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No. 8, 1965

- Communist China -

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This serial publication contains translations of articles from the Chinese-language periodical Hung-ch'i (Red Flag), No. 8, 1965. Complete bibliographic information accompanies each article.

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DEMOCRATIC TRADITION OF CHINESE PEOPLE'S
LIBERATION ARMY

[Following is a translation of an article by Ho Lung in the Chinese-language periodical, Hung-ch'1 (Red Flag), Peiping, No 8, 1965.]

A fundamental criterion for distinguishing a revolutionary army led by the proletariat from all counterrevolutionary armies led by the reactionary ruling classes, as far as internal relations are concerned, is whether there is democracy in the army. It is common knowledge that all armies are instruments of dictatorship over the mass of the people, while the proletarian revolutionary army is an instrument of dictatorship over the counterrevolutionaries. Since they represent the interests of a handful of people, all counterrevolutionary armies of the reactionary ruling classes are hostile to the people, who comprise over 90 percent of the population. Therefore, they do not dare to practice democracy within their ranks. By contrast, a revolutionary army led by the proletariat is a people's army which safeguards the interests of the workers, peasants, and other sections of the working people, that is, of those who make up over 90 percent of the population. Therefore -- except for exercising dictatorship over the counterrevolutionaries -- it establishes equal and democratic relations with the masses of the people; within its own ranks, it can and must work in accordance with democratic centralism. This is to say, it can and must practice democracy under centralized leadership and exercise highly unified and centralize leadership on the basis of democracy.

A fundamental characteristic distinguishing the PLA founded by Comrade Mao Tse-tung from all the old type armies is that within its ranks this army carries out the mass line and practices democracy under leadership in three principal fields, the political, the economic, and the military. It is a great creation of Comrade Mao Tse-tung's in army building, a great contribution by him both to Marxist-Leninist military theory and to the world proletarian revolution and the national liberation movement.

Why has the PLA been able to create so many miracles on this planet of ours and write so many miraculous pages in military history? Whence the cause and the strength that have enabled it to conquer all difficulties instead of being baffled by them, to vanquish all its enemies instead of being overpowered by them? The most fundamental cause is that our army is a genuine people's army led by the political party of the proletariat and armed with Marxism-Leninism, with Mao Tse-tung's thinking, and that the wars we wage are just wars for the liberation of the people, genuine people's wars conducted by relying on the people's own strength.

Taking this as our point of departure, we have broken thoroughly with the old military traditions of all the old type armies. We have not only firmly set ourselves the aim of whole heartedly serving the people, established absolute leadership by the party over the army, and introduced revolutionary political work, but we have completely shattered the obsolete idea that since the army is for military combat and must obey orders, it may not practice democracy. We have created the first army in history which genuinely practices democracy and belongs to the people.

In the initial stage of the building of our army, Comrade Mao Tse-tung put forward the brilliant idea that "in China, the army needs democracy as much as the people do." (1) This idea has been steadily enriched in the course of long practice of army building and of fighting, and has developed into a whole set of democratic traditions of a people's army, the content of which is democracy in three main fields -- the political, the economic, and the military. In the period of the third revolutionary civil war, Comrade Mao Tse-tung summed up the experience of the movement for democracy in our army. He pointed out: "The policy for political work in our army units is fully to arouse the masses of soldiers, commanders, and all working personnel in order to achieve, through a democratic movement under centralized leadership, three major objectives; namely, a high degree of political unity, an improvement in living conditions, and a higher level of military technique and tactics." (2) In line with these instructions of Comrade Mao Tse-tung, we have practiced the fullest democracy in the army and applied the mass line by trusting the masses in all cases and relying on them in all matters. This has given us such great strength as no reactionary troops can possess.

Throughout history all troops of the reactionary ruling classes have been instruments of violence for suppressing the people, the forces of privilege trampling on the people. In the matter of army-civilian relations, the anti-popular class nature of this kind of army is reflected in antagonism between the army and the people, and, in the matter of internal relations within the armed forces, is reflected in antagonism between the officers and men. These antagonistic relationships make inevitable a policy of oppressing the men and keeping them in ignorance. They determine its advocacy of so-called absolute obedience by the lower ranks to the higher ranks, by the soldiers to the officers, without any reasoning why they

determine its inability to practice democracy, its fear of it, and its intolerance toward it. It frequently resorts to the brutal methods of beating and berating the men and even executing them to maintain military discipline. Therefore, in essence the antagonism between the army and the people and between the officers and men is universal, without exception, in all reactionary ruling class armies.

Although a number of measures and systems of a seemingly democratic nature were adopted by certain revolutionary armed forces of the oppressed classes before the army led by the proletariat came into being, yet restricted as they were by historical conditions and the class limitations of these forces, these measures and systems were inevitably spontaneous, fragmentary and incomplete.

From its very inception, Comrade Mao Tse-tung's ideas on establishing a new type of people's armed forces helped the PLA to make the relationship between the army and people fundamentally different from the antagonistic relationship that had existed for thousands of years between the reactionary army and the people. Our army is composed of the sons of the people, it is a servant of the people, and it is the people's instrument for achieving their own liberation. It serves the people heart and soul, lovingly cherishes even the most trifling thing that belongs to the masses, and does not take anything from them however insignificant it may be. It does not, because it carries a gun, oppress the people and does not, because it has performed outstanding military exploits, claim to be the people's benefactor. This is why our army receives the wholehearted support and help of the people wherever it goes. This supreme unity between the army and the people forms a steel wall of defense that no force can breach.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung's ideas on establishing a new type of people's armed forces has helped the PLA completely to eliminate the antagonistic relationship between officers and men and between superiors and subordinates which plagued all the old-type armies, and to create in the army a vigorous and lively political situation in which there is both centralism and democracy, both discipline and freedom, and both unity of will and personal ease of mind.

Doing things and solving problems by the method of democracy under centralized leadership has become a glorious and deep rooted tradition and a system; it has become a widespread habit in the daily life of our army, of our soldiers and officers at all levels. Democracy is practiced in work and training and on the battlefield, in the companies, the army headquarters, and the military schools. In all matters, from the formulation of policies and combat plans to routine work, criticism, and commendations, as a rule, there is ample deliberation and discussion before a decision or action is taken. It can be stated that there is democracy everywhere, at all times and at all levels in our army. This greatly enhances the consciousness of

the masses and gives their initiative fuller play. Everyone feels he is master in the house. Therefore, in our army "everybody consciously attends to things and everything is attended to," and "everything that is good is sure to be praised and everything bad is sure to come to light." All our soldiers observe discipline and obey orders consciously and voluntarily; they have truly become a highly centralized combat collective. This explains why our army has become invincible and all-conquering, a fully united army in which everybody uses his brains and contributes his energy, fearing no hardship, dauntless before death, and daring and courageous in fighting the enemy.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung's ideas on army building did not come to be implemented easily and smoothly. Inevitably, so unprecedented an event as the founding of a proletarian revolutionary army in China came up against bourgeois thinking on military affairs and the resistance of conventional notions and habits of every kind. Indeed, from the very first day of the founding of our army, people infected with the habits of the old type of army and those clinging to bourgeois thinking on military affairs have stubbornly opposed Comrade Mao Tse-tung's line on army building.

At the same time as they have opposed the strengthening of absolute leadership by the party over the army, they have used one reason or another, one pretext or another, for opposing the movement for democracy and resisting the mass line. Clearly, the system of democracy and the democratic tradition, characteristic of a revolutionary army of the proletariat, cannot possibly be established, and still less consolidated and developed, unless this influence of bourgeois thinking on military affairs is again and again knocked down and the resistance of conventional notions and habits overcome.

Whether to uphold democracy and the mass line or not -- this has always been an important aspect of our struggle to implement Comrade Mao Tse-tung's ideas on army building and to oppose bourgeois thinking on the question, a struggle between two lines on army building. The system of democracy and the democratic tradition of the PLA have been affirmed, consolidated, and developed step by step and perfected in the course of continuous struggle against bourgeois ideas on military affairs.

The PLA has accumulated a rich store of experience and scored great achievements in practicing democracy and carrying forward the mass line for 38 years. To rely on the people, on the soldiers, on democracy, and on the mass line -- this is the essence of Comrade Mao Tse-tung's great thinking on people's war and a people's army, this is the priceless tradition by which our army, over the past decades, grew from small beginnings into a mighty force, and, fighting against odds, defeated one powerful enemy after another and won victory after victory. The summing up of our basic experience in this field so as to continue and carry forward this priceless tradition still better will make us invincible.

The most essential elements, the most basic experience, in the democratic tradition of our army, a tradition which has been developed and perfected in the course of the 38 years of history, can be summed up in the following eight points:

1. Whether democracy should be practiced in the army is by no means a question of method but of standpoint and basic attitude; in the final analysis, it is a question of whether one respects the masses, trusts them, and relies on them.

As early as 1938 when Comrade Mao Tse-tung summed up the experience of the workers and peasants Red Army and the Eighth Route Army in this respect, he pointed out: "Many people think that it is wrong methods that make for strained relations between officers and men and between the army and the people, but I always tell them that it is a question of basic attitude (or basic principle) of having respect for the soldiers and the people. It is from this attitude that the various policies, methods, and forms ensue. If we depart from this attitude, then the policies, methods, and forms will certainly be wrong, and the relations between officers and men and between the army and the people are bound to be unsatisfactory. Our three major principles for the army's political work are: First, unity between officers and men; second, unity between the army and the people; and third, the disintegration of the enemy forces. To apply these principles effectively, we must start with this basic attitude of respect for the soldiers and the people, and of respect for the human dignity of prisoners of war once they have laid down their arms." (3)

Comrade Mao Tse-tung's instructions on this point are still very much alive for us today. He once again emphasized this idea in his instructions of the five qualifications for successors to the proletarian revolution. He taught us that anyone without a firm belief in the masses and without a good democratic style of work is unqualified to be a successor to the proletarian revolution. In fact, the line of demarcation between a proletarian revolutionary and a bourgeois revolutionary is whether one treats the masses of the people with respect, trusts them, and relies on them.

This is a matter of basic attitude primarily because it is a question of how to understand and what attitude to have toward the role of the masses in history. Marxism-Leninism always regards the masses as the makers of history, the motive force in creating world history. At the time of the founding of the first international, Marx and Engels put forward the clear slogan: "The emancipation of the working class must be the work of the working class itself." (4) The same point is also well put in The Internationale: "No saviours from on high deliver, no trust have we in prince or peer ... and to all give a happier lot, each at his forge must do his duty...."

Applying this idea to revolutionary war, Comrade Mao Tse-tung clearly pointed out: "For the revolutionary war is a war of the masses; it can be waged only by mobilizing the masses and relying on them," (5) "The army and the people are the foundation of victory." (6) The history of the decades of war fought by the PLA under the personal leadership and command of Comrade Mao Tse-tung is one of people's war, of revolutionary war by the masses. Basically, the army's political work lies in educating and mobilizing armed masses. Once a revolutionary is alienated from the broad masses of the people and the rank-and-file soldiers, he is bound to become isolated and to be defeated in struggle, even if he be a man with three heads and six arms. Clearly, if anyone puts himself above the masses, regards himself as the hero, the overlord, and views the masses of the people and the rank-and-file soldiers as puppets, as the "rabble," he inevitably cuts himself off from the masses, has contempt for them, and cannot possibly treat them as equals, and consequently fears democracy and is unwilling to put it into effect.

This is a matter of basic attitude also because it is a question of how to understand and how to approach the source of knowledge. Comrade Mao Tse-tung has always maintained that the masses are the doers and all knowledge, without exception, comes from the masses, from their activities in class struggle, in the struggle for production, and in scientific experiment. "It has to be understood that the masses are the real heroes, while we ourselves are often childish and ignorant and unless this point is understood even the most rudimentary knowledge cannot be acquired." (7) Fighting a battle is the same. The broad mass of soldiers and commanders at the basic levels are direct participants in the front-line battles and have real knowledge of part of the actual situation; therefore, they are usually able to conceive the problems that may arise in each specific battle in a way that conforms more closely to reality, and it is easier for them to devise practical ways and means of solving these problems. The leading organs and cadres are only processing plants; their task is to go deeply into the actual situation, gather the opinions and experience of the masses, process and work on them and then take them back to the masses, popularize and carry them through among the masses.

This is the mass line. Work can be done well and battles fought well in this way. This is a truth we have again and again proved in the wars over the past decades. Obviously, anyone who does not understand and does not want to see this point, anyone who does not believe in the wisdom and capability of the masses and regards himself "the number one authority in the world," will never have a democratic style of work.

This is a matter of basic attitude because it is a question of the class feeling with which one approaches the masses. Comrade Mao Tse-tung always teaches us that a revolutionary cadre must be full of warmth toward the masses of the people and the soldiers, regard them as closest comrades-in-arms, make friends with them, know them intimately and love them from the

bottom of his heart, if he is to be really integrated with the masses, speak their language and win their confidence. Our army, from the commanders to the men, is knit together closely and democracy is invigorated and extended precisely because of the identity of class feeling. As for enemy troops who have laid down their arms, they must be regarded as class brothers who were oppressed and deceived, if the party's policy toward prisoners is to be faithfully carried out and the work of winning them over and educating them is to be done well. Obviously, those who lack proletarian ideas and feelings find it impossible to treat the soldiers, the people, and the enemy troops who have laid down their arms with any respect for their human dignity, and, that being so, a democratic style of work is indeed out of the question.

2. The "three main rules of discipline and eight points for attention," which base the strict discipline of the people's army on its democratic relations with the people, are a powerful weapon for promoting internal unity in the army and the unity of the army and the people and for disintegrating the enemy forces. (8)

Comrade Mao Tse-tung has always taught us that the PLA is powerful because all its members are self-disciplined, are united, and fight together not in the private interests of a few individuals or a small clique, out for the liberation of the masses of the people, for national liberation and for the liberation of mankind. Standing firmly on the side of the people, its sole aim is to serve them wholeheartedly.

In the earliest days of the Red Army, Comrade Mao Tse-tung personally formulated the "three main rules of discipline and eight points for attention." These rules embodied the very purpose of founding the proletarian revolutionary army in tackling concrete problems encountered most frequently in the internal relations within the army itself and in the relations between it and the people. The most common "trifles" are dealt with as matters of political principle. In this way, warlord influence of the old type of army, such as bullying people and maltreating captives, were completely eliminated from the Red Army, and a revolutionary democratic tradition of unity between the army and the people and unity between officers and men, and the correct policy of winning over officers and men of the enemy troops and treating captives with leniency, were firmly established in the people's army.

With the carrying out of the "three main rules of discipline and eight points for attention," in the course of daily contact with the army and through their own experience, the people completely changed their old conception of an army. The change was from fearing the troops to love them, from regarding soldiers as "most terrible people" to regarding them as "most beloved people," from fearing or refusing to serve in the army to competing and taking the lead in joining it, from the idea that "good men never become soldiers" to the idea that "good men must become soldiers." In the past

decades our army has proved in practice that by earnestly carrying out the "three main rules of discipline and eight points for attention" it can maintain the true nature of a people's army at all times and in all its actions, and can at times be invincible.

By carrying out the "three main rules of discipline and eight points for attention," we have gained the best results in disintegrating enemy troops and reforming the prisoners. Our army's lenient policy toward captives, and the democratic life within our army, are in striking contrast to all reactionary armies and in themselves proved most convincing living evidence. When junior officers and rank-and-file members of any reactionary army come in contact with this reality, the lying anticommunist propaganda they have been stuffed with is recognized for what it is and class consciousness is quickly aroused in most of the ordinary soldiers of working people's origin. The influence of our correct policy and democracy and our treatment of the captives made millions of Kuomintang soldiers turn their guns against Chiang Kai-shek, resulted in many combat heroes coming forward from among those soldiers liberated during the revolutionary civil wars, and induced large groups of enemy troops to lay down their arms, so that officers and men of the enemy forces, trained by the imperialists and reactionaries, changed into forces opposing their policies of aggression and war, and this happened during the war against Japanese aggression, during the war to resist U.S. aggression and aid Korea, and during our counterattack in self-defense along the Sino-Indian border.

The "three main rules of discipline and the eight points for attention" consist of only 61 Chinese characters and mostly deal with the most ordinary and common things, such as speaking politely and paying fairly for what you buy. Of course, to people filled with the notions of the old army all this is meaningless, and those whose heads are crammed full of foreign doctrines think what is the use of such "country bumpkin" talk? They do not understand that in truth these very common rules shine with the brilliance of creative Marxism-Leninism and, in concrete terms, embody the essential idea in the building of a proletarian revolutionary army. Some people regard these 61 Chinese characters as very simple. How easy it is to carry out these rules, they think, but in fact they fail to understand that these rules cannot be carried out at all unless there is the spirit of wholehearted service to the people and a thoroughly revolutionary world outlook. No bourgeois army, no army which does not really take Marxism-Leninism as its guide, will ever be able to carry them out.

3. The prerequisite and the basis of all democratic life and the movement for democracy are the strengthening of political and ideological education, the raising of proletarian consciousness and the practice of widespread political democracy.

The democratic movement in our army has always started from the establishment of equal political status and a democratic relationship between

officers and men. This is to be seen in the fact that there is only division of responsibility between the officers and men, with no distinction in the matter of respect for the human dignity of all. All are class brothers who have come to work for the revolution and who regard wholehearted service to the people as their sole aim. In the interests of the revolution, everybody has the right to learn, to investigate, and to carry out the party's policies and lines, the right to make positive proposals in accordance with them, and the right to combat any thinking or action which run counter to them. In the interests of the people, officers and men may supervise and criticize one another.

Officers have obligations to think harder, to devise more ways and shoulder more responsibility, but have no privileges of any kind. They are dutybound to welcome proper criticism from the soldiers and have absolutely no right to reject it. Naturally, they are not allowed to suppress criticism or take revenge on account of it. This is the only way to tap the masses' creative ability and readiness to accept responsibility to the maximum, so that everyone can boldly and aptly pose problems, express opinions, and criticize shortcomings. They can carefully and lovingly supervise the leading organizations and leading members. This is the only way to heighten the enthusiasm of the great mass of commanders and soldiers and strengthen the army's combat ability.

The raising of the proletarian political consciousness of the officers and men is the ideological basis for exercising democracy in the three main fields. As early as 1929, in the resolution "on the rectification of erroneous ideas in the party," written for the ninth congress of the party organization of the Fourth Army of the Red Army, Comrade Mao Tse-tung stressed the need to intensify the political training of both officers and men, to raise their political level through education, to bring democracy into full play, and to organize collective life correctly in accordance with democratic centralism in order to oppose and correct all unfavorable tendencies.

In summing up the experience of the new type of ideological education movement in the army during the period of the third revolutionary civil war, he pointed out: "The correct unfolding of the movement for pouring out grievances (the wrongs done to the laboring people by the old society and by the reactionaries) and the three check-ups (on class origin, performance of duty, and will to fight) greatly heightened the political consciousness of commanders and fighters throughout the army in the fight for the emancipation of the exploited working masses, for nationwide land reform and for the destruction of the common enemy of the people, the Chiang Kai-shek bandit gang. It also greatly strengthened the firm unity of all commanders and fighters under the leadership of the communist party. On this basis, the army achieved greater purity in its ranks, strengthened discipline, unfolded a mass movement for training, and further developed its political, economic, and military democracy in a completely well-led and orderly way." (9)

Democracy in the three main fields must be and can only be established on the basis of political and ideological education, with class education as the core, and on the basis of political democracy. This is most clearly illustrated in the above-quoted passage.

Again and again experience has proved that democracy as a whole cannot be practiced healthily if it deviates from the basis of class education and political democracy. Just consider, if there were no common political goal, no equal political status, and no common class feeling between officers and men, how could economic democracy and military democracy be carried out? How could soldiers take part in managing the mess and superintending expenditures? How could officers and men, in military training, coach one another and evaluate each other's teaching and study? As for having democratic discussion of combat plans during battle, letting everybody air problems and find solutions, and evaluating the commander's skill and tactics after a battle, such things would be even more out of the question.

Political democracy in our army is determined by its class character. There are no class antagonisms in the ranks of our army, the officers and men being class brothers. But the reactionary class character of all counterrevolutionary armies make it impossible for them to have genuine political democracy, and even more impossible for them to employ the revolutionary political work and the strategy and tactics which only proletarian troops can use. Just consider, did not Chiang Kai-shek long ago make a serious study of our 10 military principles? Did he not give orders for our campaign of emulation of meritorious service to be adopted? Has he not, since last year, studied and "popularized" our method of teaching troops devised by Kuo Hsing-fu (a company commander)? Have not the U.S. imperialists long studied our tactics of guerrilla warfare? Has not the group of U.S. "military advisers" in South Vietnam repeatedly advocated that efforts should be made to learn from our three main rules of discipline and eight points for attention? But has all this been of any help to them?

Military matters cannot be isolated from politics. Proletarian military matters can arise only out of proletarian politics. However fully we disclose our methods and refrain from keeping them secret, however fully Chiang Kai-shek and his U.S. masters study our material, they can never understand the essence, and still less can they employ these methods among their troops. This is determined by the reactionary class character of their troops. Though their intention here is to find ingenious ways of raising the morale and fighting strength of their soldiers, they are bound to fail pitifully, over and over again and repeatedly make a laughing stock of themselves.

4. Economic democracy, attention to the life of the soldiers, and the sharing of good and bad by officers and men embody the political principle of the identity of officers and men in daily life, and form the starting point for unifying the masses and bringing their initiative into play.

In all the old-type armies, the soldiers are not only politically oppressed but economically exploited. It was a common thing, an open secret, that part of the soldiers' pay in those armies was pocketed and the soldiers "bled white." From the earliest stages of the building of our army, Comrade Mao Tse-tung built a system which ensured unity between officers and men and abolished the practice of bullying and beating. At the same time, he introduced economic democracy, namely, the practice of having accounts open to inspection by all and of soldiers handling mess arrangements. He has always attached great importance to improving the life of the soldiers, always emphasized the importance of officers and men sharing the bitter and the sweet, and always opposed bureaucratic tendencies to ignore the soldiers' welfare. As early as 1928, Comrade Mao Tse-tung emphasized how important economic democracy, integrated with political democracy, was for the Red Army, at that time still in its infancy and engaged in arduous fighting. He wrote: "Apart from the role played by the party, the reason why the Red Army has been able to carry on in spite of such poor material conditions and such frequent engagements in its practice of democracy." (10) Over the decades, this tradition has played a tremendous role in strengthening unity, in encouraging the initiative of the masses and in raising the combat effectiveness of the army.

Those tainted with the warlord and bureaucratic habits of the old type of army are reluctant to undertake what they disdainfully regard as "trifles," such as economic democracy. In their view, having the accounts open to inspection by all and running the mess better are trivialities. They simply do not know that only by attending to the needs of the masses can they unite and lead them. This has been explained by Comrade Mao Tse-tung on more than one occasion. He said, "Do we want to win the support of the masses? Do we want them to devote their strength to the front? If so, we must be with them, arouse their enthusiasm and initiative, be concerned with their well-being, work earnestly and sincerely in their interests" (11) If we do so, "the masses will surely support us and regard the revolution as their most glorious banner, as their very life." (12) It is in compliance with Comrade Mao Tse-tung's instructions that the tradition of officers and men eating, living, working, drilling, and relaxing together has been maintained all through the protracted revolutionary wars and the period of peaceful construction following the triumph of the revolution. This has ensured selfless striving for the common goal on the part of the officers and men, who are bound together by class feeling and class brotherhood.

The importance of practicing economic democracy and giving attention to the life of the masses also lies in the fact that, more often than not, the soldiers come to understand concretely the nature of the revolutionary army, and the revolutionary principles such as who is the revolution for, and whose interests the army is fighting for, in very concrete and practical ways, i.e., through those "trifles of everyday life" which directly involve their vital interests. In a soldier's eyes, a leading cadre is just

a chatterer about revolution and a bureaucrat bossing the masses, however skillful he may be in argument, if he leads a privileged life and does not care about the well-being of the masses. If such a bureaucrat is in command of men in action, he will surely come a cropper.

5. Military democracy is an important measure for raising the tactical and technical level, for winning victories and for bringing forward men of ability. The officers teach the men, the men teach the men, and the men teach the officers, and all difficulties are brought up at "Chuko Liang meetings" where ways and means are suggested for overcoming them; this is the basic method of carrying out military democracy. (Chuko Liang, 181-234 A.D., the famous Chinese statesman and strategist whose name became a synonym among the Chinese people for "a wise man." A "Chuko Liang meeting" in the PLA is one in which the soldiers pool their wisdom to solve difficult problems.)

Our experience has long proved that a revolutionary army can practice not only political and economic democracy but also military democracy. It can apply military democracy in fighting as well as in training. Such military democracy was practiced as early as the period of the workers and peasants Red Army. There was mobilization for the fighting before a battle and meetings afterward to analyze the battle and sum up experience. This was indeed military democracy in practice. Military democracy was one of the factors, and an extremely important one, in the young Red Army's rapid development of high combat effectiveness and in the mature development of large numbers of fine military commanders who combined intelligence and courage, out of soldiers of peasant origin, "country bumpkins" who never attended a military academy.

The military democracy practiced in the Red Army period was developed in the war of resistance against Japanese aggression. During the third revolutionary civil war, it leaped forward to a new stage, and a complete set of methods of applying military democracy both in training and in fighting came into existence. In training, the officers and men instructed each other, to the benefit of both the teachers and the students, and evaluations were made of both the teaching and the studying. They were organized into mutual aid groups for training in which veterans helped new recruits, the stronger helped the weaker and each overcame his own weaknesses by acquiring the strong points of others. They taught and learned from one another and pledged themselves to teach well and study diligently.

In fighting, so long as conditions permitted, the officers and men were encouraged to discuss the fighting tasks and plans and offer their ideas, and to devise ways and means of solving technical and tactical problems; after a battle, they came together to "evaluate the battle," that is, to discuss the bravery, technique, tactics, discipline, and command, and to sum up their experience in actual warfare. They made progress after each

battle. In this way, all the difficulties encountered in training and fighting were easily solved once the masses were encouraged to carry out full military democracy. During the whole period of the third revolutionary civil war, military democracy played a very great role in raising the army's combat effectiveness and insuring that though equipped with the inferior "millet plus rifle," it could defeat the Chiang Kai-shek troops equipped by the U.S. imperialists with aircraft and artillery.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung made a timely summation of the additional experience in perfecting military democracy. He said: "With regard to military democracy, in periods of training there must be mutual instruction as between officers and soldiers and among the soldiers themselves; and in periods of fighting the companies at the front must hold big and small meetings of various kinds. Under the direction of the company leadership, the masses of soldiers should be roused to discuss how to attack and capture enemy positions and to fulfill the combat tasks. When the fighting lasts several days, several such meetings should be held." (13) By practicing such military democracy, it is possible to concentrate the wisdom of the masses, heighten the morale of the soldiers, overcome difficulties, and defeat the enemy.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung's instructions stimulated a more extensive and conscious development of military democracy throughout the army. The greater the number of battles fought, the more resourceful grew the army, the cleverer the soldiers and the more capable the officers. Many foreigners, and even some Chinese, were never able to understand how the PLA could knock out tanks with handgrenades, defeat warships with wooden junks, and blow up fortified city walls and reinforced concrete strongholds without artillery. To them, problems of this sort seemed enigmas impossible of solution. In reality, apart from its high political consciousness and its bravery, the army was able to make all these miracles mainly by relying on military democracy whereby "everyone contributes his ideas and offers his ways." That was our "secret."

6. The objective of democracy in the army is to consolidate discipline and strengthen combat effectiveness. The key to its correct development is the bold arousing of the masses and the strengthening of centralized leadership.

Far from weakening discipline and combat effectiveness, democracy in the army aims at consolidating and strengthening them. The units that correctly apply democracy under leadership in the three main fields in fact attain this result. Experience proves that there are no grounds for anxiety that the practice of democracy, especially democracy in military affairs, will weaken discipline, impede the work of the command, affect the prestige of the officers, cause delays and lead to the missing of good combat opportunities.

War is a life-and-death struggle between ourselves and the enemy. Above all, it demands concerted action, strict discipline, authoritative command, and prompt decisions at the right moment. In a word, it calls for a high degree of centralization. Since it calls for high centralization, how can democracy be widely practiced? Indeed, to the bourgeois militarists this is utterly incomprehensible. It is completely impossible in a reactionary army, but completely possible in our army. The practice of military democracy in a revolutionary army does not contradict all these requirements of battle; on the contrary, it strengthens them.

Experience shows that the more democracy is brought into play, the greater is the mutual understanding and trust between the higher and the lower levels and between officers and men, thus eliminating apprehensions and misgivings. Those commanders who give correct leadership and promptly rectify mistakes enjoy greater prestige and issue orders with greater confidence, and the lower officers and the soldiers observe discipline, carry out orders and obey commands with great consciousness of what they are doing. At the same time, the more battle plans are discussed democratically and amended, with each man clearly understanding his place and role during the whole operation, the more initiative do the soldiers show in fighting and the more they strengthen their unity and coordinate their actions in battle of their own volition. The effect of democratic discussion on military affairs before battle is that the fighters are to a due extent acquainted with the plan of combat. In case the commander and his appointed deputy are killed or wounded in succession, the command will not be interrupted. Members of the Communist Party and the Communist Youth League who come forward and take up the command have the assurance of possessing a sense of political responsibility and a knowledge of the concrete measures. Does this not provide a clear answer to the question of whether democracy impedes or strengthens centralization?

The point can also be clearly illustrated from our daily life and work. When preparing or carrying out a task, our officers and men say, "Let's have a talk about it," "Let's chew it over" or "let's collect opinions." When there are differences of view they say "Let's lay the different opinions on the table," or "let's discuss," or they propose "ironing out someone's ideological problems" or "trying persuasion" with someone who holds wrong opinions. Again, after completing a job, they "make some comments," "check-up" and "sum-up." In all, this does not cause any trouble, waste any time or increase the differences but, on the contrary, makes for better understanding, strengthens unity, concentrates people's volition, and unifies action at all levels, so that every task is fulfilled better.

It is wrong to be endlessly worried, timid, and hesitant about democracy, it is wrong to be afraid of arousing the masses fully, and it is wrong to hamper democracy by various prohibitions. It is wrong if democracy is lacking in the daily life and work of the army in ordinary times, if no attention is given to other people's opinions, or if democracy is reduced to

a formal procedure, while in actual fact one's own words alone are decisive. But it is likewise wrong to assume that when democracy is developed, the responsibilities of the cadres are lighter and that they can do everything simply in accordance with other people's ideas, with them trailing behind the masses and abandoning necessary leadership and centralism. It should be said that this is not democracy but an utter distortion of democracy. Nothing could be done well that way and battles would be badly fought. It would only encourage unhealthy tendencies and thwart the true initiative of the masses.

How then does one give correct leadership to developing democracy in the three fields?

Basing himself on the experience of the Red Army, Comrade Mao Tse-tung supplied us with a clear-cut answer as early as 1929. He pointed out that to practice democracy under centralized leadership, "the leading bodies of the party must give a correct line of guidance and find solutions when problems arise, in order to establish themselves as the nucleus of leadership." (14) "The higher bodies must be familiar with the life of the masses and with the situation in the lower bodies so as to have an objective basis for giving correct guidance." (15)

Obviously it is wrong, when we advocate democracy, to think that the leaders have no responsibilities, may not have their own opinions, can drift with the stream, make no analysis of the correctness or incorrectness of the opinions of the masses, and fail to distinguish between suggestions that can be put into practice and those which for the moment cannot, and that they may simply trail behind the masses. Such ideas and actions would be entirely wrong. To practice democracy under leadership, the leaders must conduct serious investigations and studies and gain an understanding of the situation so that they can offer correct opinions and practical solutions when problems arise. Therefore, if the movement for democracy is to unfold correctly, the leading headquarters and leading cadres must not only have a firm belief in the masses and a correct democratic attitude but must be highly principled and skilled in leading. It cannot be otherwise.

Though there has been great progress in both form and content in the army's democracy in the three fields during the past few decades, the basic experience and methods in practicing democracy under leadership are the same as those outlined by Comrade Mao Tse-tung. Experience shows that democracy is sure to develop in a healthy fashion when this is followed, and when one first conducts serious investigations and studies oneself and understands the situation, and then leads the masses to pay serious attention to investigation and study so that they clearly understand the actual situation. In such circumstances, criticism and self-criticism, and bringing to the surface difficult problems and finding ways of solving them, will get at the heart of things and achieve the best results.

7. The fundamental guarantee of the consistent practice of democracy and the mass line in the army is adherence to the system of division of responsibility among the leaders under the unified collective leadership of the party committee. From the very outset of building the army, Comrade Mao Tse-tung worked hard to establish the army party committee system, and to improve and consolidate it, and in the years of practice that followed, he steadily perfected this system and gradually developed it into the system of division of responsibility among leaders under the unified collective leadership of the party committee. All questions of major importance must be decided by discussion in the party committee, except in an emergency when a leader has to make a quick decision. In discussion, there must be full democracy, with differing opinions debated and efforts made to see that decisions are taken on the basis of agreed ideas. Experience shows that this system can bring all positive factors into play, concentrate the experience and wisdom of the masses, prevent any individual from monopolizing all activity and making decisions on important problems all by himself, and avoid narrowness and one-sidedness in the handling of problems. At the same time, the leader concerned can play his role to the full, make prompt decisions on his own in the process of exercising his powers as a leader, and fulfill his tasks independently under the unified collective leadership of the party committee. This is the most essential and the best system of leadership, and has stood the test of time.

The army's history over the decades proves that whenever any unit undermined or weakened the party committee system, it inevitably developed a trend of warlordism characterized by individual arbitrariness, and undermined inner-party democracy in the army and leadership of the army by the party, dissipated the unity and cohesion of the unit, and weakened its fighting capacity. During the period when the line of "left" opportunism predominated for the third time, this time represented by Wang Ming, the party committee system in the Red Army was abolished, with grave adverse effects on its combat activities and on army building.

After the party committee system was restored in the form of the military and political committees during the period of the war of resistance to Japanese aggression, and especially after it was completely restored and improved at all military levels during the period of the third revolutionary civil war, the unity of the whole army under the leadership of the party was greatly strengthened, democracy within the army was greatly invigorated, and the movements for democracy and the new type of ideological education in the army were conducted in a guided, orderly way. This added tremendously to the combat effectiveness of the army and ensured final victory in the war.

Historical experience shows that leadership of the army by the party should mean unified collective leadership by the party committees at all levels and never individual arbitrariness by any party member or leader. The establishment of the party committee system under unified, central leadership at all levels in the army, the practice in the party committee

of the system of division of responsibility among leaders under unified collective leadership -- this is the fundamental system whereby the military command is placed under the leadership of the party. At the same time, democracy in the army can be satisfactorily practiced only when the leaders first of all develop a good, democratic style of work under this system. Therefore, adherence to the system of division of responsibility among leaders under the unified collective leadership of the party committees has become a basic guarantee of the consistent practice of democracy and the mass line in the army, as against any warlord trends characterized by individual arbitrariness.

8. Democracy in the three fields which was necessary under "millet plus rifles" conditions is still needed, and needed all the more, and is entirely feasible, under conditions of modern equipment and modern war.

Democracy in the three fields came into being during the "millet plus rifles" period of the army. This provided those who held bourgeois views on military affairs with a "reason" for arguing that democracy in the three fields and the mass line were simply makeshifts on "indigenous methods" that had to be adopted in view of the inferior equipment of our army and the lack of military training of the officers. To their mind, these "indigenous methods" were very inferior and unscientific. They were utterly useless when modern equipment was adopted, regular training was available, and modern warfare was prosecuted; accordingly, only those commanders and technical experts who had undergone strict professional training were to be depended on. For a time a few persons who stuck to bourgeois views on military affairs again and created trouble for a short time in the new historical period following the founding of the CPR. In the name of building a modern, regular army, they advocated the abolition of the party committee system in the army, which in reality meant abolishing the leadership of the army by the party, weakening political work, and negating the democratic tradition and mass line of our army. This represented a vain attempt to push the PLA on to the bourgeois road of army building. The question of whether to preserve the democratic tradition and mass line of our army and bring them into full play is an essential part of the struggle in the new historical period between the two different military lines.

The facts of the past 15 years have entirely shattered their absurd arguments. The Korean war can be taken as the biggest modern war since World War II. The Chinese People's Volunteers together with the heroic Korean People's Army defeated the U.S. forces of aggression, even though the latter had far superior naval, air, and artillery forces. This was not because our military equipment and military technique were more modern at that time than those of the United States. The main reasons for our victory were the justness of our war, the all-out support of the Korean and Chinese peoples, our correct strategy, the high political consciousness and courage of our officers and men, and, an extremely important factor, the healthy development of our democratic tradition and the mass line. The world-famous tunnel

fortifications, known as the underground great wall, and the tunnel offensive and defensive tactics, the indestructible transport line which was never interrupted despite continuous enemy bombing, the mass movement for bringing down enemy planes which turned U.S. "air superiority" into "air anxiety," and the sniping operations that caused the U.S. troops uneasiness on the 38th parallel -- were not all these the creation of the masses, the cadres and fighters, arising from the widespread practice of democracy in which everybody put forward his ideas?

To say that modern equipment is too scientific and too complicated for the masses of soldiers to understand and therefore no democracy is possible -- this kind of assertion of it is not superstition and ignorance, is deliberately intended to frighten people, and is a complete swindle. The technical equipment of an air force and navy is modern enough. The research, experiment, and manufacture connected with atom bombs, guided missiles and other new weapons of the most advanced type can be said to be highly modern. Yet how did our young air force and navy rapidly master such modern techniques? How were our young pilots from worker and peasant families able to bring down U.S. ace pilots? And in recent years how were our air defense units able again and again to bring down U.S.-Chiang Kai-shek reconnaissance planes of all types? Is it not to a very large extent due to the democratic movement in which everybody offers his ideas and methods, due to the priceless tradition of the integration of the leaders and the masses?

How was our national defense industry, breaking all bourgeois rules and overcoming all difficulties imposed by the modern revisionists, able successfully to explode two atom bombs designed and manufactured in China in so very short a period? What is the reason? Is it not to a very large extent due to the democratic movement in which everybody offers his ideas and methods, due to the priceless tradition of the mass line, the pooling of the efforts of the leaders, experts and workers?

Experience has shown that the more modernized technical equipment becomes, the more that modern equipment is used in war and the more we have to deal with an enemy using modern equipment, the less can we afford to weaken the democratic tradition and the mass line in our methods of work. On the contrary, they have to be upheld and developed all the more. The reason is very simple. Man invents the weapons, man manufactures the weapons, man uses the weapons, and man destroys the weapons. Without man, all modern technical equipment is not only so much deadwood; it could never be produced. The conscious activity of man cannot be replaced by any technical equipment, however advanced. Man is always the primary factor. Within the human factor, the wisdom and experience of the individual leader and technical expert is always very limited and incomplete. Therefore, modern technical equipment can be used most fully, and extremely complicated forms of modern warfare can be carried out with the utmost confidence

and success, only under the collective leadership of the party committee and by fully practicing democracy, bringing the collective wisdom of the masses into full play, and rallying the initiative and creativeness of the masses.

In this respect, the imperialists and reactionaries are still our best teachers by negative example. They thought highly of the bourgeois conception that appeared to our army building work at one time after the victory of our revolution and were very happy about it. They believed that in this way, though the PLA would become stronger in technical equipment, its revolutionary tradition -- such as leadership by the party, political work and the mass line, centered on democracy in the three main fields -- would be weakened and even discarded; this revolutionary force would therefore change its nature and become a "professional army" such as that of the bourgeoisie and would become easier to deal with and possible to defeat. However, the imperialists and reactionaries rejoiced too soon. The facts soon turned their hopes to despair.

In the new historical period since the victory of the revolution, and especially in recent years, under the leadership of the Central Committee of the party, Chairman Mao Tse-tung, the Military Council and Comrade Lin Piao, the Chinese PLA has not only persisted in but had developed the revolutionary tradition which was initiated by Comrade Mao Tse-tung and which includes democracy in the three main fields. This has struck great fear into the imperialists, the reactionaries, and the modern revisionists of the Khrushchev brand and aroused their enmity. They furiously slander our people's movement for learning from the liberation army.

They say it is intended to wipe out democracy and force the people to submit without complaint. They say it demands of the Chinese people further sacrifice of their personal interests. They say it imposes military organization and methods on the factories and the communes, turns all of China into a barracks, and so forth. Why do they slander and attack us so fiercely in this matter? It is because they sense that our persistence in and development of this tradition is extremely unfavorable for them. We have shattered their delusions that as time goes by, as our economy develops and our equipment is improved, we will some day discard our old traditions bit by bit and gradually become estranged from the masses.

This is not at all surprising. Their reactionary class stand determines their unwillingness and failure to understand the following: The essence of what the Chinese people are learning from the liberation army is precisely how to persist in the "four firsts" and the "three-eight" style of work, and at the same time how to persist in and develop the democratic tradition of our party.

The four "firsts" are as follows: Giving first place to man in the correct handling of the relationship between man and weapons; giving first

place to political work in the correct handling of the relationship between political and other work; giving first place to ideological work in the correct handling of the relationship between ideological and routine tasks in political; and in ideological work, giving first place to living ideas in the correct handling of the relationship between ideas in books and living ideas. With regard to the "three-eight" working style, "three" refers to the three mottoes: "keep firmly to the correct political orientation," "maintain an industrious and simple style of work," and "be flexible in strategy and tactics"; "eight" refers to eight characters which mean unity, alertness, earnestness, and liveliness."

As Comrade Mao Tse-tung long ago pointed out, "In China, war is the main form of struggle and the army is the main form of organization." (16) Hence, the Marxist-Leninist line of the Chinese Communist Party, represented by Comrade Mao Tse-tung, and all the fine traditions of the party were usually implemented first in the army. This is precisely the characteristic of the Chinese revolution and arises from the historical conditions of the protracted revolutionary war. So it was with the spread of our party's democratic style of work among the masses. The whole liberation army was a school of democracy throughout the decades of war, a sower of democratic thinking and a democratic style of work. During the difficult years of struggle against reaction at home and abroad, wherever the liberation army went, there revolutionary bases were established and democratic thinking and a democratic style of work spread; the people learned to hold meetings, conduct elections, hold discussions, practice criticism and employ other democratic ways, exercise democratic rights and reach unanimity and undertake unified action on the basis of democracy.

To this day, the Chinese people still warmly refer to a good cadre whose style of work is very democratic and who is as one with the masses as "our old Red armyman" or "the old ba lu (eighth route army)." This is an apt illustration. Leadership by the party which is armed with Marxism-Leninism, with Mao Tse-tung's thinking, and whole-hearted defense of the highest interests of the overwhelming majority of the people -- these are the prerequisites for all the systems and fine traditions of our army. All the tasks of the army are carried out through firm reliance on the masses. Our people learn from the army and our army learns from the people and from the work of the local organizations. The army and the people are as one, and the army units and local organizations are in accord.

How can this be understood by the imperialists, reactionaries, and revisionists, who are alienated from and hostile to the people accounting for the more than 90 percent of the population. They do not want to and can never understand it. To them, absolute obedience and no democracy are common characteristics of all armies, bourgeois or proletarian; for the Chinese people to learn from the liberation army, therefore, naturally means abolishing democracy and imposing military control over the people.

Such is their pitiful and absurd reasoning. Their slanders and attacks can achieve no more than to expose their complete ignorance of and utter hatred for all revolutionary causes. They cannot do us the least harm; on the contrary, these attacks and slanders serve us as the best teachers by negative example and prove that what we are doing is right.

Once again this demonstrates the truth that it is not your modern technique that the imperialists and the reactionaries truly fear. The modern technique that you have they also have, and more of it and better. That is not what they are afraid of. What they really fear is precisely the unique proletarian political consciousness of our commanders and fighters, the mass line that brings into fullest play this political consciousness and the initiative and creativeness resulting from this consciousness, and our democratic tradition. Is that not perfectly clear?

Comrade Mao Tse-tung's theory and practice concerning the need for democracy in the army too, the need for the mass line in military work too, and the theory and practice concerning the orderly development under leadership of democracy in the three main fields, in the army, constitute a new development of the Marxist-Leninist principle that the masses are the creators of history. It was born out of practice during China's protracted revolutionary war. It was first carried out in the course of war and within the army. At the same time, it is applicable to the revolutionary cause of the people in general. In learning from the oil workers of Taching, from the peasants of Tachai, and from the liberation army, in the movement for comparing with the more advanced, learning from and overtaking them and helping the less advanced, the Chinese people are concretely applying the democratic traditions of our army to the three revolutionary movements of class struggle, the struggle for production, and scientific experimentation, and they are widely developing the movement for democracy in four fields; namely, democracy in politics, in production, in finance, and in military affairs.

They, too, are making many new creations, with tremendous effect on raising political consciousness, promoting production and developing science. All this fully demonstrates that the democratic tradition of our army initiated by Comrade Mao Tse-tung is a priceless revolutionary tradition, an unbreakable truth of universal application that works wherever it is applied.

Relying on this priceless revolutionary tradition, under the brilliant leadership of our party and Comrade Mao Tse-tung our army and the masses of the people have won great victories in successive revolutionary wars, in socialist revolution and in socialist construction by carrying out the principles, lines, and policies Comrade Mao Tse-tung and the party Central Committee have laid down. In the future, too, by relying on this priceless revolutionary tradition, applying it and carrying it forward on

fronts throughout the country, our people surely will all the faster reach the great goal of building China into a powerful socialist country, with modern agriculture, modern industry, modern national defense, and modern science and technology.

Our PLA should continue to hold aloft the great Red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thinking, continue to persist in and develop the democratic tradition of our army and learn with modesty all the new achievements and experiences of the local organizations in this respect, and strive to raise the combat strength of our army and accomplish with distinction the great task assigned to us by history.

Footnotes

(1) "The Struggle in the Ching kang Mountains," Vol. 1, Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung.

(2) "The Democratic Movement in the Army," Vol. 4, Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung.

(3) "On Protracted War," Vol. 2, Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung.

(4) "To A. Bebel, W. Liebknecht, W. Bracke and others," letters by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

(5) "Be Concerned With the Well-Being of the Masses; Pay Attention to Methods of Work," Vol. 1, Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung.

(6) "On Protracted War," Vol. 2, Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung.

(7) Preface and Postscript to "Rural Surveys," Vol. 3, Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung.

(8) The three main rules of discipline are as follows: Obey orders in all your actions; do not take a single needle or piece of thread from the masses; and turn in everything captured. The eight points for attention are as follows: speak politely; pay fairly for what you buy; return everything you borrow; pay for anything you damage; do not hit or swear at people; do not damage crops; do not take liberties with women; and do not ill-treat captives.

(9) "On the Great Victory in the Northwest and on the New Type of Ideological Education Movement in the Liberation Army," Vol. 4, Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung.

(10) "The Struggle in the Ching kang Mountains," Vol. 1, Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung.

(11) "Be concerned with the Well-Being of the Masses, Pay Attention to Methods and Work," Vol. 1, Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung.

(12) Ibid.

(13) "The Democratic Movement in the Army," Vol. 4, Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung.

(14) "On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party," Vol. 1, Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung.

(15) Ibid.

(16) "Problems of War and Strategy," Vol. 2, Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung.

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COMPASS FOR 500 MILLION PEASANTS IN FOLLOWING
PATH OF SOCIALISM

-- In Commemoration of 10th Anniversary of Publication of Comrade Mao Tse-tung's "On the Formation of Agricultural Cooperatives". --

Following is a translation of an article by T'ao Chu (7118 6999) in the Chinese-language periodical Hung Ch'i (Red Flag), Peking, No. 8, 1965.7

On 31 July 1955, comrade Mao Tse-tung gave a report entitled "On the Formation of Agricultural Cooperatives" at a meeting of CCP provincial committee, municipal committee, and district committee secretaries. Ten years have passed since that date.

During the past ten years, there have been huge changes in China. There have been great, decisive victories in the socialist revolution on the economic, political, and ideological fronts. Our country's socialist construction is racing forward at unprecedented speed, and there have been great, unprecedented accomplishments in agriculture, industry, national defense, and science and technology.

As to the reason why we have achieved such huge triumphs in socialist revolution and construction, the decisive factor has been that the entire party held high the red banner of the thought of Mao Tse-tung. In particular, it followed the Marxist-Leninist path for solving farm problems pointed out in comrade Mao Tse-tung's "On the Formation of Agricultural Cooperatives", stepped up the pace of socialist reform in agriculture, found a timely solution to the question of the formation of agricultural cooperatives, and then on the foundation of the cooperatives, put the people's communes into effect.

The core question in our country's socialist revolution and construction is to solve the agricultural problem according to socialist principles. Collectivization of agriculture not only created favorable conditions for the great development of agriculture, but also laid down a firm foundation for the development of the national economy as a whole. Surveying the historical facts of the past ten years, regarding the excellent situation in the villages and cities today, looking at the glorious

prospects for socialist construction, people all the more believe that, under the guidance of the thought of Mao Tse-tung, they can transform China, in not too prolonged a historical period, into a great, prosperous socialist state possessed of a modernized agriculture, a modernized industry, a modernized national defense system, and modernized science and technology.

China was originally an extremely poor, backward agricultural country. The guiding of 500 million individual peasants in such a country onto the path of the socialist collective economy, onto the mutual, prosperous, healthy path of socialism, has been a great achievement of world significance.

The practice over the past ten years has ruthlessly refuted the erroneous ideas of the party's right-wing opportunists concerning the agricultural problem, has smashed the poisonous attacks by the Khrushchev revisionists concerning socialist reform in our agriculture.

The theoretical outline made by comrade Mao Tse-tung in his "On the Formation of Agricultural Cooperatives" has great practical significance and immense vitality. Marx has said: "It is best to compare the truth to a piece of flint -- the harder the flint is struck, the more brilliant are the sparks which it emits." (1) We believe that with constant use this work by comrade Mao Tse-tung will continue to emit even more brilliant radiance.

1.

Agricultural collectivization is a great, penetrating revolutionary movement. Throughout the entire course of this movement, there will be the sharp struggle between the two paths of socialism and capitalism. Comrade Mao Tse-tung has pointed out that "the world-shaking event of having our 500 million peasants realize socialist reform will not arise under calm, peaceful conditions." (2) Facts are really this way. The extinction of the old society and the emergence of the new order can take place only by hand-to-hand class struggle. The reflection of this struggle within the party was the right opportunists' opposition to the formation of cooperatives. Under the leadership of comrade Mao Tse-tung, all the party's comrades engaged in a severe struggle with them. The above-mentioned work by comrade Mao Tse-tung was a Marxist-Leninist conclusion formed out of this struggle.

The movement for the formation of agricultural cooperatives was undertaken shortly after the completion of the land reform movement. After the establishment of the Chinese People's Republic (CPR), our party used three full years to mobilize the masses to undertake a thorough land reform. The success of land reform erased the feudal system restricting the development of productive forces, overthrew the landlord class, weakened the rich peasant economy, and spurred the recovery and development of agricultural production. The economic position of the broad masses of poor peasants was improved, and many of them became middle peasants. However, after the completion of land reform, the small peasant economy existed in agriculture like a huge sea. The vital forces of this system were after all limited, and before long, this changed from being a spur to

the productive forces to being a hindrance. At the same time, with our large population, the amount of arable land was insufficient; farm methods were very backward, so that after the division of land by the peasants, although there was some improvement or even a great improvement, many persons were still poor and not prosperous. What was particularly serious was that, not long after the land division, two new distinct phenomena appeared in the villages: On the one hand, the spontaneous forces of capitalism were developing, new rich peasants were emerging, and many prosperous middle peasants were seeking to become rich peasants. On the other hand, due to the lack of the means of production, many poor peasants were still in a poor position. Some went into debt, and some sold or rented the land which they had just been given. If these two tendencies had been allowed to develop, capitalistic excesses would have appeared again in the rural areas. Under these circumstances, was the party to lead the peasants forward onto the path of socialism, or was it to stop half-way, discard the peasants and let them go along with the bourgeoisie and the rich peasants? This was an extremely severe political test raised before the party at that time.

At this crucial moment, comrade Mao Tse-tung lucidly told the party that a great socialist activism was concealed in the masses, that the peasants should be firmly guided ahead, that there must be trust in the masses and trust in party leadership. In his "On the Formation of Agricultural Cooperatives", he pointed out that the poor and old and new lower-middle peasants, which make up between 60 and 70 percent of the rural population, possessed activism for following the socialist path, that this activism was even greater among the elements with a rather high consciousness. In the summer of 1955, the new high tide of the socialist mass movement, which appeared in the villages, was a collective manifestation of this socialist activism by the poor and lower-middle peasants.

However, the bourgeoisie and rich peasants firmly opposed the movement to form cooperatives. The 20 to 30 percent of the prosperous or rather prosperous peasants in the countryside were wavering about socialism, and some people were vigorously seeking to follow the capitalist path. Behind the prosperous and middle peasants, there was the support of the landlords and rich peasants. The class struggle in society was reflected within the party. In order to oppose the socialist reforms, the bourgeoisie, the rich peasants, and the prosperous peasants with spontaneous capitalist tendencies sought for spokesmen within the party. Thus, the spokesmen they found were the party's right opportunists of the time. They stood on the side of these groups, and searched out every sort of pretext to oppose the agricultural cooperative movement led by the party.

The right opportunists were befuddled by the several hundred thousand cooperatives which appeared. They used pretexts such as "the so-called development of cooperatives exceeds actual possibilities," "exceeds the level of consciousness of the masses," "exceeds the level of experience of the cadres," to oppose this socialist revolutionary movement by the peasants. Towards the vigorously developing cooperatives, they did not give ardent support, but rather threw cold water. They raised their policy of so-called "firm contraction." Comrade Mao Tse-tung made sharp criticism of this sort of people. He said: "Those persons who, in a

revolutionary period, can only follow the standard path cannot see this sort of activism. They are blind, and all that appears before them is a belt of darkness." (3) It can be seen that treatment of the cooperative movement -- whether to develop it or hinder it, to push bravely ahead or to "insist on contraction", to provide active leadership or to just stand about -- was in the final analysis a question of how to treat the socialist activism of the 500 million peasants, in particular that of the poor and lower-middle peasants; it was a question of actively leading the peasants onto the path of socialism, or not.

The year 1955 was a great year with regards to the unprecedented high tide in socialist revolution. What accounted for the vociferous opposition by the right opportunists just at this time? There were deep social roots for this. It is just as comrade Mao Tse-tung has said: "They always stood on the side of the bourgeoisie, the rich peasants, or the prosperous peasants who have tendencies towards spontaneous capitalism, and make suggestions for a rather small number of persons." "They don't stand on the side of the working class and put forth ideas for the entire country or for all the people." They "see the rather small number of prosperous peasants and forget the large numbers of poor or not-rich peasants." (4) We know that the socialist reform in agriculture was a question of life and death for the bourgeoisie. When we transformed the individual small peasant economy into the socialist collective economy, we tore out the old roots for capitalism in the villages and put the urban bourgeoisie into an isolated position. Under these circumstances, some persons in the party, under the influence of the bourgeoisie and the rich peasants, came out to oppose the formation of cooperatives; and this is not at all strange, for it is completely in accord with the laws of class struggle. As regards the question of the peasants, these persons were still in the stage of the bourgeois democratic revolution even though the stage of socialist revolution had arrived. This showed that they were not proletarian revolutionaries, but rather bourgeois revolutionaries. With his great strategic vision as a proletarian revolutionary, comrade Mao Tse-tung saw through to the essence of things, predicted the direction of development. At this great historical turning point, he again illuminated the program for socialist revolution to the party, made a timely attack on the right opportunists within the party, and called on the party to mobilize the masses, to actively lead the masses in the formation of cooperatives.

As soon as the theory was grasped by the masses, it became a great material force. Comrade Mao Tse-tung's report, "On the Formation of Agricultural Cooperatives," vigorously spurred the emergence of the high tide of socialist reform in agriculture, and greatly stepped up the pace of the formation of agricultural cooperatives. According to the party Central Committee's original thinking, it was to take 18 years for the cooperativization of agriculture, that is, from the establishment of the CPR in 1949 to 1967. In actuality, every area completed this ahead of schedule. The cooperativization of a half-socialist nature (that is, the first level agricultural cooperatives) was basically completed in 1956. The cooperativization of a complete socialist nature (that is, the high

level agricultural producer cooperatives) was completed in 1957. In 1958, on the basis of cooperativization, the entire country formed people's communes. This is to say that only nine years were needed for the collectivization of agriculture, including the formation of the people's communes, which was only one-half of what was originally planned. This high tide of socialist reform caused rapid changes in the villages. Comrade Mao Tse-tung described these changes at the end of 1955. He said: "The first half of 1955 was somewhat dark and foreboding, while the atmosphere was completely different during the second half. Tens of millions of peasant households had started to act, responding to the Central Committee's call, and were carrying out cooperativization. ... This was a raging tide from the sea which dashed away all demons and monsters. The faces of all people in society were clearly revealed. This was also true within the party. With the passing of this year, there is great confidence in the victory of socialism. Of course, there are still many battles which need to be fought." (5)

The development of actual life completely vindicated comrade Mao's above predictions. For ten years now, the struggle about the agricultural question still ebbs and flows. During these ten years, there have been several new visitations by the right opportunists. In 1959, they opposed the formation of the people's communes, saying that they were premature and badly handled. In 1962, when the economy had run into temporary difficulty, some persons actively touted "three selves one guarantee", "the single work method", "liberalization," and the like. Although the right opportunists manifested themselves at different times in different forms, their basic nature was still the same. Therefore, the struggle between the two paths against the right opportunists runs like a red thread throughout the entire ten years. Although at certain times, due to a shallow mastery of the thought of comrade Mao Tse-tung, there were defects and errors of a hasty nature in our work, the main danger is still from right opportunism. It is just because we firmly implemented comrade Mao Tse-tung's instructions, and overcame right opportunist errors one after the other, that the socialist revolution in the villages had gone ahead constantly, which has brought about constant consolidation and development in the rural socialist camp. The practice over these ten years proves that comrade Mao's great work, "On the Formation of Agricultural Cooperatives," is a great ideological weapon of the party in holding to the socialist direction on the agricultural problem, a great compass for guiding 500 million peasants on to the socialist path.

2.

The peasant question is an extremely important question which the proletarian revolution must resolve. China is a great country in which more than 80 percent of the population is made up of peasants. The peasant question is of first-class significance in China. Our party lead the peasants to undertake the democratic revolution and the socialist revolution; it has thus accumulated rich, incomparable experience over the peasant question. This rich experience, scientifically analyzed by comrade Mao

Tse-tung, has greatly enriched and developed Marxism-Leninism.

Comrade Mao's theory on the peasant question is very rich indeed. His report, "On the Formation of Agricultural Cooperatives," concentratedly embodied a new development for Marxist-Leninist theory concerning the question of socialist reform in agriculture. The most important of this development, we think, can be seen in the following points.

1. Concerning the Position of the Peasantry in the Socialist Revolution and Construction.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung has given extreme attention to the peasant question. Long ago when the party was first leading the democratic revolution, he repeatedly pointed out: The peasant question is the basic question in the Chinese revolution; the strength of the peasants constitutes the main strength of the revolution. The Chinese democratic revolution is actually a peasant revolution; the Chinese revolutionary war is actually a peasant war. However, the right opportunists within the party do not concentrate on the broad masses of peasants at all, for they believe that the democratic revolution is mainly a bourgeois affair. And the "left" opportunists neglect the special role of the peasants in the Chinese revolution from another angle. They insist that work in the cities is the key, thus making the middle forces into the main direction for attack. They stubbornly tried to throw the peasantry into the embrace of the bourgeoisie. In the course of the Chinese democratic revolution, comrade Mao Tse-tung thoroughly criticized these erroneous views and formulated a Marxist-Leninist line for the Chinese revolution. This was: Under the leadership of the proletariat, fully develop the peasantry's revolutionary activism, transfer the party's priority work into the villages, develop peasant guerrilla warfare, establish revolutionary bases in the countryside, bring about an encirclement of the cities by the countryside, and thus push the revolution step by step towards victory until it finally seizes state power. The CCP carried out comrade Mao's correct line, and finally achieved a great victory in people's revolution in China, a country with a population of more than 600 million. This was a great, unprecedented feat in the world's proletarian revolutionary movement.

In the socialist era, comrade Mao Tse-tung still placed extreme importance on the peasant question. He said: "Our country has a peasant population of over 500 million, and peasant conditions are greatly related to the development of the economy and the consolidation of the regime." (6) The scope and speed of our socialist revolution and construction will be determined by what policy we use to solve the peasant question and the agriculture question.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung correctly handled the relationship between socialist reform in agriculture and reform in urban capitalistic industry and commerce. He held that socialist reform in agriculture was the main link in the entire chain of socialist revolution. This is because when there is socialist reform in agriculture, the relations between the bourgeoisie and the peasantry are severed, many roots which produce capitalism are torn out, and all this isolates the capitalist forces in the cities. This point was very striking in a country in which the small peasant held

With the Marxist-Leninist principle of combining the theory of the stage of revolutionary development with the theory of constant revolution, comrade Mao Tse-tung has consistently guided our country's revolutionary movement, including the peasant movement. He pointed out that the peasant movement led by our party was not only for the purpose of realizing the democratic revolution, but was also to lead the peasantry onto the healthy path of socialism and communism. This is a task of two different natures which must be handled in two revolutionary stages. However, we must definitely not erect a great wall between the two stages; we must rather closely link the two stages together. In the first stage we must prepare conditions for the second, and as soon as the tasks of the first stage are completed, we must without hesitation launch ourselves into the struggle for the next stage.

The right opportunists in the party violated the Marxist-Leninist principle on the combining of the theory of the stages of revolutionary development and the theory of constant revolution. They put the two stages into opposition. After the land reform, they advocated that the "four great freedoms" of hired labor, loans, trade, and the buying and selling and renting of land be carried out in the countryside; they advocated the guaranteeing of private property and wealth and of consolidating the so-called "new democratic order." These comrades were nothing but bourgeois revolutionaries, and they wished to halt the Chinese revolution in the democratic stage.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung thoroughly criticized this viewpoint. Early in the stage of democratic revolution, he pointed out that it was necessary to establish the precedence of the poor peasants in the land reform. At the same time that the feudal landlord economy was smashed, it had been necessary to isolate the rich peasants politically and to weaken the rich peasant economy. After realizing the policy of "land to the tillers," it was necessary to actively organize the peasantry, to set up mutual-aid teams and cooperatives which contained the seeds of socialism. All this created very favorable conditions for the later agricultural cooperativization.

When land reform was basically completed throughout the country, comrade Mao pointed out that we must not let the revolution stop, that we must not let the masses' enthusiasm cool off, but that we must continue to raise the political consciousness of the peasants, closely link the land reform with the agricultural cooperativization efforts, constantly lead the peasants forward, so as to create a collective economy out of a dispersed economy.

Every type of complete agricultural organizational form of a gradual transitional nature, which comrade Mao created for agricultural collectivization, was another brilliant example of his creatively combining the theory of the development of revolutionary stages with the theory of constant revolution. In the course of cooperativization, by means of the methods of model examples and gradual dissemination, we took three mutually distinctive yet closely related steps: First, according to the principle of self-volition and mutual profit, we called on the peasants to organize mutual-aid teams which contained the germs of socialism; second, on their basis, we called on the peasants to organize agricultural producer cooperatives which had a half socialist nature; third, we called on the peasants

to unite more closely to organize large-scale cooperatives which were completely socialist in nature. Subsequently, on the basis of a further development in farm production, based on the demands of the masses, we lead the peasants in organizing people's communes. Thus step by step we transformed the small peasant economy, and this was beneficial for gradually increasing socialist consciousness and for rapidly realizing agricultural collectivization; and it was also beneficial for avoiding the negative affect on production which might have arisen because of the violent changes in productive relations. This guaranteed the gradual increase year after year in farm production.

After the socialist economic system was set up in the rural areas, did this mean that socialist reform in agriculture was concluded? Some people thought so. In their opinion, the socialist revolution concerned with the ownership of the means of production was the final revolution in the history of mankind. At least it was the final revolution with a class struggle import. Comrade Mao Tse-tung criticized this viewpoint and gave a negative reply to this question. In his opinion, agricultural collectivization was a great revolution concerning the peasantry's production forms and life forms, but socialist reform was not yet over.

The matter is very clear: As long as the remnants of private economy existed among the peasants, they would continue to possess certain features of small producers; and it would be difficult to avoid class splitting in the villages. Moreover, from the long-range viewpoint, the system of agricultural collectivization was not our final goal. In the future, under fully prepared conditions, we wanted to transform the collective ownership system, with its small scope and low degree of public ownership, into a system with a broad scope and high degree of public ownership, and finally we wanted to make the transition from socialism to communism, and erase the basic differences between worker and peasant and between town and country. Obviously, to realize this historical task, it was necessary to combine the theory of the stages of revolutionary development with the theory of constant revolution, to constantly push forward the socialist revolution in the rural areas.

3. On Correctly Handling the Questions of Productive Relations and Productive Forces in Agriculture.

Correct handling of the relations between agricultural cooperativization and mechanization has been an important question in socialist reform in agriculture. This is basically a question of correctly handling agricultural productive relations and productive forces. Under the conditions whereby no, or very few, machines were used in agriculture, and whereby the national industry was rather backward, was it possible to realize agricultural cooperativization? Some comrades held that before mechanization, it was not possible. And it should not be attempted. These comrades could not see that the rural capitalist system and the dispersed economy had become serious blocks to the further development of productive forces. They could not see that the small peasant economy was no longer appropriate to the needs of the development of the national economy; they held tightly to the backward production relations of the

small peasant economy, and this violated Marxist-Leninist theory on productive relations and productive forces. These comrades included some who, after they had become clear in their thinking, supported party policy on agricultural cooperativization. However, there was also a minority which did not change its erroneous viewpoint.

In contradistinction to the above erroneous viewpoint, Comrade Mao Tse-tung pointed out: "With regard to agriculture, under conditions in our country (capitalist countries bring about the capitalization of agriculture), we must first have cooperativization and only then will we be able to use large machinery." (8) With the dictatorship of the proletariat, with the leadership of the socialist state economy, it was not only possible, but necessary, to first carry out cooperativization in the rural areas and then mechanization, to take social change as the foundation and technological change as the leading factor. It was a fact that our industry was rather backward, but just because of this it was necessary to have cooperativization first. Only cooperativization would open a broad path for technological change in the countryside; only with a rapid development of farm production would there be a stimulant to industrial development, which could then all the more quickly provide large amounts of machinery to agriculture. Therefore, the peasants had to be organized without any hesitation for common labor and for collective management. In this way there would not only be an effective check to capitalist development in the rural areas, but, even if the former production tools were still used, the labor productivity would be higher than for individual production, all of which would spur farm production and hasten the stage of agricultural mechanization.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung creatively handled the relations between cooperativization and mechanization, and developed Marxist-Leninist theory concerning productive relations and productive forces. Long ago in his "On Contradictions," he pointed out that changes in productive relations naturally emerged on the basis on needs in the development of productive forces. But the changes in productive relations serve a huge function in spurring the development of productive forces, and under certain conditions, this may even be a decisive function. People see very clearly that it was just because we realized agricultural cooperativization in a timely way and changed the productive relations in the old villages, just because we established new relations, fully developed the factor of human motivation, and fully developed mass activism, that we were able to spur the development of productive forces.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung also pointed out that after the creation of socialist productive relations, productive relations and productive forces were still both in accord and in contradiction. "After solving these contradictions, new problems may appear." (9) The contradiction between productive relations and productive forces stimulate the development of society. Before many persons believed that there would no longer be any contradiction between productive relations and forces in a socialist society. If this were really the case, then the dialectic would not be appropriate, and the movement of contradictions would stop, and the development of society would come to a halt. This metaphysical viewpoint will only cause one to be helpless in the face of actual contradictions. This is very

harmful to our practice of reforming the world, and thus it is extremely erroneous. Comrade Mao's theory on the persistence of contradictions between socialist productive relations and productive forces penetratingly revealed the laws of the development of socialist society, and thus now we can, based on concrete conditions, take the initiative in constantly perfecting and altering productive relations and in guaranteeing the constant development of productive forces.

4. On the Questions of the Rural Class Struggle and the Party's Rural Class Line.

From the Second Plenum of the Seventh Party Congress in 1949, comrade Mao Tse-tung has constantly used the scientific, revolutionary viewpoints of Marxism-Leninism to arm the party's comrades, asking that we firmly remember that during the whole period of transition, class contradictions will exist, the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie will exist, and the struggle between the paths of socialism and capitalism will exist. After the land reform, should we have let capitalism sprout forth and run rampant, or should we have pushed on to socialism? After cooperativization, should we have continued to push the socialist revolution through to the end, or should we have been satisfied with what we had done, stopped half-way along the road, or even retreated in the face of capitalism? This is the main content of the rural class struggle during the transitional period. This class struggle is long-term, complicated, twisting, and at times very sharp. What is particularly noteworthy here is that comrade Mao Tse-tung pointed up the new characteristics of the class struggle under new historical conditions: After the basic completion of socialist reform in the ownership system, the class enemies opposed to socialism vigorously attempted to use the method of "peaceful evolution" to restore capitalism. Therefore, we must always be vigilant, strongly stress class struggle, adopt correct policies and measures, undertake long-term, unremitting struggle, and smash the class enemies' plot of "peaceful evolution."

Comrade Mao Tse-tung has repeatedly pointed up the protracted nature and complex nature of the rural class struggle, and he has employed a Marxist-Leninist class analysis method, starting out from reality, to make a creative scientific analysis of all classes and strata in the rural areas after the land reform. This has enabled us to reach a correct class estimate and to formulate correct policies on struggle.

In the period when agricultural cooperativization developed on a large scale, a goodly number of the previously poor peasants had already become middle peasants. There was a striking increase in the proportion of middle peasants (including new and old middle peasants) in the rural population. Comrade Mao Tse-tung made a concrete class analysis of the different strata of middle peasants. This involved the important question of formulating the party's rural class line in the socialist era. Starting from the fact of the ever-increasing number of middle peasants, the right opportunists felt that we should no longer raise the slogan of relying on the poor peasants. Comrade Mao Tse-tung held that this was erroneous.

He pointed out: "If the working class and the communist party want to use the socialist spirit and system to undertake a thorough reform of the system of small-peasant ownership of the means of production in the villages, this can only be achieved rather smoothly by relying on the poor peasants who are half-proletarianized. If not, there will be much difficulty. This is because the semi-proletariat in the villages consists of people who do not firmly hold to small-peasant ownership of the means of production, and who can accept socialist reform rather easily. The majority of them has already become new middle peasants, but as compared with the old middle peasants, they possess, except for a number of prosperous middle peasants, rather high consciousness politically. And the misery of their past lives is rather easy to recall. Also, the lower-middle peasants among the old middle peasants are rather close to the lower-middle peasants among the new middle peasants in political and economic persuasion. They are not the same as the upper-middle peasants, that is the prosperous and rather wealthy middle peasants, among the old and new middle peasants." (10)

Although the majority of the prosperous middle peasants may approve of cooperativization, they still have many capitalistic tendencies and often try to follow the old capitalist path. Struggle with their capitalistic tendencies is unavoidable. Moreover, since the economic position of the rich peasants is weak, while the strength of the prosperous middle peasants is quite large, the struggle between the two paths often manifests as a struggle with the prosperous middle peasants who are supported by the landlords and rich peasants.

Based on this analysis, comrade Mao Tse-tung raised the slogan that during the socialist era the party must rely on the poor and lower-middle peasants in the countryside. These groups total 60 to 70 percent of the rural population, and with such a large amount of working peasants acting as the working class' support in the villages, the collective economy in the rural areas has found reliable strength; the dictatorship of the proletariat in the villages has a strong social backing, and there is the reliable guarantee for the victory of socialism in the villages.

Comrade Mao's analysis of rural classes and strata solved the important strategic question of how the working class should handle the middle peasants. It formulated a class line of relying on the poor and lower-middle peasants and of uniting with the middle peasants as regards undertaking socialist revolution and construction in the villages.

5. On the Worker-Peasant Alliance in the Era of Socialist Revolution.

Under socialist conditions, the content and form of the basis of the worker-peasant alliance constitute an extremely important question. Comrade Mao Tse-tung said: As for the workers and peasants, "these two classes make up from 80 to 90 percent of the Chinese population. It was primarily the strength of these two classes which overthrew imperialism and the Kuomintang reactionaries. In proceeding from the new democracy to socialism, we will primarily rely upon an alliance between these classes."

(11)

The question is, during the period of socialist revolution, what should the foundation and method of the worker-peasant alliance be in order that it is consolidated?

In comrade Mao's opinion, under conditions of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the process for strengthening the worker-peasant alliance is to use proletarian thought to educate the peasantry, to reform agriculture according to socialist principles; it is to develop the struggle between the two paths in the countryside, to unite closely the undertakings of agriculture and industry, to bring about a reduction in the differences between the rural areas and the cities. However, in different periods, we must base ourselves on questions which arise in relations between industry and agriculture, provide a timely, concrete solution. Only thus will we constantly consolidate the alliance.

When the individual peasant economy was no longer suitable for the development of the national economy, the formation of cooperatives became the core question in strengthening the worker-peasant alliance. Comrade Mao Tse-tung refuted the opportunistic tune that there would be the danger of bankrupting the alliance if the cooperativization did not quickly "dismount". He said: "We believe that just the opposite is true. If we don't quickly mount up, the alliance may be smashed. There is only the difference of one word here, that of dismounting or mounting up, but the divergence between the two paths is manifested in this. Everyone knows that we already have a worker-peasant alliance. This was erected on the foundation of a bourgeois democratic revolution, which involved opposing imperialism and feudalism, and the seizing of land from the hands of the landlords to give to the peasants so as to liberate them from the feudal ownership system. But this revolution has passed, the feudal system has been destroyed." Now the worker-peasant alliance must be further consolidated on some other basis. "This means that at the same time that we gradually carry out socialist industrialization and undertake socialist reform in handicrafts and in capitalist industry and commerce, we must also carry out socialist reform in agriculture as a whole, that is, undertake the formation of cooperatives. We must erase the rich peasant economic system and the individual economic system, so that all the rural people prosper mutually. We believe that only in this way can the alliance be consolidated. If not, there will be the danger of bankruptcy." (12)

Of course, in order to consolidate the alliance, it is not enough just to solve the contradiction between the individual peasant economy and socialist industrialization. After cooperativization, we must still correctly handle every sort of contradiction inside the collective economy (such as those between production and distribution, accumulation and consumption, leadership and the masses, and so forth), and contradictions between the collective economy and the collective economy. We must correctly handle the contradictions between the system of collective ownership in agriculture and the system of public ownership in industry, and we must gradually solve the contradictions between the backwardness of farm technology and the progressiveness of industrial technology, etc.

During the whole transitional period, the struggle between the two paths will exist in the villages. To stand on the side of the working people, to firmly oppose capitalistic forces, to carry the socialist

revolution through to the end -- these are the most important guarantees for consolidating the worker-peasant alliance. It is only by taking the class struggle as primary, by stressing the three great revolutionary movements of class struggle, production struggle, and scientific experiments, that the alliance will continue to be consolidated and developed.

6. On Correctly Handling Revolutionary Mass Movements.

Historically, a basic distinction between historical materialism and historical idealism was that of how to view the position of the masses in history: were they the masters of history, or were they simply primeval "rabble"? Comrade Mao repeatedly pointed out that history was created by the people; "it was the people, only the people, which was the moving force in creating the world's history." (13) In his opinion, any great revolutionary movement which our party leads must be a great mass movement. The goal which this revolutionary movement wants to reach must be the results of mass struggle. It cannot be simply a gift or charity from the government or any other group. At the same time, in comrade Mao's opinion, Marxist-Leninists must at all times hold great enthusiasm for revolutionary mass movements, and they must never throw cold water on the masses. In 1927, in his "Report on an Investigation into the Hunan Peasant Movement," comrade Mao Tse-tung pointed out that in the face of the heated peasant movement, "all revolutionary parties and comrades should stand at the forefront and be tested by them; and accepted or rejected. Would they stand ahead of them and lead them? Or would they stand behind them and, indecisively, criticize them? Or would they stand opposite to them, and oppose them?" (14) At that time, comrade Mao firmly opposed considering the mass movements as "all fouled up", and he ardently praised them as being "very good indeed." This is an eternal, lasting truth. Comrade Mao consistently handled the mass revolutionary struggle with the highest enthusiasm. He led the masses to rise up to liberate themselves. In the course of carrying out agricultural collectivization, Comrade Mao was again an example for the whole party in handling mass revolutionary movements. He repeatedly pointed out that collectivization was a socialist mass movement in the rural areas. This was the great affair of 500 million peasants, something which no one could bestow on them or do for them. "The leadership should not lag behind the mass movements;" "it should lead this movement in an active, enthusiastic, planned way, and it should not use every sort of method to retard it." "There should be bold leadership, which fears nothing, neither ahead nor behind;" "there must be initiative, not passivity, the strengthening of leadership, not the discarding of it." (15) This then is the complete revolutionary spirit of Marxism-Leninism, and an expression of the highest confidence in the revolutionary people.

As regards the most basic question of treating revolutionary mass movements, the right opportunists have violated Marxism-Leninism. They have an aristocratic, lordly attitude as regards the activism of the 500 million peasants in following the socialist path; they do not believe that the peasants, under the leadership of the communist party, want to follow the path of socialism gradually, that the peasants can, by relying on their own strength and wisdom, overcome all difficulties, run the cooperatives

well, and consolidate the socialist camp in the countryside. Therefore, when the heated mass movements show up, they become confused, are startled and at a loss, frightened to death, and may even "chop down" the cooperatives already in operation. They repeat the story about a reluctant dragon who had talked of socialism for years, but who, when socialism was about to find him, was still afraid. The two different attitudes about revolutionary mass movements which appeared in the course of agricultural collectivization again show that this is a most basic question which our working class party should heed. Even after the seizure of political power, this should not in any way be neglected. We must definitely not think that once having seized power, we can replace the mass revolutionary struggles with administrative orders, that we no longer need respect the revolutionary creativity of the masses; we cannot start disliking the enthusiasm of the masses, and use such erroneous behavior as "chopping down" the cooperatives to dampen mass revolutionary enthusiasm. We should know that the proletariat seized power just so as to use it all the better in mobilizing the masses, in stimulating the mass revolutionary activism to undertake the struggle between the two paths and to finally eliminate classes. The purpose of this is to mobilize and organize the strength of the countless working people, to develop their wisdom and knowledge, so as to vigorously conquer nature and develop productive forces to as great an extent as possible. If we don't use the favorable conditions of political power to all the more firmly rely on the masses, to mobilize the masses, to lead the masses ahead, but rather if we separate political power from the masses, make it into a bureaucratic mechanism which binds the masses, then we will accomplish nothing, and may even bring about the defeat of the revolution. The right opportunists sit down beside the bourgeoisie, the rich peasants, or the prosperous middle peasants who have capitalist tendencies, and they do not hear, and do not wish to hear, the calls of the 500 million peasants. They don't wish to study the practical experience of the mass struggles. In this way they lag far behind the revolutionary mass movements and become stumbling blocks in the way of mass progress.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung has regularly instructed the whole party that, if the healthy development of revolutionary mass movements is to be guaranteed, it cannot sit by and wait for the masses to start moving; it must rather strengthen party leadership and, basing itself on the revolutionary goals of each period and by means of hard, careful work, fully educate and mobilize the masses, so that conscious struggle on the part of the masses is formed. On the question of agricultural cooperativization, comrade Mao taught us that we must systematically and repeatedly propagandize the party's policy among the masses, conscientiously raise the socialist consciousness of the masses. When we propagandize to the peasants, we must not only point out the advantages of the cooperatives, but we must also mention the difficulties which may be encountered along the way, so that the peasants are completely prepared spiritually. It was just because the party Central Committee and comrade Mao rectified the crawling ideology of the "small-footed women", which had become a serious hindrance to cooperativization, and mobilized the masses of poor and lower-middle peasants that a great revolutionary high tide rapidly developed in socialist reform in

agriculture, which surged forward, unstoppable. At the same time, due to the fact that agricultural collectivization was a product of a great revolutionary mass movement, that it was something which the masses themselves had seized, and wasn't bestowed on them by bystanders, it was able to withstand any trials or tribulations.

Comrade Mao's contributions to the question of socialist reform in agriculture have been extremely great. The great practice of the 500 million Chinese peasants in following the path of collectivization took place under the personal leadership of comrade Mao Tse-tung. This was a Marxist-Leninist line which solved the agricultural question. This line was enthusiastically praised by all Marxist-Leninists and revolutionary peoples in the world. This has provided a model for all peoples trying to throw off the shackles of poverty and backwardness, and it continually throws a far-reaching influence internationally.

However, why is it that the Khrushchev revisionists have vigorously attacked our Marxist-Leninist line for solving our agricultural problem? The most basic reason is that what they are holding up is a complete revisionist line. No matter whether we talk about Khrushchev himself or his successors in other garb, they have all been pushing capitalistic policies in agriculture in every way possible. According to the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, a socialist country, which has seized political power and has carried out agricultural collectivization, should carry the socialist revolution through to the end, engage in an uncompromising struggle with the spontaneous forces of capitalism, constantly consolidate and develop socialist agriculture, and constantly carry out the work Lenin termed the "digging out of the old roots of capitalism" (16), so as to create conditions for the ultimate elimination of classes and class differences. But the Khrushchev revisionists have done just the opposite, violating the rural work line formulated by Lenin. They have pulled back on the path of agricultural collectivization, and prepared a path for the restoration of capitalism in every possible way. Their line completely violates Marxism-Leninism and the wishes of the Soviet people: it will meet with complete failure. The Khrushchev revisionists vainly attempt to obliterate the great accomplishment in our agricultural collectivization. This can result in nothing other than the further exposure of their anti-Marxist-Leninist faces.

3.

In the ten years since the publication of comrade Mao's "On the Formation of Agricultural Cooperatives," huge changes have taken place in our rural areas. The serious question facing the party at that time -- whether to actively lead the peasants on the path of socialist collectivization, or to remain satisfied with the small peasant economy -- has been long since solved. The rapid implementation of agricultural collectivization, the replacement of the system of private ownership of the means of production, which had lasted for thousands of years, with the collective ownership of the means of production -- these were earth-shaking revolutionary leaps on the part of the rural areas in the stage of the socialist revolution. This revolutionary leap served a tremendous function in

spurring the entire cause of socialist revolution and construction. This laid down an extremely firm foundation for the victory of socialism in the rural areas and the the great development of socialist construction. Now, excellent situations exist on the political, economic, ideological, and cultural fronts. The great cause of our socialist revolution and construction is continuing to advance triumphantly. Countless facts fully demonstrate that our socialist system is incomparably superior, and that the party line for socialist construction is completely correct. We believe that within not too long a historical period, it is completely possible for us to build our country into a modern, socialist power, so that our country will overtake and exceed the world's advanced levels in the economic, cultural, scientific, and national defense fields. In order to insure that our agriculture develops even more rapidly and that it consequently spurs the even greater development of the overall national economy, the tasks facing us presently in rural work are to, by means of the great revolutionary movement of socialist education, deeply develop the struggle between the two paths of socialism and capitalism, to solve systematically the new problems which arise in the consolidation and development of agriculture collectivization, to further spur the even more rapid development of farm production, so that another new countenance will appear in our rural areas.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung has told us again and again that the socialist society will last for a very long historical stage. In socialist society, after carrying out industrial nationalization and agricultural collectivization and after completing socialist reform in the ownership of the means of production, class contradictions will still persist and the class struggle will still be with us. Domestic and foreign iron-clad facts prove that comrade Mao Tse-tung's thesis on this is completely correct. Everyone knows that, due to the operating of objective laws of class struggle in the transitional period, the struggle between the two paths in the rural areas (and the same is true for the cities) is severe and sharp. There are also the overthrown reactionary classes who will plot for a comeback, and some corrupt, bandit elements and degenerate elements who will make frantic attacks on the socialist camp. At the same time, certain facets of the superstructure, particularly in the ideological sphere, are much out of step with the new economic base. Certain aspects in the new productive relations, which were established after collectivization, are not perfected sufficiently. All these problems are unfavorable for the consolidation of the rural socialist camp, for the full development of the superiority of the socialist system, for further spurring the rapid development of farm production. Our present socialist education drive is for the purpose of stressing the solution of these problems in a concentrated way.

The rural socialist education drive is basic construction undertaken by the party and state in the rural areas in such fields as politics, economics, organization, and ideology. This is a revolutionary mass movement of great historical significance, a great motive force which propels our cause forward. This drive must, in accordance with comrade Mao's instructions, take class struggle and the struggle between the two paths as the basic program, closely combine the three great revolutionary

movements of class struggle, production struggle, and scientific experiments, so that all are done well together, and the predicted goals of the drive reached unswervingly. Comrade Mao Tse-tung has pointed out that this drive in the rural areas is an extremely penetrating socialist revolution, and also a movement for re-educating people. If we victoriously develop this drive and maintain the work for a long time, we will be able to greatly consolidate and develop the rural socialist camp and the dictatorship of the proletariat, and guarantee that our country never changes its basic nature. After the completion of this drive, a new prosperous situation will have emerged throughout the country. In order to carry this drive out well, we must mobilize the masses, and in particular enable the poor and lower-middle peasants all the more to dare to be the masters of their home. On the basis of having mobilized the masses, we must closely combine the three groups of the poor and lower-middle peasants, the basic-level cadres, and the cadres sent down from above to direct the movement, and carefully carry out the work. We must learn how to differentiate and handle internal contradictions among the people and contradictions with the enemy; we must unite all unitable people, and fully mobilize the masses to undertake stern struggle with those elements hostile to socialism who do not want to accept reform. By means of the socialist education drive, we must both carry out the party's core leadership work well and place all tools of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the hands of reliable, and also lay down a firm foundation for building advanced socialist villages, and thus insure that there is even greater progress in all aspects of work.

Now we can already see the great accomplishments achieved by the socialist education drive. In all places where this drive has been carried out successfully, a prosperous situation has appeared. In many communes and teams, there is the vigorous political picture of having both centralism and democracy, both discipline and freedom, and both united determination and individual wishes. This drive has further consolidated the collective economy and greatly spurred basic construction in production and farm fields.

The basic reason why the socialist education drive in these areas could show such tremendous results is due to having carried out the instructions of the party Central Committee and comrade Mao Tse-tung. They victoriously developed the struggle between the two paths, correctly differentiated and handled the internal contradictions among the people and contradictions with the enemy, and by means of a series of activities, they have made the necessary appropriate adjustment in certain links in the superstructure and in productive relations. This includes: Conscientiously instructing basic level cadres, and raising their consciousness; rectifying the party's rural basic level organizations; readjusting and making healthy the basic level leadership core; further developing the cultural revolution in the villages, eradicating the poisonous seeds of capitalist and feudal culture, consolidating and developing the camp of socialist thought and culture; establishing and strengthening the rural political work system, and constantly elevating the political and ideological consciousness of the peasant masses; greatly developing the Te-chai spirit, firmly holding to the policy of self-reliance, further promoting

technological revolution in agriculture and basic construction in the fields; further strengthening and filling out the three-level system of ownership in the people's communes; improving and strengthening the management system in the people's communes; and so forth. In so doing, we guarantee the constant consolidation of the rural socialist camp, the spirit of socialism continually soars upward; thus the people's enthusiasm is stimulated and development of production is spurred. Therefore, in the places where the socialist education drive has been developed, in the wake of the high tide in the socialist revolution, a new high tide has emerged in socialist construction.

At present, throughout China's villages, a vast, surging high tide in agricultural production is forming and developing. This is an expression of the highly developed revolutionary spirit of the people. The hard-working, courageous Chinese people possess inexhaustible wisdom and creativity. Under the brilliant of the great party Central Committee and comrade Mao Tse-tung, any miracle can be done. In our present review of comrade Mao's "On the Formation of Cooperatives," the most basic point is to absorb revolutionary spirit, conscientiously carry out the socialist education drive, carry the socialist revolution through to the end; to learn from comrade Mao's high confidence in, and ardent support of, the revolutionary masses, and to continue to push forward with the great cause of socialist revolution and construction. We thoroughly believe that, under the leadership of the Central Committee and comrade Mao Tse-tung, with the brilliant illumination of the general line, we will continue to develop the revolutionary spirit of self-reliance, of painstaking struggle, and of frugally and diligently building up the country; we will fully develop the creativity and activism of the masses, and in all our work, a new high tide will appear throughout the country, and a new tremendous leap forward will emerge.

Footnotes:

- (1) "Debate at the Sixth Lal-yin Provincial Conference," (the first paper). The Collected Works of Marx and Engels, Vol. 1, The People's Publishing House, 1956, page 69.
- (2) "Socialist High Tide in the Villages," middle volume, the People's Publishing House, 1956, page 706.
- (3) *ibid.* page 587.
- (4) "On the Formation of Agricultural Cooperatives," People's Publishing House, 1955, pages 19, 24, 25.
- (5) "Socialist High Tide in Chinese Villages," middle volume, pages 729, 730.
- (6) "On Correctly Handling Internal Contradictions Among the People," People's Publishing House, 1957, page 16.
- (7) "On the Formation of Agricultural Cooperatives," page 23, 24.
- (8) *ibid.* page 23.
- (9) "On the Correct Handling of Internal Contradictions Among the People," page 12.
- (10) "Socialist High Tide in Chinese Villages," middle volume, page 858.

- (11) "On the People's Democratic Dictatorship," The Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Vol. 4, People's Publishing House, page 1483; 1960.
- (12) "On the Formation of Agricultural Cooperatives," pages 30,31,32.
- (13) "On Coalition Government," The Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, Vol.3, People's Publishing House, 1953, second edition, pages 1031. .
- (14) "Report on an Investigation into the Hunan Peasant Movement," The Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung, People's Publishing House, 1952, second edition, pages 13, 14.
- (15) "On the Formation of Agricultural Cooperatives," pages 2,1,2,34.
- (16) "The Eighth Congress, of the All-Russia Soviet," The Complete Works of Lenin, vol. 31, People's Publishing House, 1958, page 468.

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