosette pinned on your chest, but by the load you carried on your shoulder. And the purpose of the commendation wasn't to let you stand motionless with your pretty red rosette, but to inspire you to pick up a heavy load and take it forward on the run. The people

honoured you as an encouragement, because they hoped for still better things from you.

Kuan saw that Hai had his head bowed in thought. "A locomotive is a wonderful thing, Hai," he said. "But if it leaves its cars behind and runs on alone, it doesn't do much good. The main responsibility of a Communist, a squad leader, is to take his masses with him."

Hai understood the commander's criticism. He nodded in silence.

A long train slowly approached, emitting a thick cloud of steam. The drums and cymbals went into action, the pennants danced, slogans were shouted. The men on both sides of the embankment were like a boiling sea.

The driver put his head out of the engine cab and peered carefully at the rails ahead. His intense manner infected everyone present. They all grew still, scarcely daring to breathe. As the locomotive moved towards the section of the embankment the men had built, they felt as if it was rolling over their arms. Would the embankment be able to sustain its weight?

Slowly and steadily the train passed on. Happy laughter welled up from the soldiers' hearts. The fruit of their labour was already in the service of socialism. This is a revolutionary's greatest joy. The train was loaded with large crates. Hai read the neatly printed words:

Peking Machinery Plant  
Machine Factory of Shenyang  
Shanghai Instruments Factory

Kuan couldn't take his eyes off the train. He remembered the first day at the work site, when a truck had driven off with a load of machines that bore foreign names and were missing parts, and he couldn't help smiling. He looked up at the couplet on the arch of cypress boughs, its golden letters shining in the sunlight. "This is certainly a case of turning a bad thing into a good," he murmured. "How true your words are, dear Chairman Mao. As long as we have you, we've nothing to fear. The sky won't fall."

Hai was cheering happily with the others when he noticed Kao standing beside him. He remembered what the commander had just said about being a "locomotive." It stung him like a hornet, and he at once fell silent. Kao had been running along with the others, but he had stopped half way. Hai felt that as a "locomotive" he had failed in his responsibility. Yet the Party had honoured him instead of criticizing. As a Communist, a squad leader, his work was far from the mark. How could he justify the Party's confidence in him, live up to its expectations?

The train picked up speed and hurried towards the newly built national defence plant. All the blood in Hai's body raced to the rhythm of the train. "A Communist must be a 'locomotive,'" he thought. "That's the only way we can get to the ideal of communism at an early date. I must come back from the hospital soon. My shortcomings are waiting to be corrected. My tasks are waiting to be fulfilled."

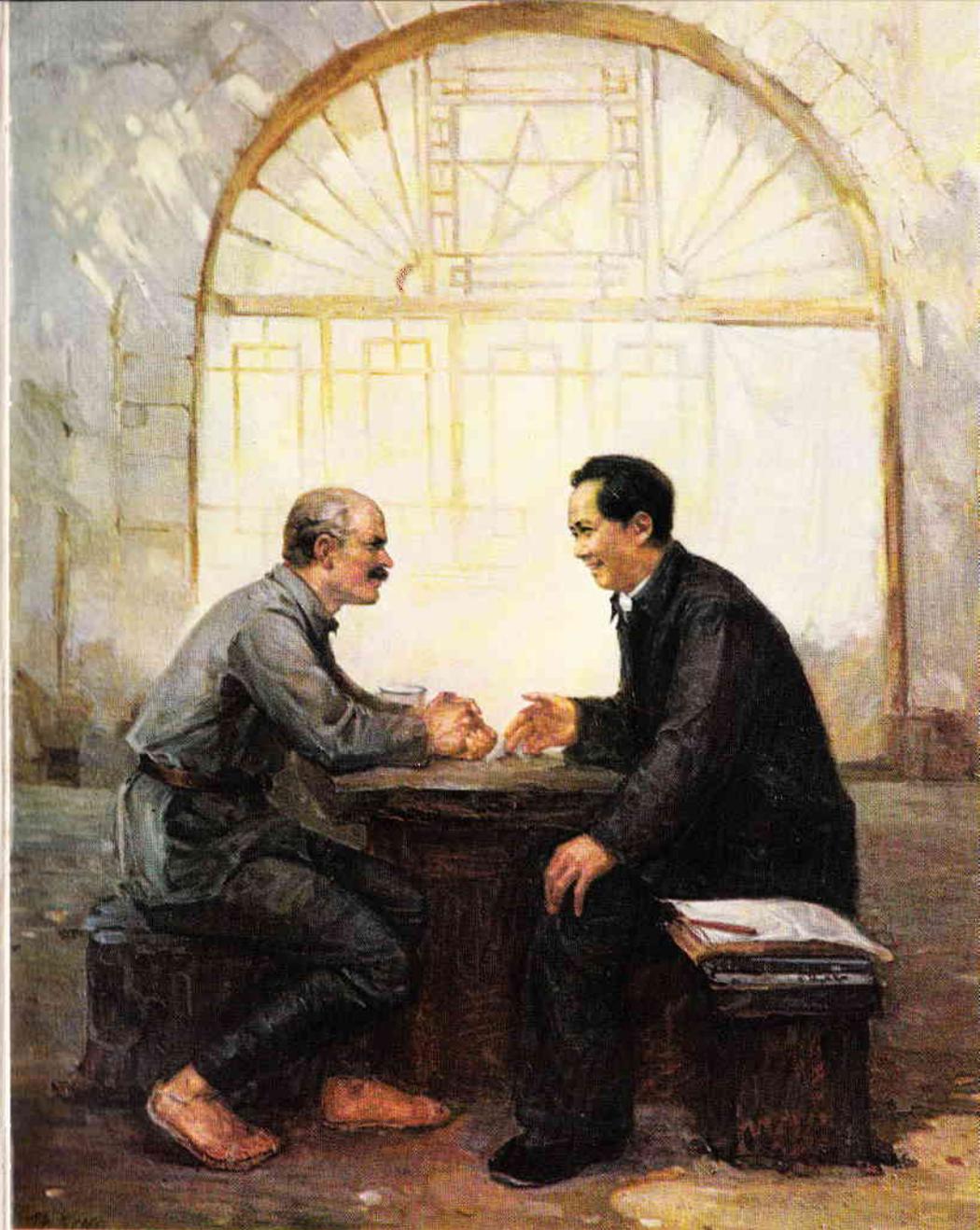
(To be continued)

*Translated by Sidney Shapiro  
Illustrated by Tung Chen-sheng*

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*Chairman Mao Chats with Dr. Norman Bethune* ▶  
(oil painting) by Chen Hsin-hsing

The artist is a young painter of 26. Dr. Bethune was a Canadian Communist and distinguished surgeon. He came to China to help the Chinese people in their War of Resistance Against Japan and arrived in Yen-an early in 1938. He served the army and the people in the Liberated Areas for nearly two years. He contracted blood poisoning while operating on wounded soldiers and died in Tanghsien, Hopei, on November 12, 1939.



## *Poetry*

The following is a selection of poems by workers whose spare-time writings, together with those by peasants and soldiers, form an important part of China's literature today. The authors are engaged in surveying, oil-drilling, iron and steel production, road-building, forestry and other fields of construction.

*Kuo Kuo-tung*

### Morning Study

First thing in the morning  
Surveyors sit by their tents  
Breathing in the fresh air  
And studying the works of Chairman Mao Tse-tung.

Each sentence is a drop of rain or dew  
Nourishing men's thoughts;  
Each work, like the spring breeze,  
Opens windows in men's minds.

Working by the riverside,  
Their hearts are stirred by the storms of Five Continents.  
Standing on the mountain peak,  
Their fingers draw a blueprint of communism.

They thrill to these words of wisdom  
Which sharpen their judgment and sight,  
Words filled with truth  
Which give them greater strength.

The sun lights up the white clouds over the summit,  
Dew sparkles on green grass;  
And the surveyors, Chairman Mao's works in hand,  
Are climbing the ladder of truth.

*Wu Shu-teh*

## We Shall Always Follow the Party

The moon follows the earth,  
The earth follows the sun,  
Oil follows our steps,  
And we shall always follow the Communist Party.

*Anonymous*

## Recalling Our Pioneering Days

Gazing out across the boundless grassland  
We smile to recall our pioneering days:  
Our food — wild herbs, sorghum and millet,  
And only flickering lanterns in our tents.  
But to strike oil  
We read and re-read the works of Chairman Mao.

Iron derricks gashed the blue sky,  
The roar of drills frightened the hares away;  
And relying on our two hands  
We made the earth yield oil.  
We went all out,  
Each man of us a hero.

The brilliant prospect ahead  
Redoubles our confidence and energy;  
We have solved all problems, overcome all hardships,  
To make oil flow endlessly.  
Let us raise a mighty cheer  
For this land of ours so fair.

*Chen Yu-lin*

## Five Youngsters Go to Their Posts

Five youngsters are off to work,  
Singing along the way to speed the dawn;  
Their singing sparkles on the ground,  
Their singing soars up through the girders,  
Their singing reaches the furnace,  
Louder even than the roar of the rolling-mill!

One sings: The furnace, opening, flashes red  
Like our fine Shanghai harbour,  
Where at dawn whole rows of cranes compete  
To hoist the red sun over the horizon.

Another sings: Viewed from the control stand the rolling-mill  
Is like a peak emerging from the clouds;  
Shafts of golden light rise through the silver mist,  
Steel billets blaze red as fire.  
It is like the sunrise we see over Mount Omei  
Where the scarlet sun seems perched on the mountain's back.

His mates' boasts of their homes  
Make the lad from Gobi chime in:  
Which of you has seen  
The bright rainbow spanning the desert?  
Sunrise is less beautiful,  
The full moon less bright.  
As I turn my wheel,  
That great arc is shimmering before my eyes.

His mates' boasts of their jobs  
Make the worker from the south cry eagerly:  
You should hear our South Sea roar in the fishing season,  
When thousands of fishing-nets are cast in the ocean,  
The giant billows are dotted with white sails,  
And across the water floats the blare of conches!  
The fine steel on my conveyor belt  
Is like millions of fish leaping into the hold of a boat.

Molten steel has the beauty and brightness  
Of the big red lanterns over Tien An Men,  
Day and night they shed their light! . . .  
But the fifth youngster's words are cut short  
By the siren's blast:  
To your posts, lads!

With swift, sure steps  
Five youngsters go to their posts.  
At the tramp of five pairs of feet,  
Iron ladders, iron railings and the iron control stand  
Are thrown into vibration.

With swift, sure steps  
Five youngsters go to their posts,  
And the power in five pairs of hands  
Sets steel wheels, steel switches, steel levers  
Working in co-ordination.

Get cracking now!  
Five youngsters at their posts,  
Their young hearts true to the Party,  
Are singing the same song in different dialects  
As they shoulder the heavy load of revolution.

*Yun Hsing*

## Cleaving Hills and Bridging Rivers All over the Land

Cleaving hills and bridging rivers all over the land,  
Wherever a road is to be built I go.

From my boyhood I have lived among road-builders,  
Child of a maintenance team;  
I learned to repair roads in my early teens,  
Taught to wield a pick by my father.

I fought with the troops in the War of Liberation,  
Repairing the railway down to the southern coast,  
Crossed the Yalu River in the War to Resist U. S. Aggression  
and Aid Korea,  
Kept communications open through every air-raid.

My father fell in Korea,  
And these were his parting words:  
Keep that pickaxe over your shoulder,  
It will come in handy to build up our country.

Cleaving hills and bridging rivers all over the land,  
I have tramped the length and breadth of our great country.

Wrapped in clouds and mist are the Chinling and Pa Mountains,  
Many the sandstorms over the northwest plateau,  
Bitter the cold on the icy Hsinganling Ranges,  
Scorching the sun in south China.

We go where no roads are,  
Pitch camp where no man dwells,  
Braving the wind and dew in the wilderness,  
Climbing sheer cliffs on ropes.

Full thirty thousand *li* I have battled my way,  
With my two hands I have cut through countless gorges,  
Building railways for my country,  
Planting flowers of revolution far and wide.

Cleaving hills and bridging rivers all over the land,  
I have feet with soles like iron.

As soon as one highway is built,  
Before we have time to mop our sweating faces,  
Whistles urge us on  
To break camp and set off again.

By the eastern sea we welcome the rising sun,  
On Tienshan's snowy heights bid farewell to the evening clouds,  
In the heart of dense forests withstand the frost and wind,  
On the rolling grasslands drive through whirling sand.

We bathe our feet in the ten thousand *li* of the Yangtse,  
And wash our picks in the turbulent Yellow River;  
Countless silver bands are thrown over this sacred land  
As the railway, dragon of iron, speeds towards the distant  
horizon.

Cleaving hills and bridging rivers all over the land,  
I glory in hardships and count the road my home.

A woman of the north makes clothes for me,  
Sinkiang girls give me Hami melons;  
I have stayed in the felt yurts of Mongolian herdsmen,  
And drunk the buttered tea of grey-haired Tibetans.

Old herb-gatherers have guided me on my way,  
Olunchun hunters have led me through dense forests;  
Chuang brothers with firewood on their backs have climbed the  
mountains with me,  
Miao girls have come down from the hills to give me sweet  
cassia.

I remember the smiling faces of the children,  
The words spoken by old people from their hearts....  
Because I have gone through hardships for the people,  
They treat me as one of their own.

Cleaving hills and bridging rivers all over the land,  
I go where conditions are hardest;  
The country is my paper, a pick my pen,  
Shifting mountains and filling in valleys I paint a picture.

Wind from the south,  
Swallows flying north,  
Tell Chairman Mao for me:  
He has only to give the word  
And I will gladly go to the ends of the earth,  
Crossing the Four Seas and never wearying.

*Liu Teh-chang*

## The Girl Taking Lunch to the Lumbermen

Her shadow flits among green trees,  
Her songs cascade through the mist;  
Creak, creak, goes her carrying-pole as on she sings....  
Who is she? The girl taking lunch to the lumbermen.

The slender pole across her shoulder quivers  
Like the wings of a wild swan in flight,  
And she crosses boulders and gullies  
With a step both firm and light.

The trackless forest holds no fears for her,  
She climbs cliffs high and sheer;  
For she has given her whole heart to her task,  
This mountainside, these streams, rest on her shoulders.

Listen, in the lumbermen's hut  
She is singing, *We Are Revolutionary Youth*.  
Look, under the towering pine  
She is telling the men  
About *The Foolish Old Men Who Removed Mountains*.\*

Her shadow flits among green trees,  
Her songs cascade through the mist.  
Here she is! The lumbermen welcome her  
With the red pines they have felled and a bunch of azaleas.

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\**The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains* was Chairman Mao Tse-tung's concluding speech at the Seventh National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party held in 1945. In this speech Chairman Mao told an ancient Chinese fable about the Foolish Old Man who determined to remove the two high mountains blocking the entrance to his house and finally succeeded. Chairman Mao used this fable to urge the people to be resolute, unafraid of sacrifices and ready to overcome all difficulties in order to raze the two mountains of imperialism and feudalism which lay like a dead weight on the Chinese people, and to win victory in the revolution.

## Even Planes Fear the Militia

— Some Impressions of Vietnam

In July of 1965 some other Chinese comrades and I started a tour of north Vietnam. It lasted 110 days and covered four thousand kilometres. At the time of our arrival the north Vietnamese had already shot down more than 300 U.S. planes; when we left, the score was well over seven hundred. And the record of their destruction speeds upward like a whistling arrow leaping from a hero's bow in days of yore. What a marvellous land! Practically every moment of our journey was steeped in an atmosphere of victory. We shared the joys of battle of the courageous Vietnamese anti-aircraft gunners and the wonderful Vietnamese militia, and their triumphs.

All through our journey we toured at a hurried pace viewing things like one looking at the flowers while passing on horseback. Nevertheless, I want to say that we have seen a real flower,

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Wei Wei, poet and essayist, was born in 1920.

a revolutionary flower, a red flower of the people's war blooming in full glory. How brilliant and beautiful it looks in the midst of battle smoke.

All over north Vietnam a network of flame stretches from coast line to sky, knit by anti-aircraft guns and the rifles and machine-guns of all the people and their militia. Into it the American planes plunge, like moths drawn to the flame. Flying murderers who set out after a casual cup of coffee to drop bombs on peoples' homes are punished, one after another. Their Thunderbirds, their Vampires, their planes whose shrieks are meant to terrify kept bursting into flames and falling to the earth. How magnificent is the concept of the people's war once it blossoms. It blooms brilliantly in the guerrilla warfare in south Vietnam and shines with majesty in the anti-aircraft battles in the north.

How many remarkable militiamen we met on our journey! Every time I saw those militiamen with sweat streaming down their back, feet muddy or those bright, brave militia women in conical straw hats, heavy cartridge belts round their waists, a deep indescribable love surged out towards them. I really felt that they were the most splendid figures in the genre paintings of our times. It is precisely these heroes with mud on their feet and these heroines in straw hats who are deciding the fate of Vietnam, not the American marauders with their fancy weapons. For the feat of giving the American flying murderers such a good lesson, they should range high on the honour roll of the world revolution.

We saw the first remnants of an American plane shot down by the militia in a pretty little village between wooded hills and the sea, in the province of Thanh Hoa. As we drove up early one morning through a misty rain, past groves of banana and palm trees, local cadres were waiting to greet us. They took us to the backyard of a house in the western part of the village, where lay what was left of an AD5. It had ploughed nose-first into the earth only a few yards from the house. The part that was visible above the ground had been scorched by flames and looked like a gutted headless fish. Its wings had snapped off at the moment of impact and been flung to

a palm grove a good distance away. Most of the wing stumps and the smashed engine had been removed piecemeal by people for souvenirs. We were told the plane had made a great crash when it landed, and smoke had risen more than a hundred yards into the air.

Villagers came flocking when they heard that Chinese comrades had arrived — old folk leaning on staffs, women with babies strapped to their backs, militiamen and militia women, bearing rifles, leather cartridge cases on their belts, and dozens of noisy children. In a moment the small yard was jammed. Everyone talked at once, all eager to tell us how the plane had been shot down. Their emotional intensity reminded me of China's liberated areas in the old days.

I put one foot on the wrecked engine and asked: "What happened to the flying murderers? Did you catch any of them?"

"They were flattened to jelly in the crash," a big thirty-year-old man who was leader of the militia platoon replied with a laugh. "We dug for two days, but all we could find was three heads and seven legs."

"How many of them were in the plane, after all?"

"Five, according to enemy reports. But we couldn't piece together that many."

Everyone laughed. The platoon leader pointed at a boy of about twenty-two.

"Let him tell you about it. He's called Le Ngoc Lan. He was firing the machine-gun that day."

Le was a pleasant, likeable lad, not very tall. His bare feet were spattered with mud. Rather awkwardly, he said:

"I was working in the fields that morning when the alarm sounded. I jumped into the emplacement and waited. Pretty soon I saw the plane flying north along the shore at a height of about two hundred yards. I met it with five three-round bursts. Flames spurted from under its wings. That . . . that's how it happened."

The platoon leader stared at him reprovingly. "Can't you give any more details, put any more life into it? These Chinese comrades have come all this way —"

"That's all there was to it," the boy replied, blushing. He gave us an apologetic smile.

A Vietnamese comrade who was accompanying us laughed. "You see, that's how our people are. They shoot down planes without much trouble, but if you ask them to talk about it, they have a terrible time."

Since the boy was obviously too embarrassed to go on, the platoon leader gave us a slightly fuller account. He said originally there had been four American planes that day. They were circling over the sea, searching for a pilot who had been shot down the day before. They had to fly very low because the sky was overcast and there was mist on the ground. Then one of them left the others and flew north along the coast. It was greeted by militia fire at every village it passed, and was already a bit wobbly by the time it reached this village. After it was hit by the boy's machine-gun fire, it climbed about fifty yards into some clouds. When it reappeared, flames were licking beneath its wings. Again it rolled up into a climb, apparently trying to make for the sea. But the blaze spread rapidly and the plane plunged to the earth. Later investigation revealed that its wings were riddled with rifle bullets. Thus, not only did the missing pilot remain missing, but five more flying butchers were sent to join him!

I was quite stimulated on hearing this account. "What do you think, uncle," I asked a silvery-haired old man, who was standing in the crowd. "Who are tougher — the imperialists or the people?"

The old man — later I learned he was a seventy-six-year-old poor peasant — came a few paces closer, leaning shakily on his staff.

"If you ask me," he said, "I think the people are tougher. Those Yankees — they squeal like a stuck pig when they get the tiniest bit of a scratch. I'm sure we can drive them out."

There was a low murmur of laughter in the crowd.

I told the old man I agreed with him absolutely. He was very pleased. He tottered around on his staff, shouting at the noisy kids that they were disturbing the Chinese guests. But they paid no attention and went right on with their games.

Everyone livened up at the mention of the Yankees. A provincial militia cadre said that two days ago eighteen American planes had tried to bomb the Ham Rong Bridge. Three of them

had been shot down, but the pilot of one had managed to get his 'chute open. Cheering villagers poured out of their air-raid shelters, took up sickles and clubs, and rushed to meet the descending pilot.

A gust of wind, however, blew him into the river. Everyone immediately got into small boats and went after him, in spite of the fact that enemy planes were still wheeling overhead. Straight as an arrow, the boats of the farming co-op flew to the centre of the river. When they were about fifty yards away from the pilot, he raised both hands high above his head. He was so fat, they were afraid he'd swamp the boat if they tried to lift him on board. Since he was wearing an inflated life-belt, they just tied a rope to him and hauled him ashore.

There, the militiamen, thinking they'd make too big a target for the enemy planes if they all walked together, told the pilot to go first. He was afraid they wanted to shoot him, and began groaning and gesticulating to show that he couldn't walk because his leg was hurt. It was a tense situation and the militia had no way of explaining. The only thing they could do was carry him. Two of them took his arms, two his legs. But he was too heavy. Finally, two other men put a board under his middle, and in this manner, like a dead hog, he was brought back to the village.

The militiamen had assumed that his leg was badly wounded. But when they examined it, it was only a trifle red and swollen. The skin wasn't even broken.

At this point in his story, the provincial militia cadre said with a laugh: "They look pretty impressive when they're up there in those bombers. But when you get them down here they tremble and crawl like worms. That pilot begged for mercy when our militiamen brought him to provincial headquarters. We asked him what he thought of our ground fire. He wrapped his arms around his head and shivered. A lieutenant-colonel he was, too!..."

Again the villagers burst into laughter.

"It takes a while for a village to get into the swing of shooting down planes," the big platoon leader said. "When our militia set up its first machine-gun in this village, some of the old folks said we were 'only stirring up trouble.' Even a few of our militiamen

weren't entirely convinced that we could bring down enemy planes with rifle and machine-gun fire. But as soon as we shot down the first, the whole atmosphere changed. Production increased. People went to work in the fields in the middle of the night. We used to spend a month on the rice harvest. Last time we did it in twelve days. Our militia is wild about potting enemy planes. They strain their eyes, watching for them."

This village is only one of thousands like it in north Vietnam, and it's not considered particularly outstanding. We visited another village, in Nghe An Province, whose militia had shot down four American planes without a casualty of their own. Cars and trucks rolled steadily over the bridge they were responsible for guarding.

We arrived there in the middle of the night. In the bright moonlight we saw a large network of communications trenches. They made the little village, lying amid banana groves and rice paddies, look quite imposing.

The several hamlets comprising the village were near the highway. Not far ahead of us was the bridge — a span about ten yards long. The enemy, in their attempt to paralyze traffic, were bombing all bridges, even those only a few yards in length, often dropping dozens of missiles on a single target. At this small wooden bridge the enemy had hurled over a hundred and fifty bombs. But it stood intact, except for a plank knocked off by a geyser of water which had shot up after one of the bomb-bursts. The American marauders had given four planes for that one plank. I felt the greatest respect for the village militia here.

The following morning in a peasant's home on the edge of the village I met the secretary of the village Party committee and the leader of the village militia. The militia commander told how the four enemy planes were felled. One had come during a rainstorm to bomb the small bridge. Special mention, at this point, was made of a twenty-three-year-old girl called Dang Thi Thanh.

A member of the militia, she was the first girl in the village to become a machine-gunner. She was also an assistant platoon leader in the militia, assistant head of the farm production team, and an instructor of the local Young Pioneers. Firing with machine-gun

or rifle, she had participated in every one of the thirty-nine clashes in which the village militia took part. In the tenses periods, though her home was only eight hundred yards away, she ate and slept in her battle position.

"And do you know who her father is?" the militia commander asked with a smile. "It's our Party secretary here."

I shook hands warmly with the tall comrade and congratulated him on having such a fine daughter. He looked about fifty.

"His son is also an assistant platoon leader," the commander added. "He has another daughter who's just joined a Youth Shock Brigade. She's gone off to work far from home."

A faint smile appeared on the father's weather-beaten face.

Four or five high-spirited boys and girls in their early twenties entered, and the commander said, pointing at a slim, pretty girl: "This is Dang Thi Thanh. Let her speak for herself."

Dang was wearing a close-fitting blue tunic and wide-legged black trousers. Long black hair cascaded down her back.

"What's there to talk about?" she asked with a smile, as she sat down on a bench.

"Tell me about your everyday life," I suggested.

"I got married a few years ago, and I'm much busier now than I was at home," she laughed. "We've a lot of mouths to feed in my husband's family and only a few of us who can work in the fields. My father-in-law is also a Party secretary. The family depends mainly on me."

"What does your husband do?" I asked.

"He used to be a student in Hanoi University," the militia leader interjected, "but now he's in our air force."

I laughed. "You two are a perfect pair," I said to her. "He's up in the air, destroying enemy planes, while you're knocking them down from the ground. Besides being a good machine-gunner, you support the whole family as well. Quite a girl."

Dang smiled in some embarrassment. "At first we girls used rifles," she said. "We get up at three in the morning to plough the fields, you know, so as to be back by daybreak. I thought that was a good time to learn the machine-gun. I asked the platoon leader

to teach me, but he was too busy, so I began taking one apart myself. I often couldn't put it together again. It used to make me sweat, seeing all those bits and pieces."

Just then, several enemy jets howled into the sky above us. The kids who had been watching us from the doorway, including one bare-bottomed toddler who had been sitting on the threshold smiling at us amiably, were quickly shooed into an air-raid shelter by the Party secretary.

The crump of heavy explosives followed almost immediately, nearby.

"After the bridge again," said the Party secretary, with a casual wave of his hand. "Go on with what you've been saying."

"The enemy started bombing the north on August fifth, 1964," Dang continued. "They began 'escalating' in April of '65, and escalated right to our door. Every day they bombed, wrecking hundreds of villages. Refugees kept pouring past here — women with babies on their backs, children supporting old folks, everyone loaded with whatever they could salvage. It made me hate the American imperialists. What right have they to ruin our lives?" She paused. "As you see, we don't fire at enemy planes the moment they appear. We wait till they fly low. We try to make every shot a hit, to bring them down with the first volley."

Sitting around with us were several other outstanding members of the village militia. Army veteran Phan Dinh Luu, who was in charge of training; Phan Lap, twenty-four-year-old platoon leader; "Dark-as-pitch Can," so called because of his swarthy complexion and his fondness for black tunics and trousers; and Tran Thi Kim Trinh, an eighteen-year-old girl who had shown remarkable courage while rescuing people from a fire.

Each told me his or her own story. But Nguyen Uyen — secretary of the village Youth League branch, leader of the militia platoon, and machine-gunner — didn't open his mouth. He looked very intelligent, with his large eyes and prominent cheek bones. Nguyen was known as "The Silent Young Man."

"Why were you given that nickname?" I asked.

"I don't like to talk much," he smiled.

"That's all right for other times," I said. "But today you must tell me about yourself."

"I'd rather tell you why we hate the enemy. They smash with their bombs things we've built with sweat and blood." He gazed out through the doorway. We could hear the thunderous drone of the American planes. "My family used to be hired-hands. We're only poor peasants now, but we're much better off than before. The Party and the revolution have brought light into our lives. But now, just as we've begun to have a little happiness, the enemy come and destroy, wreck. I hate them."

He was speaking for all the people of north Vietnam. I could understand the way he felt, for the Chinese people had felt that way too. It was the special hatred of a man who's just put a brimming bowl to his lips only to have it knocked aside by the hand of another. Because of this hatred, and our love of the people of Korea, we Chinese once plunged into a very arduous war, in which, together with the Korean people, we destroyed hundreds of thousands of the enemy. Today, this same feeling, this especially intense hatred, is burning throughout Vietnam, north and south, flinging into the sky a network of flames which was incinerating enemy planes by the flight.

In the afternoon, a group of militiamen took us to see their positions. We walked along a narrow raised path through rice paddies extending like limitless green lakes on either side. I was amazed that people constantly under attack could tend their fields so well.

On a clearing before a small grove were five machine-gun emplacements. Girl and boy militia were on duty beside the weapons. One gun crew consisted of two seventeen-year-old girls. They had the ruddy complexions and bright eyes that gales, sea and hot sunlight bring. Whether in conical straw hats or steel army helmets, all the militia girls looked boldly courageous.

The machine-gunners had made high tripods of bamboo segments which could be quickly dismantled and set up elsewhere. They demonstrated this for me, moving with swift efficiency. It was a clever idea. The muzzles of the guns were pointed skywards in the direction from which enemy planes were expected.

Four planes had been shot down from this very position. I gazed for a long time at these peasant boys and girls — tillers of the field, fuel cutters, drawers of water. In north Vietnam's militia, I thought, there are many like Nguyen Uyen and Dang Thi Thanh. And in these hills and green fields, many are the gun muzzles rising angrily into the blue sky. All over the north, guns primed with hatred lie ready in the tall grass, waiting for every enemy plane that takes off from the ports of south Vietnam, from the military bases in Thailand, from the aircraft carriers on the sea.

When they fly high they are met by the anti-aircraft bursts they fear so much, when they fly low withering barrages of rifle and machine-gun fire greet them. A captured American major put it this way: "We can't hit our targets from high altitudes, and we're scared to death of your militia's rifles when we come in low."

So there you have it. A people's militia in a people's war has always been a formidable threat to enemy ground forces. Today it thrusts its might into the very heavens.

*Translated by Sidney Shapiro*

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*On Patrol* (traditional painting) ►  
by Wei Tzu-hsi  
Wei Tzu-hsi, born in 1915, works at  
the Kiangsu Studio of Traditional  
Painting.



*Yu Lu-yuan*

## The Revolutionary Ballet “The White-Haired Girl”

During the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1937-1945), among the villagers of western Hopei there circulated a story about a “white-haired goddess,” which later became the embryo plot of a modern revolutionary opera. This opera describes a poor peasant, Yang Pai-lao, who toils hard the whole year round but cannot pay the rent and high interest exacted by the despotic landlord Huang Shih-jen and is forced to give the Huang family his daughter Hsi-erh in payment of a part of his debt. Unable to see any way out, Yang Pai-lao takes poison, and Hsi-erh is dragged off by force. Her betrothed, Ta-chun, has no choice but to run away. Hsi-erh is cruelly treated in the Huang family and humiliated by Huang Shih-jen, who finally decides to sell her to a brothel. She manages to run away and lives in the wild mountains for many years. This hard life turns her hair white, and she never ceases to thirst for revenge. At last the Eighth Route Army led by the Communist Party comes to the village. Ta-chun, who has joined the people’s forces, helps to liberate his home and rescues Hsi-erh. Finally the vicious landlord is executed and Hsi-erh changes back from “a ghost” into “a human being” in the new society. This opera *The White-Haired Girl*, produced in 1945, reflected the class struggle during the democratic revolution and was enthusiastically acclaimed by the people of the liberated area at that time. It was one of the major achievements in revolutionary literature and art after the

publication in 1942 of Chairman Mao Tse-tung's *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*.

This revolutionary ballet *The White-Haired Girl*, in eight scenes with a prologue and an epilogue, was adapted from the opera by the Shanghai Dance School and marks another great achievement, after *The Red Detachment of Women*, in the revolutionizing of the ballet. Its profound revolutionary content, strong spirit of the age and new artistic style which the people love to see and hear, have won warm praise from workers, peasants and soldiers. The following is an account of the creation of this ballet.

The Shanghai Dance School has only six years' history and lacks experience as well as professional choreographers and directors; but holding high the red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought, its staff and students have had the courage to create something new and original which is socialist and proletarian, the courage to revolutionize the classical ballet form which has been dubbed the "pinnacle" of art. It took them little more than a year to produce this revolutionary ballet which has attained a relatively high level both in ideology and artistic form. This has provided further experience for making the ballet a revolutionary, national and popular art form in China. This is a victory in giving prominence to politics, a victory for Mao Tse-tung's thought, and an achievement which redounds to the credit of the teachers and pupils of the Shanghai Dance School who by revolutionizing themselves ideologically and artistically have resolutely pursued the course of making literature and art serve the workers, peasants and soldiers.

The dance school learned much from the East China Festival of Modern Drama on Contemporary Themes held in Shanghai from the end of 1963 to the beginning of 1964; and a powerful impetus to revolutionizing its ideology was provided by the Festival of Peking Opera on Contemporary Themes held in Peking in 1964, with fine exemplary operas like *The Red Lantern* and *Shachiapang*, which heralded a nation-wide upsurge of revolutionary dramas on modern themes. During the Spring Festival of 1964 its dancers went to perform in villages and units of the armed forces, were struck by their enthusiastic response to the revolutionary operas on contemporary themes,

and very much stirred by the spare-time worker, peasant, soldier artists' revolutionary keenness to produce works of this kind. This raised a crucial problem in their minds: Whom should the ballet serve? Should it serve the workers, peasants and soldiers who constitute the great majority of our people; should it serve the socialist economic base and proletarian politics? Or should it serve the needs of the landlord and bourgeois classes and their followers and remnants, old and young? To solve this problem, the Party branch of the dance school organized a study of Chairman Mao's *Talks at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*. In this, Chairman Mao stated explicitly: "This question of 'for whom?' is fundamental; it is a question of principle." Revolutionary literature and art should serve the workers, peasants and soldiers who are the great majority, and we should ensure that they "fit well into the whole revolutionary machine as a component part, that they operate as powerful weapons for uniting and educating the people and for attacking and destroying the enemy." Comparing their own thought, educational methods and performances with Mao Tse-tung's thought, the staff and students of the school realized how serious the situation was. Mao Tse-tung's thought enabled them to see clearly. Formerly some of them had imagined that to serve the workers, peasants and soldiers meant giving them more performances of *Swan Lake*; as to the content of their art and whether or not the audience wanted it, they felt this was not their business; and if workers, peasants and soldiers could not appreciate ballet, that was because their level was too low. Now it dawned on them that this attitude amounted to a refusal to serve the workers, peasants and soldiers. Some students said with feeling: "When we produce classical works of art propagating bourgeois individualism and bourgeois humanism, instead of keeping the workers, peasants and soldiers in mind we are sabotaging socialism through art." But how to make the ballet serve the workers, peasants and soldiers? They found the answer eventually in the works of Chairman Mao.

The appearance of the ballet *The White-Haired Girl* proves the truth that once the people are armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought, a power-

ful material force will be produced. In the period of little more than a year from 1964 to the spring of 1965, there was no change in the objective conditions of the Shanghai Dance School, they still had no professional choreographers or directors, nothing but a handful of young teachers and a few dozen pupils; but by studying the works of Chairman Mao they all underwent a profound ideological transformation. They made up their minds to change the classical ballet into a modern art form which could serve the people. And they succeeded beyond their expectations. The young teachers who had no experience of choreography succeeded in producing this revolutionary ballet; the composers who had never previously worked on a ballet now composed music and dance tunes with a strong revolutionary impact and a vivid national style; and the pupils aged twenty or less mastered difficult new movements one after another, and gave superb representations of the characters. This fully demonstrates that the revolutionizing of the ballet depends mainly on politics, on Mao Tse-tung's thought, on the people's revolutionary spirit. Proletarian politics and Mao Tse-tung's thought bring the artists' initiative into full play and enable them to improve their technique.

Since this ballet was adapted from an opera, a great deal of preliminary hard work had to go into understanding it from a new point of view and re-creating it. This is not only because the ballet and the opera are two different art forms but — and this is more important — because new and higher demands are made of our artists as our age has made great strides ahead. When they first began work on a short ballet on this theme, the leadership pointed out that when dealing with class relationships in the villages during the period of the democratic revolution they must lay stress on class exploitation, class oppression, class revolt and class struggle in accordance with the spirit of our socialist age, giving a true representation of the poor and lower-middle peasants. This directive became the guiding rule of the choreographers. However, to apply this guiding rule to their work involved a process of exploration in art, and it was essential for them to raise the level of their ideological under-

standing. The choreographers under the Party leadership studied Chairman Mao's works on classes, class contradictions and class struggle, and used his thought to analyze the subject and the main theme, thereby gaining a better understanding of the relationship between the poor peasants Yang Pai-lao, Hsi-erh and Ta-chun and the traitor and despotic landlord Huang Shih-jen. They saw that it was the relationship of two opposing classes in mortal combat. The experience of Hsi-erh, Ta-chun and the rest truly reflected the life and fate of hundreds of millions of peasants in the old China. Wherever there is oppression, there will be revolt and struggle. Hsi-erh's revolt and Ta-chun's joining the Eighth Route Army reflect the strong aspirations of the poor peasants who were in revolt against oppression and seeking liberation. The path they trod was the historical path which China's peasants travelled. With this initial understanding, the choreographers held firm to the red line of class opposition and class struggle in their treatment of the plot and the relationship between different characters, attaching much less importance to the love between Hsi-erh and Ta-chun, and giving predominance and pride of place to the struggle against exploitation and oppression.

At the same time, they realized that in order to give a true picture of the class struggle in the countryside during the period of the democratic revolution they must emphasize armed struggle. At first, in the fifth scene, for instance, the close relationship between the armed forces and the people was brought out through a scene of general rejoicing; but in spite of the sense of jubilation conveyed, this lacked a clear, well-defined content. This has now been changed to show the Eighth Route Army led by the Chinese Communist Party entering the village and mobilizing and arming the masses to struggle against the landlord. And whereas at first the ballet ended with the execution of Huang Shih-jen and the villagers' celebration of their liberation, an epilogue has now been added in which Hsi-erh joins the army, determined to carry the revolution through to the end. In this way the main theme of the ballet is brought out more vividly.

Since the class struggle and the armed struggle cannot be separated from the leadership of the Party, the choreographers and directors of this ballet show the role of the Party through such characters as the poor peasant Uncle Chao who is an underground Party member, as well as soldiers of the Eighth Route Army; and after Hsi-erh's rescue and victory in the struggle, the masses' infinite gratitude to our Party and love for our great leader Chairman Mao are expressed in the song:

Mao Tse-tung is the sun,  
The sun is the Communist Party.

These two lines express the heart-felt feelings of our broad masses of peasants. By this means the whole ballet has become a paean to the class revolt and armed revolution of the peasant masses, a paean to the Party and Chairman Mao, further deepening its significance and raising the level of the central theme.

The main key to giving a correct picture of the class revolt and armed struggle is by creating authentic images of characters such as Yang Pai-lao, Hsi-erh, Ta-chun and Uncle Chao, and using them to show the rebellious and revolutionary nature of the poor peasants. We can see that the choreographers and directors of this ballet made great efforts to treat these poor-peasant characters in a new way.

Yang Pai-lao is depicted as an old poor peasant filled with the spirit of revolt. In the opera, driven to desperation, he takes his own life by drinking lye; but in the ballet, when the landlord comes to his house to dun him and seize Hsi-erh, he fights back and is beaten to death. Such a death is more positive, full of fighting spirit.

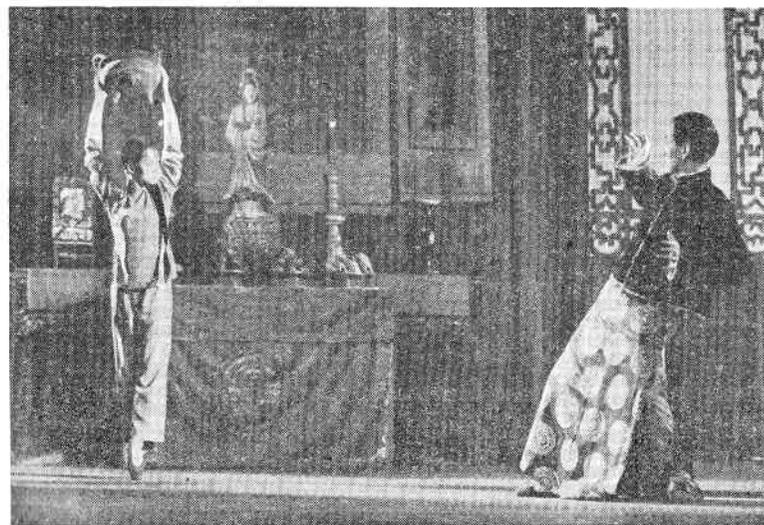
Hsi-erh's character, too, is improved on in the ballet. In face of the class enemy she shows herself undaunted by force, with the courage to fight resolutely to the end. Several key episodes vividly portray the growth and development of her character. Her father's murder and her own abduction arouse strong class hatred in her and she determines to take revenge; in the Huang family she suffers the most cruel treatment but resists the landlord's attempt to rape her, and this further strengthens her determination to revolt; she

resolves to escape from the landlord's house and live on to take revenge. Living an inhuman life in the wild mountains and forests, battling with the elements, intensifies the anger and hatred in her heart and adds to her resolution; thus in the sixth scene in the Temple of the Goddess, when she meets her mortal enemy Huang Shih-jen and his stooge Mu Jen-chih, who are trying to run away from the wrath of the people, all her pent-up anger bursts out like an erupting volcano. These incidents build up a convincing image of this resolute, unyielding daughter of a poor peasant.

The treatment of Uncle Chao and Ta-chun is also new in the ballet. The former is depicted as a calm, experienced underground Party member, the latter as a young poor peasant who develops into a staunch cadre of the Eighth Route Army.

Chairman Mao pointed out that in the Chinese countryside during the period of the democratic revolution, the poor peasants were always the main force of the revolution, "the vanguard of the revolution," the deadly opponents of the despotic landlords and evil local gentry, whose strongholds they did not hesitate to attack. Based

Maltreated as a slave in the landlord's house, Hsi-erh fights fearlessly against her tormentors



on this analysis of Chairman Mao's teachings, the ballet has thrown its characters into more striking relief, making them more truthful and more typical. The rebellious spirit of Hsi-erh and Yang Pai-lao is entirely true to life, representing the essence and main trend of that period; and it was indeed necessary to elevate Hsi-erh, Ta-chun, Yang Pai-lao and Uncle Chao to the position of class representatives of China's poor peasants and, through them, to acclaim the revolutionary spirit of the labouring people, to stir the hearts of millions and arouse their fighting spirit. On the basis of this understanding, the dance school revised the original story of the opera, improved the dances and music and strengthened Hsi-erh's character to enable her to overcome her class enemy both morally and in spirit, thus making this heroine's image more sublime.

We are bound to encounter many contradictions and difficulties when we try to use a foreign classical art form like the ballet to reflect the life and struggle of the workers, peasants and soldiers of China to serve our socialist revolution and socialist construction, and to make the ballet acceptable and understandable to the masses. One of the most fundamental contradictions is that between the old art form and the new revolutionary content.

In order to solve this problem, to integrate form and content, the makers of this ballet took as their starting point the reality of the revolution and the requirements of the ideological content and characters, using and remoulding the old art form to create a new form of revolutionary ballet.

Though the classical ballet has certain techniques and modes of expression which can be utilized, its form, conventions and techniques, even its most graceful and charming dance movements, are deeply imprinted with the thoughts and feelings of the Western bourgeois way of life. If we use these without any modification to depict the modern revolutionary life of the Chinese labouring masses, we are bound to distort it and to vilify the image of our workers, peasants and soldiers. So in order to make use of them we must first change them, breaking old conventions to establish something new; only so can there be development and innovation. In other

words, we must break through the rigid art forms of the classical ballet and refuse to be fettered by its restrictions and conventions. Thus the Shanghai Dance School, starting from the requirements of the characters and the need to express real life, adhered to the principle of making full use wherever possible of the forms, expressions and techniques of classical ballet, but not using unsuitable ones simply for the sake of preserving traditional techniques. When they could not find adequate expressions and forms in the ballet, they borrowed from our folk dances and traditional opera. But whether using forms from the ballet or from other dances, instead of taking them over unchanged they submitted them to a process of selection, modification and re-organization.

The life and struggle of the masses are the only source of artistic creation. The ballets of the past are affluents from this source, not the source itself, and can therefore only be used as reference material when we make our revolutionary ballets. One important experience gained by the dance school in solving the contradiction between the old form and the new content was this: A thorough understanding of life must precede any consideration of the form or improvement of the dancing movements. Thus they sought for the most suitable forms of expression on the basis of a full understanding of the content and the characters' thoughts and feelings which they wanted to convey. For example, in the Temple of the Goddess when a flash of lightning shows the White-haired Girl her mortal enemy Huang Shih-jen, her immediate reaction is:

At the sight of my enemy flames surge in my heart...

I want to tear him to pieces.

In this specific situation, how should she behave? The longing to pursue and beat her enemy makes her forget everything else. The choreographers, realizing this, made a dance showing her pursuit of Huang Shih-jen which forcefully expresses Hsi-erh's burning class hatred and fearless fighting spirit. Though the raw material of this dance comes from the ballet form, as far as its basic meaning is concerned it is real life transmuted by art into a dance.

When we persist in starting from the revolutionary political content, from life itself, to reform the art of ballet, is there any danger of destroying its distinctive features? If by distinctive features we mean such things as "graceful, elegant gestures" and "the natural charm of the performer," they definitely will be destroyed. For the failure to do this would make it utterly impossible to reflect the life and struggle of the workers, peasants and soldiers and their thoughts and feelings, to create a new style of revolutionary ballet. But if by distinctive features we mean the basic form and techniques of the ballet, then by depicting the revolutionary new life and creating heroic images of workers, peasants and soldiers these can be translated into something higher and enriched and further developed to take on new life. The experience of producing this ballet shows that, owing to the rich content of the revolutionary life depicted, full use can be made of such good features of the ballet as its powerful sweeping movements, its leaps and bounds, as well as such basic forms as the solo, *pas de deux* and ensemble dancing of the *corps de ballet*, which include many very difficult technical movements. All these can be brought into play provided they are reformed and developed on the basis of the live content. At the same time we must use certain good features of traditional folk dances, Chinese operas and acrobatics to make up what is lacking in the ballet form. The makers of this ballet have adapted rich movements, techniques and modes of expression from our operatic and dancing arts, and amalgamated them into the ballet. Among those borrowed from our operatic dances are the way of coming on stage, sweeping movements of the sleeves, rolling on the floor, the splits, the swordsman's stance, somersaults etc., which have been integrated with the ballet form. In this combination, the general ballet features are still preserved and the ballet remains the main form, with raw material from traditional and folk dances incorporated in it.

When we produce a revolutionary ballet, we must see that it is understood and liked by the workers, peasants and soldiers. To achieve this involves not only the problem of what content to express, but also the problem of the form of expression most pleasing to the workers, peasants and soldiers. To enable the audience to under-

stand this ballet, the dance school made many experiments regarding both content and form. In addition to observing the principle that the form must fit the content, they did all in their power to heighten the dramatic effect of the dancing, to combine the use of the concrete and the abstract on the stage, and to make the plot consistent and clear. A most important innovation, hitherto unheard of, was the bold introduction of singing. The twenty songs by way of accompaniment have created a new form of ballet which combines singing with dancing. The addition of songs integrating the visual images and the music serves to bring out the main theme and the thoughts and feelings of the characters; it heightens the dramatic atmosphere, helps the audience to understand the story and bridges the gap between them and the ballet, enabling the audience to enter into the feelings of the positive characters on the stage while inspiring the performers to give of their best and dance with even more feeling. Thus in the seventh scene, when Hsi-erh is rescued by Ta-chun and some villagers and the red sun shines into the cave, powerful choral singing full of emotion is heard:

The sun has risen to shine far and wide....  
Chairman Mao is the sun,  
The sun is the Communist Party.

This song expresses the infinite gratitude of Hsi-erh and the others and their love for Chairman Mao, conveying a strong emotion which dancing alone cannot easily put across. At this moment, the singing and the dancing fuse in one complete, powerfully moving artistic whole.

The addition of singing is something quite new in ballet, and the workers, peasants and soldiers thoroughly approve of it. As some of them have aptly commented: "When politics is in command, even the ballet has a voice."

The whole musical score of *The White-Haired Girl* has also contributed in no small measure to the revolutionizing, nationalizing and popularizing of the ballet. The composers have further enriched and developed the music of the opera according to the requirements of the content and the characteristics of the ballet, creating a number of

powerfully moving new songs and tunes, and making use of popular revolutionary songs. To make the songs easily intelligible and to the taste of a mass audience, the composers did not use too elaborate a musical accompaniment or harmonization, but tried to achieve a national style chiefly by the use of melodies. As a result, the music of the whole ballet is distinctively national in style and highly acceptable to the audience.

The teachers and pupils of the dance school realized that they could only amass experience and evolve new methods and theories of revolutionary ballet by means of revolutionary practice, and only through practice could they test their correctness. Revolutionizing the ballet is a new task, and opinions often differed in the process of revolutionary practice. Different ideas were also put forward on certain specific problems of artistic method. When this happened, the leadership of the school did not jump to hasty conclusions but encouraged people to air their views and suggestions boldly; while holding to the right course, they carried out various experiments and allowed the expression of divergent views; they tolerated failures, leaving practice to show which opinions were more correct. For instance, views differed about the scenery and stage properties to be used, as well as certain dancing movements of the White-haired Girl, in the fourth scene in the mountains. Some were in favour of keeping the whole scene abstract without any stage properties; others were for a completely concrete stage setting; yet others for a combination of the two. Which was the best method? Repeated experiments showed that if the stage was bare the audience could not easily follow the action, while if it was filled with concrete objects that would interfere with the dancers' freedom of movement. Taking real life as the starting point, they finally combined the abstract and the concrete so as to



The White-haired Girl joins a unit of the Eighth Route Army led by Ta-chun to go to the front

make full use of the characteristics of dancing while helping the audience to understand the plot. This produced a new artistic style. When problems of this sort are well handled, the question of incongruity or inconsistency of style need not arise.

The creation of this ballet also proves that revolutionary practice not only results in new experience and wisdom but also in increased courage and confidence. The ballet school learned that when problems arose and they fell short on practice, they tended to be more timid in their ideas. For example, some had scruples about the introduction of singing or composing new *pas de deux*. The question

of introducing songs was raised early on, but they were afraid people would declare that this was not ballet, that it might end up neither ballet nor opera, and so they dared not put it into practice. Later the leadership urged them to use this form which the masses love, and not to mind whether some people scoffed at it; for as long as the workers, peasants and soldiers accepted it, that would be enough. They must not mind if it did not look like a ballet; for there is nothing wrong in creating a new form which serves socialism. Then the makers of the ballet made up their minds to try it. At first they only inserted songs between the scenes, but later this developed into singing to accompany the dancing. Since the effect was excellent, it destroyed the old superstition that the ballet must have no voice and was widely acclaimed by the public.

The process of repeated practice is a process of continuous revolution. *The White-Haired Girl*, starting as a short ballet and ending as a full-length performance, was revised dozens of times. Even after the première of the full-length version, nearly sixty more revisions were made. During this process, the staff and students of the Shanghai Dance School persisted in bringing about the revolution in art through revolutionizing their own ideology, striving to embody the instructions of the Party and the opinions of the workers, peasants and soldiers in their own actions. They succeeded in carrying out the Party's instructions and in meeting the wishes of the workers, peasants and soldiers.

The creation of this ballet is the outcome of integrating the leadership and the masses, it is the collective effort of all the school's teachers and pupils. The Party and administration of the dance school, while primarily concerning themselves with the political and ideological aspects of the production, also took an active part in the actual production of the ballet itself. They brought to it the instructions of the higher leadership and the opinions of the workers, peasants and soldiers, at the same time calling upon all the teachers and students to use their initiative in making this revolutionary ballet. So starting from the school leadership down to every teacher, pupil and member of the administration, guided by the idea that

all work is for the revolution, they devoted their whole energy to revolutionizing the ballet. The result was a dynamic situation with everyone joining in and using their brains. The whole staff and student body, led by the Party branch, formed a strong collective working for the same revolutionary goal, and this ballet sums up the wisdom of that collective.

This ballet also owes much to the revolutionary help given by some dozen literary and art units in Shanghai. The striking features of this collective effort are the number of people involved, the wide range of activities (including art direction, the composing of music, singing, décor and make-up etc.), and the length of time taken. Those who helped produce this ballet brought to it their experience of creating revolutionary art, but what mattered even more was that they obeyed the Party's instructions and came armed with the works of Chairman Mao, with the knowledge that they were creating something for the revolution. Because they considered the making of this ballet as a revolution in art, they were not afraid of attempting something new and difficult, and did not worry about working conditions but considered this as their own work, taking the initiative to overcome problems never previously encountered, in the spirit of comradesly co-operation.

Unreserved acceptance of the criticisms and opinions of the worker, peasant masses was another of the main reasons for the success of the ballet. The teachers and students of the dance school regarded this as an important way to raise the level of their thought and improve their work. In the course of making the ballet, they organized six discussions with workers, peasants and soldiers, who made more than two hundred proposals for improving the central theme, characterization, dancing movements, acting, singing accompaniment and stage décor. All these proposals were ideologically clear, penetrating, specific and practical. The leadership of the school went through them and organized the whole school to study and use them as an important basis for further improving the quality of the work. For these suggestions not only dealt with the problem of how to emphasize the class struggle and strengthen the rebellious nature of the characters, but the school was able to learn much from

them regarding questions of specific artistic treatment. Some instances were the proposals that when Uncle Chao urged Ta-chun to join the Eighth Route Army there should be a red light shining on the back-cloth; when Ta-chun and Hsi-erh recognized each other in the mountain cave, this should be expressed in the form of a sung dialogue; when Huang Shih-jen and his underling were shot, the rifle reports should ring out loud and clear.... All these proposals by workers, peasants and soldiers were accepted. And, above all, their clear political stand and strong class feeling for a revolutionary work of art taught the dance school a profound lesson, greatly inspiring all the teachers and students.



Hsi-erh and her friends prepare for the New Year

**STAGE PHOTOS FROM *THE WHITE-HAIRED GIRL***

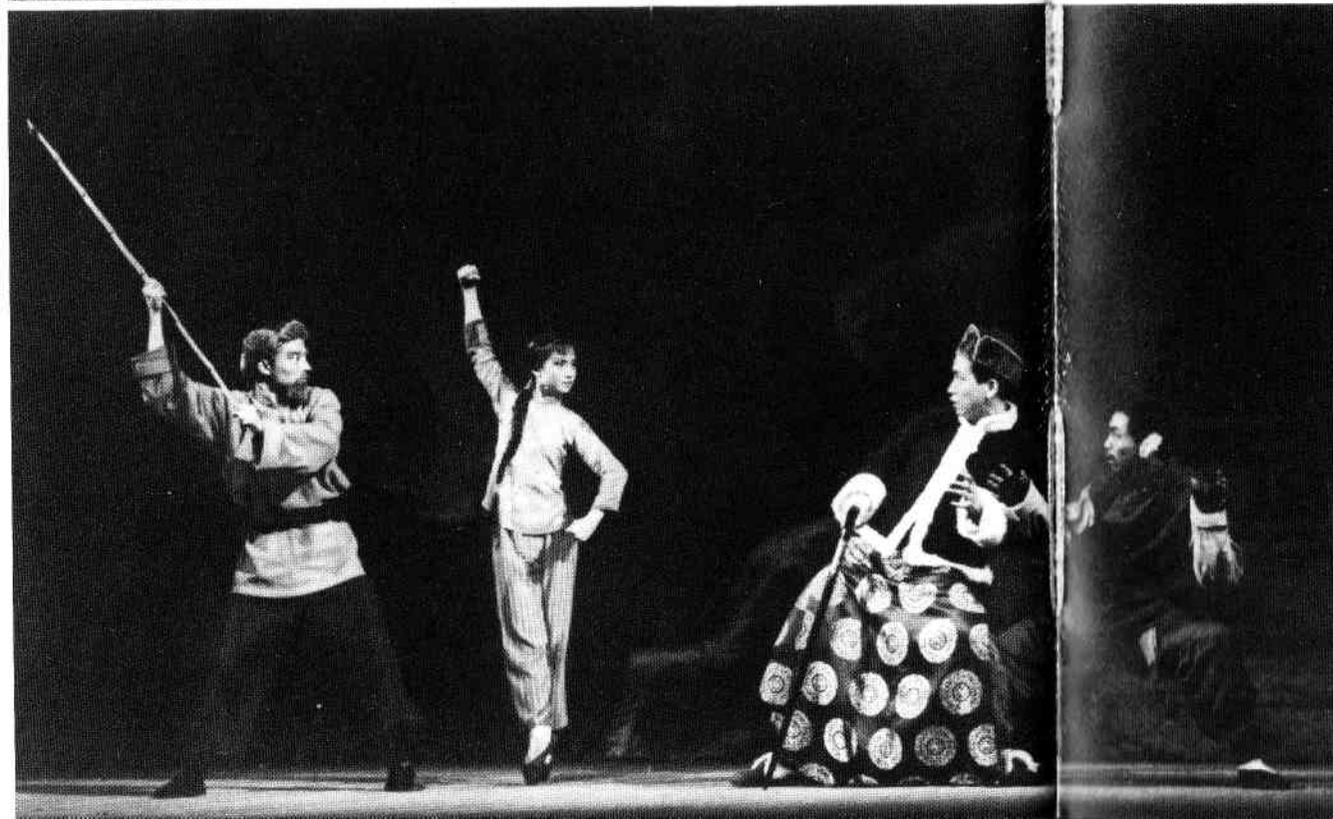


◀ Yang Pai-lao gives his daughter two feet of scarlet wool as a New-Year gift

The traitor and despotic landlord Huang Shih-jen and his stooge Mu Jen-chih try to drag Hsi-erh away but she and her father resist resolutely ▼



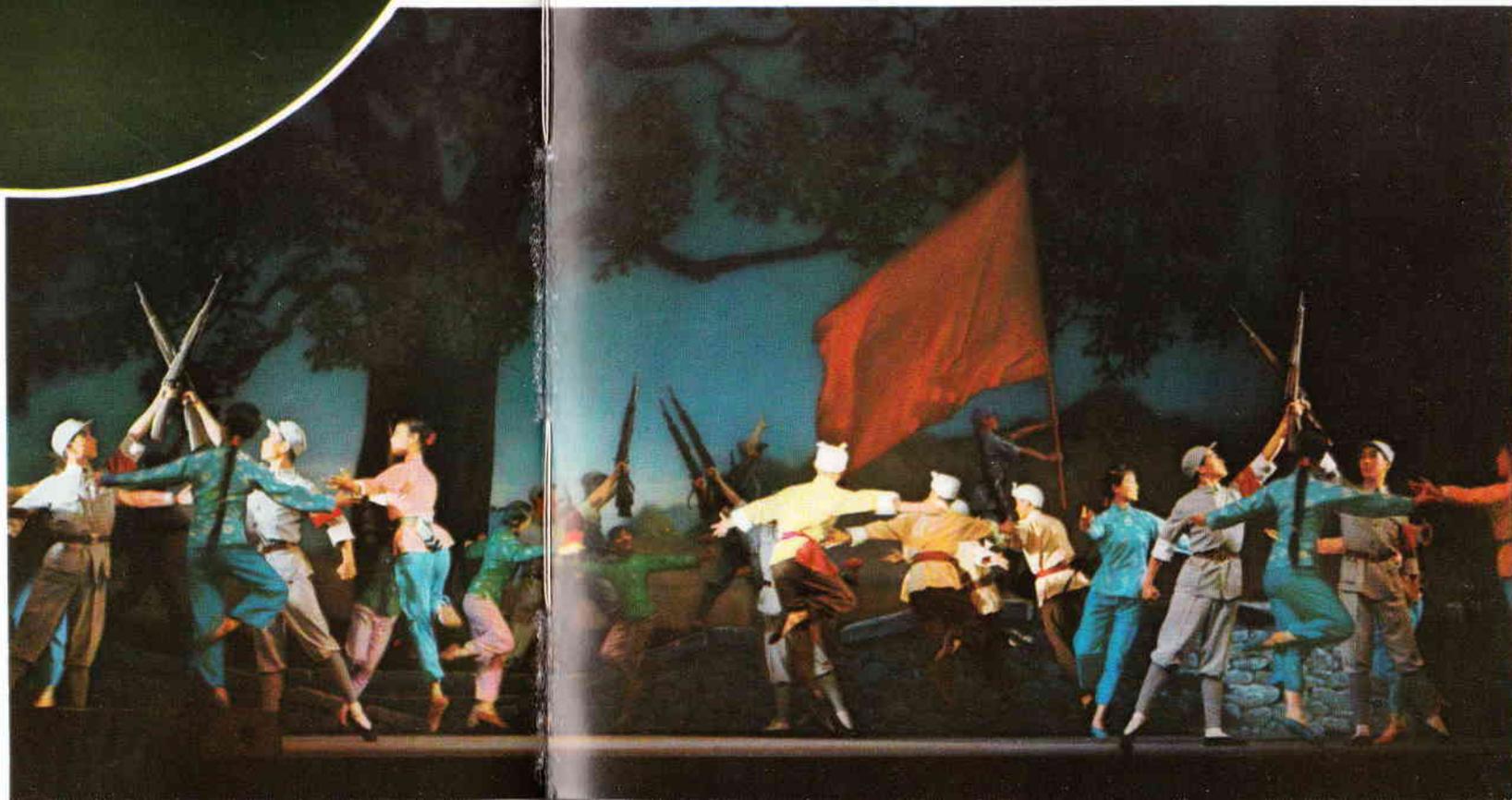
Hsi-erh, escaping from the landlord's house, sings indignantly: "You shan't kill me! I mean to live on, live to take revenge!"





◀ The White-haired Girl battles with the elements and wild beasts in the mountains

The villagers warmly welcome the Eighth Route Army come to liberate them ▼





The White-haired Girl (Hsi-erh)



▲ In the temple the White-haired Girl pursues her enemies who are fleeing in terror

At last the White-haired Girl sees the sun again after living for long years in a mountain cave ▼





Ta-chun while pursuing the landlord discovers the White-haired Girl. They recognize one another and are overwhelmed with emotion.

## Comments on the Ballet “The White-Haired Girl”

Since its première the ballet *The White-Haired Girl* has aroused a strong response among our broad masses of workers, peasants and soldiers, many of whom have eagerly stated their reaction to it. The following are a few comments selected from different Chinese papers.

Chairman Mao Is the Sun, the Sun Is the Communist Party

*Chiang Ling-chih*

I have seen both the opera and film versions of *The White-Haired Girl*, and it struck me that this ballet produced by the Shanghai Ballet School has improved considerably on certain episodes by emphasizing the class struggle and the armed struggle throughout the drama,

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Chiang Ling-chih is a woman worker in the Peking No. 2 Cotton Mill.

high-lighting the spirit of revolt in Yang Pai-lao, Hsi-erh and the other peasants, and showing the militant strength of the masses led by the Chinese Communist Party.

This ballet is very successful in portraying Hsi-erh's determined resistance to tyranny. She burns with anger when she sees her father beaten to death by the cruel landlord Huang Shih-jen and his stooge Mu Jen-chih, and she puts up a stubborn resistance when they drag her off by force. Unable to bear the harsh treatment she receives from the landlord's family, her whole body scarred by lashes of the whip, she breaks out of their house. She defies the wind and rain, the wolves and tigers in the forest deep in the mountains in her fight for existence. When Huang Shih-jen and Mu Jen-chih try to escape retribution for their crimes and shelter in the temple in the mountains, she hurls herself furiously at them, not for personal revenge but to avenge her class, because class hatred has given her the strength and courage to fight against Huang Shih-jen. The ending of the ballet, too, has a deeper significance with its greater emphasis on fighting spirit. After the Eighth Route Army soldiers and the villagers have found Hsi-erh, Huang Shih-jen and Mu Jen-chih are executed. Then Hsi-erh joins the revolution with the other young people to help liberate more of the poor and oppressed, showing again that she is not out for personal revenge but to avenge her class, to fight for the proletarian revolution.

This was a fine, very moving performance, and there was immense feeling in the singing which accompanied it. Watching the ballet, I entered into Hsi-erh's hatred and indignation as well as her joy after she had risen up and become one of the masters of the country. When the enemy had Yang Pai-lao beaten to death, I was reminded of how my own father was hounded to death by the bosses of a textile mill; when the landlord's mother stabbed Hsi-erh and his thugs whipped her, I felt as if I were being beaten again by the boss of the mill where I worked as a child. This class hatred is something I shall never forget.

To me, the scene in the mountain cave was especially moving. When Ta-chun finally discovered Hsi-erh there and led her and the villagers out of the cave towards the red rising sun, I could hardly

contain my emotion. And when the chorus sang, "Chairman Mao is the sun, the sun is the Communist Party," I could no longer hold back my tears of gratitude. For that line in the song expressed what was in my heart. I could hardly see the dancers on the stage for crying as I pledged myself: Chairman Mao, Chairman Mao, it's because of you and the Communist Party that we workers won liberation and became the masters of our country. I shall always do as you say, never forget the class struggle, keep a firm class stand and carry the proletarian revolution to the very end.

## What I Learned from "The White-Haired Girl"

### *Li Shan-yuan*

I'm a peasant of over sixty without much book-learning or knowledge of the world. I'd never even heard of this outlandish thing called "ballet," let alone seen one. When I was invited to see the new ballet *The White-Haired Girl* and to give my comments, that fairly flummoxed me. How could a peasant like me understand something so foreign? To my surprise, I not only understood it but liked it very much. It was a good show. I can't use fancy terms like those educated people, so I'll just say what I thought after seeing the ballet and what I learned from it.

In our villages in the old society everything, earth and sky alike, belonged to the landlords who lorded it over us. They trampled all over us peasants and could get away with murder. The hell that Yang Pai-lao and Hsi-erh went through in the ballet was the lot of every poor peasant. Take my family for example. For generations we worked on the landlords' land. Our whole family, old and young, sweated our guts out all year round without managing to fill our stomachs, because we had to carry the grain we'd reaped to the landlord's house just as in the ballet. As for myself, I had to start work for the landlord when I was little more than ten, and that black-hearted beast

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Li Shan-yuan is an agronomist in Lukouchiao People's Commune and a model worker of the Peking Municipality.

made my life misery. If I didn't do just what he wanted, he would whip me, kick me or strike me. All poor people in the world feel for each other. When I saw Yang Pai-lao beaten to death by the landlord's stooge and the vicious way Huang Shih-jen's family treated Hsi-erh, I thought: This isn't make-believe, this is just what we poor peasants had to put up with in the old society. I found myself clenching my fists and itching to give Huang Shih-jen a few blows myself. My hatred and fury didn't abate until I saw the Eighth Route Army liberate the village and find Hsi-erh in the cave, and until those two swine Huang Shih-jen and Mu Jen-chih were shot. I feel that this ballet, from beginning to end, showed exactly what happened to us peasants, that it said all that was in my heart to say. This ballet teaches us not to forget the crimes of the landlords class, not to forget class hatred; it teaches us that it was not easy for us people to win mastery over our land and we must keep the state power firmly in our own hands.

### Poor Peasants the World over Are Brothers

#### *Sung Teh-lan*

I am an old woman now, but this is the first time I saw a ballet. I'd no idea what to expect or whether we country folk could understand this thing called "ballet." But seeing it really warmed the cockles of my heart, because it's all about the way we poor and lower-middle peasants were ground down and exploited and how we stood up and won liberation. It reminds us not to forget the bad old days, to do what the Party and Chairman Mao say, not to forget class struggle but to carry the socialist revolution through to the end. This ballet spoke for all us poor and lower-middle peasants. I not only found it easy to follow and understand but learned a lesson from it too. We poor and lower-middle peasants will hold out both hands to welcome this kind of revolutionary ballet.

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Sung Teh-lan is a member of Evergreen Commune, Peking.

In the old society I was oppressed and exploited by the landlords and the rich. I went through more misery than words can tell. So I cried to see that wicked landlord in *The White-Haired Girl* beat Yang Pai-lao to death and carry off his daughter. I cried over her bitter sufferings in his house, and the fearful, less than human life she led up in the mountains. That brought back to me all our wretchedness in the old days. Yes, this ballet pours out the class sufferings of us poor and lower-middle peasants.

Before liberation, my life wasn't very different from the White-haired Girl's. My family had no home, no plot of land of our own. We rented a few *mou* of poor land from the landlord and put a year's hard work into it, but still couldn't pay the rent. At New Year the landlord's house was gay with lanterns, they feasted on fish and pork; but we poor folk couldn't even fill our bellies. I was forced to take my boy out begging. It was mid-winter and the northwest wind blew right through you; snowflakes as big as goose-feathers were whirling down. Where could we beg in that snowstorm? Luckily we met a friend in need, a poor man, who took pity on my son and me and gave us some husks. We could never have swallowed them if we hadn't been starving. . . . My heart still aches when I think of those wretched times. In the whole of Peking in the old society there was no way out for the poor.

To keep from starving, we sold our few odds and ends to scrape together the money to leave home and go as refugees to Hsuanhua County in Hopei. But things were no better there. We'd only jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire. The Japs dragged off my boy and his dad to do forced labour, leaving the rest of us with nothing to eat. My daughter and I scrounged cinders and picked up what we could on rubbish heaps, or went begging in the streets. My old mother-in-law, over eighty, died of hunger, and we had to bury her up in the hills wrapped in a tattered mat and swallow back our tears, for in those days the Jap overseer wouldn't even allow us poor folk to cry. We had as rough a time of it then as the White-haired Girl.

What the White-haired Girl went through was what all of us poor and lower-middle peasants went through. So when I saw her stand up and the vicious landlord Huang Shih-jen overthrown, I was glad

from the bottom of my heart, because this vented the feelings of us all and settled scores for us all. Now we poor and lower-middle peasants have stood up and become the masters. In the land reform my family got land and a house, and things have been better for us every year. Since people's communes were set up, our commune has been producing more every year. The commune members live better every year. We own all our good life today to the Party and Chairman Mao. But there's still class struggle in the countryside. The landlords and rich peasants who were overthrown are still up to their dirty tricks, trying to sabotage us in the hope of making a come-back. We must not forget the sufferings of the past and how we were exploited and oppressed. We must be more on our guard and keep a firm grip on the seals of office. As soon as my second boy was old enough, I sent him to join the army, just as Hsi-erh at the end of *The White-Haired Girl* joined the revolution with Ta-chun. We poor peasants all want the same thing: To defend the fruits of our victory, defend our socialist China, we must carry the revolution through to the end.

We are living well today, but plenty of peasants in other parts of the world are still cruelly ground down. All poor peasants in the world are brothers, we are one big family. Though I'm getting on for seventy now, I'm still fit enough to work in our production team. I mean to work harder to grow more vegetables and grain to support the world revolution and hasten the day when our exploited and oppressed class brothers all over the world will win their liberation.

## Where There Is Oppression There Must Be Revolt

### *Fang Hsiung*

Chairman Mao wrote in his *Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan*: "The poor peasants have always been the main force in the bitter fight in the countryside. . . . They are the most responsive to Communist Party leadership. They are deadly enemies

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Fang Hsiung is a member of the PLA air force.

of the camp of the local tyrants and evil gentry and attack it without the slightest hesitation." Chairman Mao in this report also praised the poor peasants as the most revolutionary, the "vanguards of the revolution." The characters and main theme of this new ballet *The White-Haired Girl* accord with Chairman Mao's classic analysis of Chinese peasants during the period of China's democratic revolution. The teachers and students of the Shanghai Ballet School have given unstinted praise to these characters, featuring them as the class representatives of China's poor peasants, and using them to acclaim the revolutionary spirit of the labouring masses and arouse the militancy of the workers, peasants and soldiers. This is a befitting task for revolutionary literary and art workers.

As soon as old Yang Pai-lao appears on the stage, he creates the impression of a resolute, unbending poor peasant who has suffered fearful class oppression and burns with hatred for the landlord class. When the vicious landlord Huang Shih-jen comes with his stooge Mu Jen-chih to demand payment of a debt and try to drag Hsi-erh away by force, Yang Pai-lao at once fights back. This is a conflict between oppressors and oppressed, between exploiters and exploited, between representatives of the landlord class and a representative of the poor peasant class. According to the law of class struggle, where there is oppression there must be revolt. The historical truth of the class struggle of that period makes it inevitable that Yang Pai-lao should resist these scoundrels even at the risk of his life. He cannot crawl to them or beg for mercy. So when we see him seize his carrying-pole as a weapon, when we see Hsi-erh snatching up the incense-burner to hit Huang Shih-jen, these episodes strike us as natural and true to life.

We feel that these improvements on the original made by the teachers and students of the Shanghai Ballet School accord with the historical truth. The ballet eulogizes poor peasants, presenting their story, speaking up for us poor peasants in accordance with the teachings of Chairman Mao; that is why the more we see it the better we like it. The Shanghai Ballet School has also made bold innovations in the art form of the ballet. Acting on the principle that the form must

suit the requirements of the content and taking the ideological content and the characters' temperament into account, they have used certain Chinese folk dances and operatic movements besides introducing singing to help express what is in the characters' minds. The music is excellent, with a thoroughly Chinese flavour, owing to the use of gongs, drums, the *panhu* and *sanhsien* fiddles and the Chinese flute. *The White-Flaired Girl* is a fine example of revolutionizing the ballet and giving it a national and popular style. We workers, peasants and soldiers welcome good ballets of this sort.

This ballet deepens our understanding of the truth that where there is oppression there must be revolt and struggle. In the period of the democratic revolution, Yang Pai-lao, Hsi-erh, Ta-chun and others like them took up arms to fight the despots. Today we live in the age of the socialist revolution when the landlords and other reactionaries have been overthrown but still want to recover power, still try to sabotage us; and there are still hundreds of millions in the world who are exploited and oppressed like Yang Pai-lao and Hsi-erh, whom we must do everything in our power to help. We must be more aware of the class struggle, waging it to the very end and devoting all our strength to creating a new world without imperialism, without capitalism, without exploitation.

## *Chronicle*

### **The Seventh "Shanghai Spring" Music Festival**

The seventh "Shanghai Spring" Music Festival opened on May 14 in Shanghai. In eighteen days, thirty-eight programmes with more than 200 revolutionary, militant musical and dance items were given to audiences totalling 110,000. Millions more enjoyed these items through the radio and on television. This big musical event was enthusiastically acclaimed by workers, peasants and soldiers and has had a greater influence among the people than any previous festival of this kind.

The red line of the great thought of Mao Tse-tung ran through all the performances which eulogized the heroes among the workers, peasants and soldiers, depicted their ardent militant life and paid high tribute to the great socialist age. Two of the ten programmes devoted to special subjects, *Recitals of Chairman Mao's Poems Set to Music* and *Long Live the Victory of People's War*, concentrated on eulogizing Chairman Mao Tse-tung's thought, while the others sang of different aspects of the splendid achievements of our socialist revolution and socialist construction which are brilliantly illumined by Mao Tse-tung's thought, expressing the boundless love of the people of China's various nationalities for the Party and Chairman Mao.

Of the 4,800 artists who took part in the performances more than 3,400, or about 70 per cent, were spare-time worker, peasant and soldier singers and dancers. This was more than in any other "Shanghai Spring" festival. In the opening concert, for instance, more than half of the items were contributed by worker, peasant and soldier artists, who also presented two special programmes, *Spare-time Music and Dance* and *Song of the Masses*. The items composed by them eulogize the Party and Chairman Mao with deep class feeling, expressing their courageous determination to serve the revolutionary cause and showing a clear-cut class stand and strong sense of pride. Their performances, characterized by vividness, simplicity and a strong flavour of life, were highly acclaimed throughout this festival. The militant masses of workers, peasants and soldiers have taken over the song and dance stage as befits the main force in the great socialist cultural revolution. This was an important feature of this "Shanghai Spring" festival.

The song and dance items were not only rich in content, but created many new styles of artistic expression. Starting from the requirements of the revolutionary content, they boldly broke through stereotyped conventions to create popular, vivid forms of expression easily understood and liked by the workers, peasants and soldiers. For instance, in the cantata *Forward, Glorious Workers of Shanghai!*, the dance drama *The Red Army Fears Not the Trials of the Long March* and the song cycle *Sing of Wang Chieh, Learn from Wang Chieh*, as well as other programmes of songs and dances, singing, dancing and recitation alternated or were integrated against a lantern-slide background to make the performances more vivid, forceful and colourful.

After nine days of performing in concert halls and theatres, the musicians and dancers who took part broke their usual festival routine by taking some of the best items eulogizing the great thought of Mao Tse-tung and reflecting the energetic, militant life of the masses to factories, villages and army units and performing for another nine days at these fighting or production fronts. This revolutionary move was warmly praised by the workers, peasants and soldiers.

### Workers, Peasants and Soldiers Criticize Bad Films

In the decade and more since the founding of our People's Republic, a black anti-Party and anti-socialist line running counter to the great thought of Mao Tse-tung has existed in our literary and art circles. This black line is a combination of bourgeois and modern revisionist ideas on literature and art and what is called the literature and art of the 1930s (in the Kuomintang areas of China).

Under the guiding influence of this black line, some bad writings and bad films have been turned out. To thoroughly eliminate this black anti-Party and anti-socialist line and eradicate its pernicious effect, various bad films such as *The Siege*, *Sisters on the Stage*, *The Press-gang* and *Red Sun*, were recently released so that the people could discuss and criticize them.

*The Siege* is supposed to describe some Chiang Kai-shek troops who came over to our side in 1947 in northeast China during the War of Liberation. However, the film did not depict the powerful might of the people's war, the powerful might of the liberation army which had surrounded the city; instead, it made out that it was internal contradictions and struggles within the enemy camp that led to the enemy troops finally coming over. A great many scenes were devoted to whitewashing the enemy and advocating a theory of class conciliation, thus gravely distorting the People's Liberation Army and the historical truth of the people's liberation war.

*Sisters on the Stage* portrays the life of two Shaohsing opera actresses, Chu Chun-hua and Hsing Yueh-hung, in the old society. This film blatantly advocates the bourgeois theory of human nature, covering up and negating the class contradictions in the society of that time and idealizing the road of individualistic struggle followed by bourgeois artists. This film represents the views of the advocates of the so-called "literature and art of the 'thirties," running counter to the great thought of Mao Tse-tung on literature and art.

*The Press-gang* is based on a play in the Szechuan dialect depicting the press-ganging and extortion practised by the Kuomintang reactionaries during the War of Resistance Against Japan (1937-1945). The two main characters are Li Lao-hsuan, a landlord and usurer, and

Pockmark Wang, a puppet ward chief. Taking the contradictions between these two villains as the central theme, the film from beginning to end depicts how Pockmark Wang, using the press-gang as a threat, extorts money from Li and forces his attentions on Li's daughter-in-law. . . . With vulgar jokes and low comical episodes, it glosses over the acute class contradictions existing in the countryside at that time, sympathizes openly with the "sufferings" of the landlord class and distorts the characters of poor peasants.

*Red Sun*, adapted from the novel of the same name, depicts the battle in which our People's Liberation Army completely annihilated the Kuomintang 74th Division and captured their position at Meng-liangku during the War of Liberation. In this film, the enemy divisional commander Chang Ling-fu is portrayed as a hero, "courageous and wise," "steady and incisive" and "completely dauntless," while our army and soldiers are gravely misrepresented and vilified.

Large numbers of letters and articles by the masses, particularly workers, peasants and soldiers, and records of their forums to criticize and condemn these obnoxious films have been published in newspapers and literary magazines throughout the country. Citing their own experiences in life and battles, they expose the hypocritical and reactionary nature of these films. They take a clear-cut class stand, and reason cogently and militantly. In this great socialist cultural revolution, the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers have put an end to the monopoly of literary and art criticism by a handful of so-called "literary and art critics." This marks the beginning of an era in which the workers, peasants and soldiers have mounted the forum of literature and art.

### New-Style Puppet Plays

The Puppet Theatre of Lunghsi, Fukien Province, famous as the "land of puppets," came recently to Peking and performed a series of puppet plays on modern revolutionary themes which were warmly received by audiences in the capital.

Fukien glove-puppet plays, with a history of four hundred years, are an important form of our puppet art. Made of cloth and moved

by the palm and fingers, two different puppets in totally different moods can be manipulated by one performer. A very small stage is required and the stage properties are extremely simple, but the plays can be very vivid with a distinct style of their own. Before liberation, the insecurity of the artists' living threatened this old art form with extinction. After liberation, the care and help of the Party and the people's government gave it a new lease of life.

The Lunghsi Puppet Theatre brought an outstanding repertory to Peking on this trip. The plays they put on took their themes from present-day life and the revolutionary struggles within and without the country and had a strongly realistic contemporaneity. *All Our Nationalities Sing the Praises of Chairman Mao* is the first large-scale song and dance puppet drama to have appeared in China. This presents the jubilation of the peoples of all China's nationalities on National Day at a rally to express national unity in Tien An Men Square, Peking. Conveying the ardent and boundless love of our different nationalities for our great leader Chairman Mao, it presents songs and dances of twelve nationalities, each characterized by a distinctive style. In *Red-Silk Dance*, a puppet 16 inches in height whirls two red silk six-foot streamers and dances gracefully. In *Coloured Jars*, Korean girls dance lightly with jars on their heads, bending and rising with complete ease. The Mongolian *Cavalry Dance* adopts movements and gestures from the traditional juggler with knives as well as from our present-day militia. This dance has a stirring rhythm and powerful movements.

The puppet artists also performed *Battle Song in the Coconut Grove*, reflecting the struggle of the Vietnamese people to resist U.S. imperialism. In this, they showed with uncanny skill the heroic Vietnamese people downing U.S. planes, sharpening bamboo stakes, digging pitfalls, loosing hornets against the enemy and blowing up U.S. tanks. Real acrobats could hardly execute many of these complex acrobatics.

Yang Sheng, a puppeteer well-known for his tiger-fighting plays, co-operated with some young artists to give a good performance of the modern play *Destroying the Tiger*. The heroine of this moving

play is the little shepherdess Ah-hsiang, who is devoted to the collective and goes into the mountains to look for a stray lamb.

The puppet artists also performed outstanding children's plays like *Returning the Bag* and *Red Youth* which reflect the new moral qualities of our younger generation.



## New Booklets in English

### THE GREAT SOCIALIST CULTURAL REVOLUTION IN CHINA

A series of booklets will be published under the above title.

No. 1, now available, contains the following three articles:

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*Notes from Three-Family Village* — by Yao Wen-yuan

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**Heighten Our Vigilance and Distinguish the True from the False**

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