

Thoroughly Expose and Criticize The "Gang of Four"

2nd National Learn-From-Tachai Conference (III) Party Central Com- Mao-tse-tung, the the "four have no ly expo at in

A Battlefield for Criticizing The "Gang of Four"

Ferreting Out "the Bourgeoisie
— Another "Gang of Four" Set

"Gang of Four"
Criticizing

AND MAO MAKES 5

Mao Tsetung's last great battle
"Points"?

Trade: Why the "Gang of Four" Peki

AND MAO MAKES 5

***Mao Tsetung's last
great battle***

Edited with an Introduction by Raymond Lotta

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Editor's Note

The texts of all the reprinted articles and documents are reproduced here as they appeared in the various (English) sources cited. Only clear typographical errors were corrected, and some minor typographical conventions have been standardized. As a result the spelling of certain Chinese proper names may vary from text to text, depending on how the translator romanized them. In addition, a few of the translations include some awkward phrasing and border-line cases of grammaticality, but this has been left as is. In the translations from Issues and Studies, the square brackets which occur are reproduced from the original (English) source; elsewhere they have been used occasionally by the editor. Explanatory footnotes appear occasionally in the body of the texts. These are from the original (English) sources.

Not all the texts are from official People's Republic of China sources. Some of the other sources do sometimes reprint documents whose authenticity is highly questionable; however, in the opinion of the editor the texts reprinted here do seem basically accurate, and to reflect the points of view of those to whom they are attributed.

Preface

To even the most casual observer it has become apparent that great changes have taken place in China since the death of Mao Tsetung. Four of the most prominent leaders of the Cultural Revolution, the so-called "gang of four," have been overthrown and this was followed by a major purge of the Communist Party and mass organizations. Many of Mao's long-standing political opponents, perhaps the most notable being Teng Hsiao-ping, now occupy the highest positions of authority. The innovations in education, industrial management, culture, scientific research and other areas forged through the Cultural Revolution have largely been scrapped. The very profound questions to which Mao drew attention in the final years of his life, particularly with respect to the serious danger of the restoration of capitalism, are now either dismissed or his answers are attacked.

The scathing criticism and slanders against the Four are thinly veiled attacks on Mao Tsetung and Mao Tsetung Thought. In fact, this was not a "gang of four," it was a "gang of five" because these revolutionaries were closely allied with Mao and he had placed his confidence in them. And, actually, it wasn't a "gang" at all—it was the core of the revolutionary headquarters within the Chinese Communist Party.

Today exhortations for order, labor discipline and everything for economic development have replaced Mao's basic line of continuing the revolution and his call to "grasp revolution, promote production." The Cultural Revolution has, indeed, come to an end as inscribed by the new rulers of China in the Political Report delivered by Hua Kuo-feng at the 11th Party Congress in 1977—but not for the reasons they would have us believe. It has ended because the opposition which Mao was fighting to his last breath has come out on top, having seized control of the Party, army and state organs.

How could something like this happen? Is it simply the result of the machinations and ambitions of a few leaders? Does this prove that socialism is an unworkable system or an impossible dream? Leaders do count for something, but not apart from the social forces they represent and the political lines they concentrate and rally others around. As Marx taught, socialism is not a pious hope, but neither is it something pure and unrelated to that which preceded it. "What we have to deal with here is a communist society, not as it has *developed* on its own foundations, but, on the contrary, just as it *emerges* from capitalist society; which is thus in every respect, economically, morally and intellectually, still stamped with the birth marks of the old society from whose womb it emerges." ("Critique of the Gotha Programme," *Marx*

and Engels Selected Works, Vol. 3, p. 17, Progress Publishers, Moscow.)

Marx, Lenin and Mao all emphasized that socialism is a society in which the working class rules, but it is a transitional society. It contains within it the seeds of communism in which all classes and the basis for class divisions have been eliminated, but it also contains the scars of capitalism in the persistence of certain inequalities and social distinctions. It is a society that can either move forward to communism or backward to capitalism; it is not a static or fixed society. Whether society will, in fact, move forward depends on the ability of the working class to continue to make revolution and gradually remove the soil giving rise to capitalism. The outcome of this struggle will be determined over a fairly long time, a period which will be marked by repeated major upheavals.

What does it mean to continue the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat and why is this the central issue facing the working class in power? Under socialism there still exist such differences as between workers and peasants, between town and country, and between mental and manual labor. In China, the collective form of ownership as opposed to state ownership predominates in the countryside. Accordingly, peasants will not receive wages, but payment for a portion of the value of what their collective unit is able to produce. Living standards will be unequal as between different agricultural units because crop yields will vary depending on soil fertility, the level of mechanization and so forth. Among urban workers the wage system of payment according to work will tend to perpetuate inequality insofar as people have different capabilities and needs. Finally, as long as there are some people who are mainly engaged in administrative and intellectual labor as opposed to working with their hands, there will be a tendency among these people to demand privileges, to pursue a life of fame and glory, and, most dangerously, to turn their administration of units into personal control over them.

The existence of these inequalities and differences are obstacles to the achievement of classless society—communism. These are the material conditions which give rise to a new bourgeoisie. They cannot be eliminated overnight, but these things must be restricted and gradually overcome. This requires that society be continually revolutionized under the leadership of correct political and ideological line—both to defeat the revisionist line of those who would seek to preserve and widen these differences and to combat their inevitable attempts to grab power. Continuing the revolution also means transforming the superstructure, including the cultural and educational institutions which will be used by the bourgeoisie to create public opinion favorable

to its cause.

Advancing to communism does require achieving material abundance. But during the entire socialist transitional period there will be sharp struggle over which road to take in developing production, which class it will serve, and whether short-term expediency—which may result in temporary spurts in output but in the long-run leads to stagnation—will take precedence over the long-term interests of the working class. These are life and death questions for the working class.

There have been those within the workers' movement—leading members of communist parties—who have denied all this. For these people, once the working class seizes power and establishes socialist ownership of the means of production, the tasks and fate of the revolution hinge on developing the productive forces. In one way or another, these revisionists or capitalist-roaders, as Mao called them, insist that, with the transformation of ownership, classes and class struggle cease to exist. They deny that the working class must continue the revolution and carry it out thoroughly in all spheres of society. The revisionists regard socialism not as an historical stage in which the working class must struggle against the influence of exploiting classes, overcome the disparities that remain—whether it be in terms of income or the social division of labor—and grasp its historic mission of breaking with and uprooting the property relations and ideas of the past. They identify socialism in terms of its ability to produce more, more efficiently. To them, socialism is characterized not by the working class becoming the master of society and consciously striving to eliminate all that stands in the way of completely transforming it. Rather it is characterized by a prescribed level of output and technique.

Mao stated emphatically that the objective struggle occurring in society between dying capitalism and emerging communism is reflected and concentrated within the communist party. In China this struggle has centered on the question of what is the road forward for the Chinese people—to persevere in revolution and on that basis to develop and expand production or to subordinate everything to developing the economy, relying on profits, experts, foreign assistance, and maybe later, after the material foundations have been laid, get around to revolutionizing the relations among people, the institutions of society, and people's thinking. In China's particular conditions this struggle has come down to this: Must a backward country like China retrace the steps of more advanced capitalist countries and wind up in the same situation, must it make use of the same methods and forms or can the working class really make a leap in history and transform society completely?

This struggle has raged inside the Chinese Communist Party, with

Mao arguing not only that it was necessary to take the road of continuous revolution through stages if capitalism were to be defeated, but that it was possible. Not that it was easy—because it's a lot harder than falling back on capitalist methods and the force of habit—but that armed with an understanding of the nature of this struggle the masses could be mobilized for the struggle to achieve communism. The Cultural Revolution was living proof of this. Initiated by Mao in 1966 and led by him throughout, it indicated the forms and methods by which the working class could maintain and strengthen its rule and continue the advance toward communism.

For the first time in the history of proletarian revolution, the problem of how to prevent a restoration was solved—though not finally, as Mao would point out—and this thrust the working class movement to a higher level. The fact that this was reversed in 1976 doesn't lessen the significance of this experience because the Cultural Revolution broke through contradictions and difficulties that the Bolshevik Revolution could not, just as the Bolshevik Revolution had pushed past the obstacles of seizing and consolidating power that the Paris Commune before it had failed to do. Mao Tsetung summarized crucial experiences and lessons of this process of continuing the revolution, and Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought provides the basis for the international working class to solve the new problems arising out of the ongoing struggle to emancipate mankind.

The Cultural Revolution blew a big hole in the arguments of the revisionists who maintained that nothing new and qualitatively different could be created by the working class and that China would have to hew to the old patterns of development. But the changes brought about by the Cultural Revolution met stubborn opposition from powerful forces—concentrated within the Communist Party—who put up fierce resistance and plotted to restore the old order. The danger of restoration, Mao pointed out, had its economic basis in the imperfections and contradictions of socialist society and its political basis in the actual power and ideological influence exercised by high Party officials promoting a revisionist line. And, as he repeatedly stressed, once these people seized power they would set out to remake society according to their class interests and outlook—whereby a handful of exploiters would try to turn the masses into unthinking work-horses.

The struggle in the years 1973-76 was a continuation of the struggles that came to a head in the early years of the Cultural Revolution when the working class successfully resisted attempts at restoration and carried out major transformations of society. But, as Mao emphasized, many more such revolutions would be required exactly because what the working class was fighting for was not just more porridge on its

table, but a whole new world.

The suddenness with which the October 1976 coup happened and the torrent of abuse heaped on the Four caught many people around the world by surprise. Some confusion has also arisen from the fact that the current rulers still in word uphold Mao and his teachings (though it grows increasingly difficult for them to do so as they publish articles which straightforwardly say not to take seriously—or “dogmatically”—all of what he said). But a review of the events since the time of the 10th Party Congress in August 1973 indicates clearly that the two-line struggle within the Party had been intensifying, coming to a climax with the arrest of the Four and the defeat of the revolutionary forces.

The program of those in power today is hardly original. Its main points had been major planks of the revisionist program in China since the founding of the People's Republic and had been loudly and widely advertised throughout the period since the 10th Party Congress as these revisionist forces sought to create public opinion for their attempts to reverse the revolution. Where they had gained the upper hand they were even able to implement many of their policies. And several times they engaged in trials of strength, hoping to isolate and crush the revolutionaries.

This was a complex and difficult struggle. Mao guided it and gave timely support to revolutionaries, with the Four in their front ranks, who were seeking to uphold and defend the gains of the Cultural Revolution and strengthen the rule of the working class. Yet following his death the forces opposed to Mao and socialism were able to amass the strength for a critical and what ultimately turned out to be a decisive showdown.

This collection of documents has been brought together to trace the development of the two-line struggle in China in the last few years of Mao's life and the issues and forces involved. These documents are a valuable source of information about key questions which were being debated and the approach of Mao and those close to him—Wang Hung-wen, Chang Chun-chiao, Chiang Ching, and Yao Wen-yuan being the most outstanding representatives—to the task of building a movement to resist the influences and encroachments of the enemies of the revolution and their attempts at restoration of the old order. Moreover, they provide important insights into the development of Mao's thinking on the nature of socialist society and the new problems posed by the deepening of the socialist revolution. For the most part we have included major theoretical articles, because the most important facts to glean in this struggle are not claims about Chiang Ching's dress habits, but the political lines that were opposing each other and the class forces they represented.

The main body of the book is divided into five sections, correspond-

ing to the different periods and stages of mounting intensity of this struggle. The texts in these sections all basically reflect the line of Mao and the "Four" on various issues involved. (For an explanation of why and how this was true in the main of the Political Reports to the 10th Party Congress [Text 3] and the 4th National People's Congress [Text 15] which were delivered by Chou En-lai—a man who was in basic opposition to this line—see the Introduction, pp. 12-13 and 24-25.) In contrast, the appendices of this book contain documents antagonistic to the viewpoint of these texts. One, "The Bitter Fruit of Maoism" (Appendix 5), is from the Soviet Union. The rest articulate the line of Teng Hsiao-ping, Hua Kuo-feng and others who were united in their opposition to the line of the Left.

To many outside of China, including this editor, the seriousness and intensity of the struggle in the years 1973-76 was not fully appreciated until after the arrest of the Four. Hopefully, this collection will assist those concerned by the recent turn of events in China and all who seek to understand and learn from the experiences of the Chinese Revolution in seeing what was involved in Mao's last great struggle. An introductory essay has been included as background on the events leading up to the counter-revolutionary coup of October 6, 1976.

August 20, 1978