had been explaining for some time that soldiers sent to help the left would have to be rotated to prevent their new governmental powers from going to their heads. Had not some of them insisted on establishing a new order rather than awakening the masses?[73] What was really being done was to remove the final traces of ideas that had raised the spectre of polycentrism.

With the Centre restoring its authority over the army, and the army doing its utmost to earn its privileges, useful progress was being made towards re-establishing order in ideologically classic style. The last extremists turned their wrath on the army, which they now saw as an instrument of discipline. But they were no longer able to find allies for a new rebellion. There was a report that a group of students dressed in mourning were present at the inauguration of the Kiangsi revolutionary committee.

[73] On February 14th the Central press explained that study classes in the army should help to rotate the troops helping the left, because some of them with duties in the provisional institutions were forgetting to serve and educate the people, preferring to issue orders.

10. The Victory of Moderation

Mao Tse-tung was now running the Cultural Revolution with a much smaller staff. The group that gave guidance to revolutionaries throughout the country consisted only of a few of his companions. They made use of the press, radio, and the sensitive antennae of the Central Committee's Cultural Revolution Group. Brief talks by some of the leaders, reproduced in the few Red Guard journals that still survived, became the sources of inspiration. A few words or an observation by Mao Tse-tung were published as the 'latest instructions' for the revolution. By referring to a few principles he could, through reversing an urgent order or deflecting the pressure from the revolutionary masses, change a situation. The Central press then took up the theme, developing it at length and illustrating it with models culled from across the country, and from history, in order to show how it could be applied in practice. In the situation these models became very important.

The Centre had, by means of the revolutionary media and the press, called forth political action against divergent tendencies, and built up defences for the Cultural Revolution. Through these means the Centre was setting the building of socialism in China under way once more.

However, in keeping control over so big a country, this tiny staff was not alone in facing the revolutionaries. The Centre had been obliged to commit powerful machinery

in order to direct the course of the revolution, and prevent its abuse by the violent idealists, the die-hards of the extreme lefts, and the soldiers who believed in the army's special mission. Even after the Party had been disrupted, the Centre had kept in being the government and army structures, although the problems of the Cultural Revolution within both of them threatened to develop into serious crises. Once these problems were overcome, the end of the movement was in sight.

The whole of the army, which was now back under control and accepting the discipline of the Military Commission, had been mobilized in order first to absorb and then to sublimate its own revolutionary liberation. The State Council, which had recovered its power after the power seizures, wanted a pyramid of revolutionary committees on which to rely to co-ordinate administrative tasks in the provinces. A comparable power structure had been missing for far too long, and in the spring of 1968 its re-establishment took first priority.

From January to August 1968 revolutionary committees mushroomed. As 'provisional institutions' their job was not to replace the Party but to establish themselves as the organs through which the government's authority was transmitted. Established under the army's wing, they contained a core of converted veteran cadres. This was too much for those who still regarded themselves as the true revolutionaries, arguing over the character of the veteran cadres and criticizing the government. 'Rebellion' still smouldered among the Red Guards, with whom the policy of alliance had failed. What was to be done with the groups of irreconcilables?

They could not be eliminated. Mao Tse-tung was against dissolving organizations in order to facilitate the 'grand alliances.' After all, the extreme left had its uses as a watch dog on the conservative forces' acceptance of the revolution. Mao Tse-tung believed in the value of opposition in general, and expected the revolutionary committees to cope with it. But conflicts among students almost destroyed the balance within the Peking revolutionary committee. Red Guard brawls were a scandal that everyone

was talking about even though they no longer took place in the streets. They were an abscess on the Cultural Revolution that would have to be dealt with.

The solution was found in the doctrine that all enemy forces could be split. The 'good' rebels had to be identified within opportunist groups and insubordinate organizations, and turned against the others. This was an application of the Maoist principle that 'one divides into two.' Much of the year was needed to divide the Peking Red Guards into two. But the entry of philosophy into the debate did not prevent a number of bruises and wounds.

The creation of the provincial revolutionary committees emphasized the fact that a new stage had been reached. The slogan of the day was 'Struggle–Criticism–Reform.' Why the struggle and criticism when their parts had apparently been played? Apart from the students, the conflicts were apparently over. A bourgeois revolution would have proceeded to reforms, and the new committees would have become a political force. But the Cultural Revolution was working for the Party, and the pressing task was to refine and purify it. The behaviour of each of its members in the revolution had to be examined to see whether they deserved to stay in the Party.

During this singular period the revolutionary committees existed alongside Party committees that were resuming their political role, and the study classes in the Thought of Mao Tse-tung that were to form the basis of the new Party. It was clear that a complicated process was under way that would lead to a general meeting of the Party. But it may be asked which was the more important for those who had wanted the Cultural Revolution: reform of the establishment or the trial of the 'Resistance.'

Now, if a revolution in political attitudes was to be possible, it would have to reach down to basic levels. Who was to be a Party member, and how was he to become one? Although revolutionary organizations were a source of fresh blood, their members would have to undergo examination. Nobody was to be spared from 'struggle and criticism.' What had hitherto been a battle-cry now became a selection process.

A similar type of intrigue was applied to classifications of the people. The conclusion was reached that the workers were 'the main force of the revolution.' Till now the Centre had not said anything of this kind. Instead it had praised the students, who had launched the first assaults of the revolution with unparalleled courage. Then it had called the revolutionary cadres the country's most precious treasure. Had the workers deserved so much of the Cultural Revolution despite being tempted by their sectional interests? What in fact stood out clearest in the memory was the lesson of the Shanghai strike. At the end of a proletarian revolution, leadership should be returned to the labouring classes, among which the industrial workers had shown the most political awareness.

In August 1968 the workers were invited to enter the universities in order to reform the academic and teaching system. They achieved the apparently miraculous result of bringing the hitherto interminable struggles among students to an end. Their entry into the universities brought back a sense of respect. On the theoretical level the appeal to the workers solved one of the students' principal contradictions: how could one combine being a student, enjoying privileges, especially the privilege of learning, with being a non-privileged revolutionary constantly in the service of the people? Some students had believed before that they should give up their studies and join the masses. By bringing in workers alongside the teachers a new solution was being offered.

There were also practical considerations. China was short of cadres and technicians, and there was bound to be delay in training more. The existing ones had to realize that they should not hide away in their ivory towers, but should go among those less educated than themselves and spread their knowledge as widely as possible. Once revolutionary committees were established in all the provinces, educating the masses and committing oneself completely to the service of the collective became a matter of the first priority once again. Mao Tse-tung had been writing on the subject since September 1968.

Thus China headed towards the reform of its Communist Party, but it was borne in mind that the essential was not structural reform. 'In the revolutionizing of state organs, the essential road is that of contact with the masses. The revolutionizing of structures will adapt itself to contacts with the masses. There is no need to put the emphasis on bureaucratic structures.'[1]

The only thing that really mattered was the small flame of interest in public affairs that the Cultural Revolution had kindled somewhere in the popular consciousness, and which the people did not yet know how to maintain. What was important was that they should be willing to think in terms of China as a whole, and understand what had to be done in common, and ultimately that they should have enough faith in their mission to be able to criticize their rulers. If the masses had not been sufficiently aroused this time, a new Cultural Revolution would have to be undertaken. In the last resort organizations as such did not matter, nor did the extremism of some ideas. Criticism should not be snuffed out: it was the tiny flame that had to be kept alive, and had somehow to be transmitted to the vast and complex meeting of the Party that was to come.

The political solution

In February 1968 the leaders themselves were explaining that the Cultural Revolution would be different now from what it had been the previous year. Those revolutionaries who were still living on reputations acquired by criticizing Liu Shao-ch'i and Teng Hsiao-p'ing had now to appreciate that they had another job to do in depth. It was intolerable to regard positions won in the revolution as personal conquests. The most thankless task now awaited them: rebuilding the Party and the state with elements that were not of their own choice. The great majority of the cadres had to be put back in harness on new principles, and it was necessary to come to terms with them. As Chou En-lai said:

> The conflict between policies at present amounts to a

[1] Mao Tse-tung directive, issued November 1967.

> conflict between public and private interest . . . a conflict between the spirit of Party and the spirit of factionalism. . . . This is why it would be wrong to apply the criteria of 1966 and the beginning of 1967 to the present situation. . . . Has not Chairman Mao told some veterans that one should not live on one's reputation, and that one has to win new merits? In these circumstances there can be even less question of any of you proletarian revolutionaries, whoever you may be, living on your achievements in only eighteen months of revolution.

This tone was very different from that of 1967. Chou En-lai added that it was time for the revolutionaries to make room beside them for those of the cadres who were not afraid of revealing their faults:

> We should be able to encourage a number of cadres to come forward and expose themselves to the criticism of the masses. . . . These are the conditions for the triple alliance.[2]

These instructions applied to the provinces as well as to the backward sectors of Peking and Shanghai. But in fact the movement was slow to take shape in the provincial towns and the districts. The national press, for example, had to wait till January 27th before it could announce, in Anhwei, the formation of a revolutionary committee at unit level, the first to be created in that eastern province.[3] But when the policy that had been ordered began to be better understood, the regional leaders worked hard to apply it. The revolutionaries had to be made rather more tolerant of converted cadres. The preparatory group for the Nanchang revolutionary committee won a mention in despatches for a decision that established the line to follow: where there were still unresolved cadre problems, more of the cadres who had made mistakes had to

[2] Speech by Chou En-lai to representatives of committees in government ministries on February 2, 1968.

[3] See New China News Agency release, *Chinjih Hsinwen*, January 27, 1968.

be won over for the revolution. Proud cadres would have to be convinced through patient persuasion: they would come round when they knew more about successful examples of the fusion of cadres and revolutionaries.[4]

Revolutionary committees were finally established at the provincial level, something the Centre had long been hoping to achieve. They appeared at the rate of three a month from January to the end of May 1968.[5] Canton's province, Kwangtung, received its committee on February 21st; and Kiangsu, of which Nanking was the capital, on March 23rd. Although the Centre's wish that all the provinces and big cities should have their revolutionary committees by May Day was not realized, when Szechuan's was formed on May 31st only five remained to be formed, and these were in frontier regions where the army was in a state of alert.[6]

However, Chou En-lai stressed several points. First, the Cultural Revolution was not yet complete. There was no lack of revolutionaries to volunteer for criticizing Liu Shao-ch'i and Teng Hsiao-p'ing over their lines on the people's communes and foreign policy. But the current task, simplifying the bureaucracy, was far less popular. Revolutionaries should get closer to the cadres and find out more about the work they did.

What was in fact happening? 'Directors and heads of departments have not yet really been liberated,'[7] in other words, they had not yet made their confessions and been set back to work with a new set of ideas. They were simply sent back to their jobs so that the government could

[4] Resolution of an enlarged meeting of the preparatory group for the Nanchang revolutionary committee, February 20, 1968, published by the Central press.

[5] Kiangsi, January 5th; Kansu, January 24th; Honan, January 27th; Hopei, February 3rd; Hupei, February 5th; Kwangtung, February 21st; Kirin, March 6th; Kiangsu, March 23rd; Chekiang, March 24th; Hunan, April 8th; Ninghsia, April 10th; Anhwei, April 18th; Shensi, May 2nd; Liaoning, May 10th; Szechuan, May 31st.

[6] Yunnan, Fukien, Kwangsi, Sinkiang, and Tibet.

[7] Speech of Chou En-lai, February 2, 1968.

continue to function. The sovereign influence of the masses had not yet touched them.

On the other hand, the Cultural Revolution gave positions of political responsibility to people of every stamp.

> Light must be shed in order to reveal bad elements, should they exist among us—'black hands,' and groups exercising evil influences. This does not mean that most of the masses have been misled, but some of them are following leaders who must themselves be brought to political awareness. A distinction must be made between good and bad revolutionaries. We must drive them out ourselves. The besetting ill of our time is to hide our faults and to fail to make rigorous demands of ourselves.[8]

It was thus permissible to attack the leaders of revolutionary organizations who denied that it was their duty to form alliances, excluded cadres and other revolutionaries, and refused to accept the sincere alliances that were necessary if the proletarians were to be formed into a single Party. As K'ang Sheng explained, they were guilty of subjective idealism: they were so obsessed with their own motives that they forgot about the results to be achieved.[9] From now on the method to be used in consulting them was to split their forces from the inside: 'Alliance and unity go through struggle to division, and a new alliance is formed on the basis of the Thought of Mao Tse-tung. This is the dialectic of the Cultural Revolution.'[10]

Chiang Ch'ing gave some practical advice on carrying this out: exclude undesirable elements, put intellectuals into positions of responsibility, and bring together those who had proved themselves in the Cultural Revolution. Generations should be mixed.[11]

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Speeches by Chang Ch'un-ch'iao and other leaders to delegates of Anhwei revolutionaries who had come to Peking to learn from the experiences of Shanghai.

[10] Red Guard organ *Hungch'i,* February 10, 1967, 'Long live the Peking People's Commune.'

[11] At the end of his speech of March 27, 1968, Chou En-lai discussed Chiang Ch'ing's instructions of November 1967.

This method got results. It was learnt that, in the army, several factions eventually dissolved themselves, including one that had once been connected with the proletarian revolutionaries in the general staff.[12] Yang Ch'eng-wu's supporters were thus weakened before his fall. Student Red Guard organizations appeared to be tougher. There was one success at the People's University, but in some other places the former followers of Lin Chieh and Wang Li held firm together against all attempts to convert them.

At Peita, the Cultural Revolution's model university, Nieh Yüan-tzu was under pressure from the Peking revolutionary committee to bring about an alliance. Had she lost heart after the frequent failure of persuasion? Apparently she refused to stop her own group from using their fists. There was fighting on the campus, and on March 29th Nieh herself suffered a knife wound. As a victim she could become a heroine once more. The Central leadership gave her their support, but it was necessary to send six hundred troops into Peking University. Even this did not prevent fighting between students from breaking out again at the end of April. The *Hsinpeita* and *Chingkangshan* groups each fortified a building in which they entrenched themselves, attacking each other from the rooftops, firing stones and tiles with huge catapults.[13] Their sentries, armed with red tasselled spears, tried in vain to invoke the peasant rebels of the revolutionary wars and to symbolize their loyalty to Mao Tse-tung, but most people mocked this distortion of the Cultural Revolution. Student organizations were soon to lose their political privileges.

The end of the Red Guards had an official date.

[12] According to the journal of the *Tungfanghung* Commune of the Peking Institute of Machinery, December 8, 1967, quoting the *Chingkangshan* organization of the Institute of Higher Defence Studies.

[13] The events of March 29th were described in Peking wall-posters, and those of April 26th in an *Agence France Presse* release from Peking. See Chapter 4 for the names of Peita Red Guard Organizations.

> From July 27, 1968, powerful contingents of the working class entered places long dominated by leaders committed to the capitalist way, and to places where the intellectuals were predominant.[14]

Workers were called in first to Peita, then to Tsinghua University in the last part of July. During August they appeared in most of the universities and colleges of Peking, and they were called 'propaganda teams of the Thought of Mao Tse-tung.'[15]

Chairman Mao apparently called a meeting of representatives from some of the city's most famous Red Guard organizations[16] on the afternoon of July 27th, and told them that their organizations would no longer be allowed to take political initiatives.[17] They would now be, to some extent, isolated. For the time being they had better accept army control. Ten days later, Chiang Ch'ing referred to Chairman Mao's July 27th instructions as the authority for the working class to play the leading role in 'Struggle–Criticism–Reform.' As we have seen in another context, the students found the proletarian spirit hard to assimilate. For the sake of peace and quiet they were even deprived of their monopoly of the universities in order to amalgamate them with real proletarians.

While the entry of the workers was signifying the beginning of a new order in the privileged world of the students, a number of the latter were going to the wide open spaces of the virgin lands to learn the realities of the building of socialism. Already, after the neutralization of the ultra-leftist wing, there had been an exodus of young people and intellectuals from Peking for Inner Mongolia.

[14] Lin Piao, 'Report to the Ninth National Congress of the Communist Party of China.' *Peking Review*, Special Issue, April 28, 1969.

[15] The groups and representatives included Nieh Yüan-tzu for Hsin Peita, K'uai Ta-fu for Tsinghua's Chingkangshan, and the Aeronautical Institute's Red Flag.

[16] See *Ajia Keizai Jumpo*, no. 736, Tokyo, November 1968.

[17] July 27th, according to the Hong Kong paper *Hsingtao;* July 28th, according to a Peking Red Guard paper.

Ending one's Cultural Revolution in a camp on the steppe frontier, with the prospect of spending the rest of one's life as a pioneer, may not have been complete disgrace, but it was a harsh shock for those who had been dreaming of stirring political activity. Something of their condition may be guessed at from the remark by T'eng Hai-ch'ing, the Chairman of the Inner Mongolian revolutionary committee and regional military commander: 'In recent months we have organized activities giving revolutionaries the chance to live, work and study with the PLA. This has had a profound effect on their view of the world.'[18] The exodus of the beginning of 1968 was followed by a new one after the changes in higher education.

There was a purge in cultural circles. One incident which had considerable repercussions was that of the 'Congress of worker, peasant and soldier actors of Tientsin,' which performed satirical plays for private audiences. The most scandalous item in its repertoire was called, 'the Madman of the Twentieth Century,' and some press comments gave the impression that this play was an attack on Chairman Mao himself. From November onwards there was a series of investigations and prosecutions. T'eng Hai-ch'ing, the chairman of the Inner Mongolian revolutionary committee, who was involved in carrying out this purge as well as in the rehabilitation of the Red Guards, and perhaps for the same reason, said, 'After Comrade Chiang Ch'ing's speech of last November, the calm waters of literature and art began to move.'[19] Chiang Ch'ing had spoken on November 7th or 10th. It may well be that these were the investigations which led to the final downfall of Ch'i Pen-yü (see Chapter 9). At this time too the press purge began. But the most important purge was, of course, the one involving Liu Shao-ch'i, Teng Hsiao-p'ing and several others. The Central Committee originally appointed by the Eighth Party Congress held its twelfth

[18] 'Ideological work among proletarian revolutionaries,' *People's Daily*, January 15, 1968; New China News Agency, no. 011705, 1968 (French language series).

[19] T'eng Hai-ch'ing's remarks were published in the national press at the end of March 1968.

plenary session in October 1968, and ratified the 'Report on the examination of the crimes of the renegade, traitor and scab, Liu Shao-ch'i.' The session unanimously adopted a resolution to expel Liu Shao-ch'i from the Party once and for all, to dismiss him from all posts both inside and outside the Party, and to 'continue to denounce the crimes which he and his accomplices had committed in betraying the Party and the country.'[20] Liu had at last been exorcised by name, and he continued to oblige by acting as an excuse for later purges.

It was not surprising that those responsible for the ideas which the Cultural Revolution had risen up against should have been swept aside when the movement put its political programme into effect. It was also natural that the defenders of these ideas, such as T'an Chen-lin, should have been overthrown. The Cultural Revolution put forward its own conception of what the Party should be, and it was only natural that the chief exponents of the opposing line should fall with it. Apart from them, there does not seem to have been a systematic overall purge.

Some men of the right who had held to their conservative outlook and had been in total opposition to Mao Tse-tung on some vital questions (such as Ch'en Yün and, perhaps, Ch'en Yi) lost some of their importance, but remained in senior positions. They accepted democratic centralism, and did not conspire to bring a group of like-minded leaders into power.

As we have seen above, the revolution dismissed many men from its ranks, but from the middle of 1967 there was no longer any need for those who were loyal to the Party spirit to worry about this happening to them. The Cultural Revolution's victims were rightists, leftists and even enthusiastic Maoists who threatened the Party by representing a group that was too independent and powerful: such were P'eng Chen, T'ao Chu, Ho Lung, Ch'i Pen-yü, or Yang Ch'eng-wu.

[20] *Communiqué of the Enlarged Twelfth Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China,* Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1968.

Social change

Ever since the beginning of the Cultural Revolution the rebels had been asserting that what they had to do was 'destroy': destroy the 'Four Olds,' overthrow the authorities, make a clean sweep in the superstructure. Anyone who pointed out that they had nothing to put in its place was abused and vilified. For two years the rebels had denounced as reactionary the majority of local attempts at reorganization that appeared to be inspired by the spirit of reform.

An editorial which appeared simultaneously in the *People's Daily, Red Flag* and the *PLA Daily* on September 1, 1968, marked a significant change: 'Destruction comes first,' it read, 'but within it are contained the seeds of construction.'[21] While the terminology reveals the deep-rooted prejudice against 'construction,' the sense is clearly that the destructive phase was now developing into a new one. The revolutionaries were being assured that their work would continue—tomorrow's ideas would still be the ones formed in the struggle—but they were also being told that the forms of political struggle had now changed.

By the time it was accepted that 'the working class must play a leading part in everything' there was no longer any need to ask it to lead the political struggle. The Centre now held the reins once more, and the initiatives now required would be for the transformation of society rather than attacks on the political enemy. Thus it must be realized that the workers were now the 'principal force,' according to the role they were to play in the next phase of the revolution, which was to be social.

Leaving aside the question of the extent of their political awareness—a matter of some importance, as we have seen above—the role of the workers has to be understood by reference to two ideas: the simplification of the bureaucracy, and Maoist ideas on development. The first was based on the axiom that producers were better suited than man-

[21] See *Peking Review,* no. 37, September 16, 1968.

agers for revolutionizing the relations of production, and the second carried with it the desire to achieve the 'proletarian industrial revolution'[22] that the Cultural Revolution had facilitated. Chou En-lai developed the first concept in these words:

> The revolution in the world of ideas comes first, with the proletarian revolutionaries seizing power from the advocates of the bourgeois line. Now it is up to us as economic revolutionaries to transform the economic system. An economic system is a matter not of power but of work relationships. . . . There must be revolution in every sphere of life, and the key question is the necessity of simplification.[23]

The second idea was emphasized in an editorial in *Red Flag* that may be attributed to Mao Tse-tung himself:

> What is the situation as regards the engineering and technical personnel in factories? . . . We must pay particular attention to re-education of graduates . . . so that they will integrate with the workers and peasants.[24]

The fight against bureaucratism, and the streamlining of the administration, were the basic themes in the building of revolutionary committees. Instead of a top-heavy administration maintained by the Party, and which the people

[22] This expression was used in the report of an investigation on 'The Revolution in Education in Colleges of Science and Engineering as reflected in the struggle between the two lines at the Shanghai Institute of Mechanical Engineering,' in *Red Flag*, no. 3, September 10, 1968, p. 13; see *Peking Review*, no. 37, September 13, 1968, p. 17. This was also published in the *People's Daily* of September 5, 1968.

[23] Chou En-lai, February 2, 1968, to delegates of committees in various ministries, *op. cit.*

[24] *Red Flag* editor's note on the report on the Shanghai Institute of Mechanical Engineering quoted above, of which Chiang Ch'ing said, 'This editorial represents the voice of our great leader Chairman Mao.' See *Peking Review*, no. 37, September 13, 1968, p. 8 for Chiang Ch'ing's speech, p. 13 for the editorial.

considered parasitic, the Units should be run by workers giving some of their time to public affairs.

> In order to remain an ordinary person as well as being an official, we need a drastic reform of the old methods of office and administrative work. Have a small leading body and a small staff. . . . so that there is no overlapping or redundancy in the organization and no overstaffing, so that bureaucracy can be prevented.[25]

Before the Cultural Revolution the Party had justified the growth of the bureaucracy by the increasing complexity of the economy and by the need to have a division of labour. Now it was necessary to reject any kind of technocracy and go back to Mao Tse-tung's 1942 teachings on frugality, on the availability of all people, on unity in work, complete equality of employments, and a turning away from anything which resembled technocracy.[26]

Discipline at work was now a matter for the workers themselves. We have seen above the strains under which discipline had been put, the worst being in the mines in February 1968. Meetings of workers in the various branches of industry were called, and the participants were asked to consider ways of improving output and the organization of work. The meeting for miners was held on May 22nd in the outskirts of Peking, and it passed resolutions on developing forms of self-management and making the best use of veteran workers in production.[27]

The principle laid down for teaching, 'in line with the needs of the proletarian industrial revolution, and proceeding from the realities of production' was to 'set up the required training courses, to learn whatever the work in

[25] *People's Daily*, *Red Flag*, and *PLA Daily* joint editorial, 'Revolutionary committees are fine,' March 30, 1968; see *Peking Review*, no. 14, April 5, 1968, p. 7.

[26] See the article by Yung Chung-tung, *People's Daily*, October 31, 1968; and *Ajia Keizai Jumpo*, no. 739 Tokyo, December 1968, p. 17.

[27] The conference, reported in the *People's Daily* of May 25, 1968, was held in the Muchengchien mine that had been the scene of bloody incidents during February.

progress may dictate, and to fill in the gaps.'[28] Links between universities and industry or between universities and agriculture were not confined to research workers. In order to integrate the institutions of higher education more closely into the development of the country, gifted workers and peasants would complement their technical knowledge with scientific training, then go back to their Units to share their new learning. Through this interchange the regime hoped to benefit the areas where knowledge would do most to achieve a new leap forward. This time there would be no attempt to triple output, but from the factories and communes 'innovations and inventions' would emerge to help production. The Cultural Revolution, now nearing its end, concentrated on sketching out a reform of education and careers for technicians, workers and peasants.

Interest was mainly devoted to technical and scientific universities as a result of a recent directive of Mao Tse-tung:

> It is still necessary to have universities; here I refer mainly to colleges of science and engineering. However, it is essential to shorten the length of schooling, revolutionize education, put proletarian politics in command and take the road of the Shanghai Machine Tools Plant in training technicians from among the workers. Students should be selected from among workers and peasants with practical experience, and they should return to production after a few years' study.[29]

Following up this directive, the journal *Red Flag* opened its columns to an investigation of the factory and the institute that Chairman Mao had held up as examples. The questions of syllabuses, and the length of courses and personnel, were studied in detail. The barriers which existed between foundation courses, basic technical courses, and specialist courses would have to be destroyed. Courses

[28] *Red Flag*, no. 3, 1968; *Peking Review*, no. 37, September 13, 1968, p. 17.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

in scientific and technical colleges would now be limited to two or three years, and a body of 'proletarian teachers' would be formed. The main role of full-time teachers would be:

> to arrange an organic link between colleges, factories and scientific research units, and to help the students raise their practical knowledge to the theoretical level, in order to redirect it again to the practical. The students may then go to the lecture platform to exchange the practical information they have. The present teachers should go among the workers and peasants in groups one after another and work towards integration with the workers and peasants.[30]

What about agriculture? The countryside was further from the universities than were the factories. Would this new emphasis on technical education, which had been missing from the 1958 'leap forward,' bring about the growth in agricultural output that China needed? It was true that the countryside would produce more grain through seed selection and above all through a diversified use of fertilizers. But what was called for at the moment was more work from the peasants in improving the land: digging more wells and canals, and terracing more fields. The example to be followed was that of Tachai.[31]

Poor and middle peasants devoted themselves to this work and, as at Tachai, some of them rejected their salaried status. At least, they rejected a system of set payments for each kind of job. They said that peasants should be mobilized for work in the fields as were soldiers for active service. The members of each team should divide the work among them, and each should declare afterwards what he had done. On the strength of this everyone in the team would decide how to share what they had to distribute.[32] This responsible attitude to work would com-

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[31] See Chapter 2.
[32] The peasants of the Tientsin suburbs, for example, passed a resolution in these terms.

plement the new spurt of technical progress that the new teaching system promised to workers and peasants.

A step had been taken towards simplifying the bureaucracy, workers managing their own work, and the reform of teaching and pay. However, these measures were to be regarded as projects, because they had not yet received a general application. But at any rate they formed part of a programme for greater autonomy in the people's communes and the Units. And the statement that workers were to take over the traditional role of intellectuals was an event of great significance to society.

An analysis of the provisional institutions

Before the Cultural Revolution, local and provincial government depended on a dual system of Party and people's committees. Although political inspiration came primarily from the former, the latter did something to give the 'united front' some reality alongside the Communist Party. The Party and state leadership appeared to treat them with equal respect, knowing the advantages to be gained from well established local politicians. In a study on Party personnel published in 1967, F. C. Teiwes concluded that in the previous decade Peking had shown great confidence in the loyalty of provincial officials.[33] Then the Cultural Revolution challenged the Party cadres to choose between obedience to the old structure and rallying to the call of the Thought of Mao Tse-tung. The shock this gave to the committees made them unable to maintain their authority, and the Centre instructed the revolutionary committees to take their place.

The revolutionary committees seemed to have been invested with the authority of the Party committees, but in their composition they were more like the people's committees in that they included representatives of the masses. They had the 'widest revolutionary representation seen

[33] F. C. Teiwes, *Provincial Party Personnel in Mainland China 1956–1966*, Columbia University, New York, 1967, p. 63.

since the Liberation,' wrote *Red Flag*,[34] and as it went on to reaffirm that the committees had been invested with the authority of the proletarian dictatorship, the view that the revolutionary committees would become permanent rather than transitional began to gather credence. Perceptive observers agreed that they might last for a long time, replacing both kinds of old committees.[35]

In some places, however, Party committees co-existed with corresponding revolutionary committees, and even reconstituted themselves. There was the case of the Tachai brigade.[36] Another important example was provided by the Geological Institute, which created a 'provisional Party committee' in November 1967. Its revolutionary committee met in special session to restore the Party organization in the Institute.[37] Thus the new Party could be constituted without the inevitable overthrow of the old.

But as a purge was taking place within their ranks—which Lin Piao mentioned in his report to the Ninth Congress—the Party committees could not exercise leading roles.[38] They seemed to exist in the shadow of the revolutionary committees, whereas another provisional institution played yet another role: the study classes of the Thought of Mao Tse-tung. Party members and ordinary people both took part in these classes, which were often run by the military, and thus resembled the triple alliances

[34] *Red Flag*, October 15, 1968.

[35] See especially the Japanese-language edition of *Mainichi Shimbun* of October 16, 1968.

[36] See *Ajia Keizai Jumpo*, no. 722, June 1968.

[37] On November 17, 1968, according to the official press in Peking.

[38] 'In units where the work of purifying the class ranks has not yet started or has only just started, it is imperative to tackle the job firmly and do it well in accordance with the Party's policies. In units where the purification of the class ranks is by and large completed, it is necessary to take firm hold of other tasks in keeping with Chairman Mao's instructions concerning the various stages of struggle-criticism-reform.' Lin Piao, *Report to the Ninth National Congress of the Communist Party of China*, Peking, 1968, pocket edition, pp. 57–58.

of these three elements in the revolutionary committees. The study classes, however, had no administrative or political control. They were to form the basis of the new Party, from which the delegates to the coming Congress were to be chosen.[39]

The revolutionary committees maintained themselves in existence right through to the end of the Cultural Revolution as the sole local organs with leadership power. How powerful were they in fact? The Centre certainly allowed them wide discretion in provincial matters. They were strong because they were founded on the principle of unified leadership. It will be remembered how the principle had been applied in the days when the Party's membership was reduced, and what part the army had played in those circumstances;[40] it was not therefore surprising that soldiers should be numerous in the revolutionary committees. Long ago in the bases, during the struggle against the Kuomintang, the army had disseminated the ideas of a small group of Communists to the Soviets. Now the Party, its numbers reduced by the tests it had imposed on itself, closed ranks around the leaders loyal to Mao Tse-tung, and used the unified leadership to pass on its counsels to the masses.

Comparisons have most often been drawn between the Party committees and the revolutionary committees, and this has generally been in order to highlight the army's new place in the power structure. With only about three exceptions, all the revolutionary committees heading the provinces and big cities had either a military commander or an army political commissar as chairman.[41] The concessions made to the military seemed quite exorbitant when the newly appointed leaders were not even commanders of local garrison troops but of troops only stationed in the

[39] See the good discussion of the role of the study classes in 'Kakumei jinkai ni miru kokka kikō kaikaku no hōkō,' *Ajia Keizai Jumpo,* no. 722, June 1968.

[40] See Chapter 1.

[41] The exceptions were Hopei, Shensi, and Tientsin Municipality.

area.[42] In cases when this was done it would seem likely that the army had been called upon to restore order locally.

But while it is true that the top leadership of all the revolutionary committees included generals, it must not be forgotten that at least one cadre from the former Party committee's secretariat was always with them. This is significant because it suggests that the precious records of the Party committees remained in competent hands. The files of confidential information on all the cadres who would have to be re-employed were neither seized by the people nor dispersed. In every case, one of the secretaries in charge of these records was won over to the Cultural Revolution.

The Party had long paid particular attention to ensuring the continuity of the teams which controlled the provinces. As F. C. Teiwes, already quoted above, has written:

> The top leaders, undoubtedly influenced by a deep belief in the power of indoctrination, seem also to have recognized that other methods were equally if not more effective for applying the right policy and achieving control in times of tension. . . . Large scale personnel changes were only carried out in specific situations that demanded radical action, as in Kweichow in 1965.[43]

The Cultural Revolution does not seem to have brought about any profound changes in this policy. All the documents needed for the appointment of cadres were closely guarded. They were kept, as far as possible, beyond the reach of revolutionary indiscretion.

Representatives of the people were, of course, included

[42] This was the case in Chekiang, Anhwei, and Ninghsia. See *China News Analysis,* no. 707, May 10, 1968.

[43] *Provincial Party Personnel in Mainland China, 1956–1966,* p. 63. The Kweichow purge in 1965 seems to have given that province a new administration that had few links with local interests and was highly responsive to ideological control. This doubtless explains the leading role played by the province in the Cultural Revolution, a role that its geographical isolation and backwardness of development would not otherwise justify.

in the revolutionary committees alongside the Party's representatives. The deputy chairman of the Inner Mongolian committee included a lorry-driver,[44] Kwangtung included a worker in a machine-building plant, and Shansi a peasant labour-hero.[45] Members of the Party learned to share political work with the people they governed, beside whom they made their careers. Moreover, propaganda insisted that the members of revolutionary committees, including the top leaders, should go down among the masses and share their work.[46] There could be no doubt but that the remoulded Party would include representatives of the masses who had done a probationary spell in the Party.

Revolutionary committees maintained the situation in the absence of Party committees, and served as a crucible in which the cadres could be better fused with soldiers and ordinary people. They did not seem to be intended to become permanent institutions. In his report to the Ninth Congress, Lin Piao only mentioned them in the section on the phase of 'struggle-criticism-reform.'

The rebuilding of the Party

Popular revolutions always have songs. The Red Guards wrote some, as did the propaganda media. The people made their choice, for they sang the ones they preferred. The favourites were undoubtedly 'The East is Red' and 'Sailing the Seas depends on the Helmsman,' both infused with passionate feeling for Mao Tse-tung. But one of the songs most often sung by revolutionaries was simply the first quotation in the Little Red Book set to music: 'The force at the core leading our cause forward is the Chinese

[44] 'Ōku no Jinzai wa hagukumu jidai,' *Jimmin Chūgoku*, Peking, March 1968, p. 30 ff.

[45] Ch'en Yung-kuei, Tachai's leader.

[46] Most of the Kweichow revolutionary committee stayed in their former jobs (New China News Agency, March 29, 1968). Half of the members of the standing committee of the Heilungkiang committee compelled themselves to work in basic-level Units while the other half did the committee's work (New China News Agency, February 29, 1968).

Communist Party.' From start to finish, even when its leaders were falling to the pitiless attacks of the Rebels, the leading role of the Party was being celebrated in song.

The reconstruction of the Party was announced in a joint editorial of the *People's Daily*, *Red Flag*, and the *PLA Daily* on January 1, 1968, emphasizing the Party's leadership and announcing its reorganization.

> Alongside the rectification of the Party organization, the Communist Youth League, the Red Guards and the various revolutionary mass organizations should be rectified ideologically and organizationally.

In short, the same treatment was prescribed for the Party, infected as it was with revisionism, as for the mass organizations suffering from ultra-leftist tendencies. It was necessary above all to take what was good from all political bodies and give the Party everything it needed:

> In the coming year we should . . . purify and rectify the Party organization. A number of outstanding, advanced proletarian elements who have come forward in the great cultural revolution should be admitted into the Party; and the renegades, secret agents and leaders committed to the capitalist way, who refuse to reform themselves, should be expelled.[47]

Old Party members, whose positions had exposed them to public scrutiny, were still undergoing a series of trials. First they were suspended from their duties, but not expelled from the Party, and then made to undergo investigations into their public and private lives that dug right down to the roots of their personal philosophies.[48] Those who passed this test were allowed back to work, but they

[47] 'Forward to complete victory in the great proletarian Cultural Revolution,' *Peking Review*, no. 1, January 3, 1968, p. 12.

[48] See Ando Hikotaro, 'Bunkaku sannenme no kadai,' an excellent study of the situation of cadres relieved of their duties, *Asahi Jyanaru*, vol. 9, no. 52.

were not yet 'liberated.' The investigation was only an individual test, and collective agreement was needed before they could be set free. The cadre who wanted to be restored to his authority had to appear in public and try to make, with the help of the people, an analysis of the motives that had brought him into, or perilously close to, error. When the people accepted his analysis, which was generally self-critical and always ended with an attack on the 'bourgeois' leaders of the Party, the cadre was at last 'liberated' and allowed to resume his duties.

As far as one could tell, the point of holding these ceremonies was not to have show trials but to win as many as possible over to a unified way of thinking. The term *tuli ssuk'ao,* 'independent thought,' was used to denote the repeated process of profound self-examination and public adherence to the standard themes of revolutionary criticism. It is all too clear that the subject was under considerable psychological pressure; but he could not make a purely formal conversion as it would not have been accepted. The avowal had to be personal and backed up by evidence.

The cadres who underwent these tests without success were not usually threatened with anything worse than expulsion from the Party. Lin Piao himself guaranteed that, with regard to 'bad elements and suspects discovered in the course of the movement for purifying the class ranks, the policy of "killing none and not arresting most"[49] should be applied to all.'[50] Yao Wen-yuan declared: 'Men whose revolutionary thought has failed them, men who have lapsed, should be advised to leave the Party.'[51] The 'purifying of the class ranks' mentioned by Lin Piao was a movement on a much larger scale than a Party purge, extending as it did to revolutionary organizations that had to undergo the same treatment. But the significant fact about the latter was not so much their 'purification' as the incorporation of their members into the Party.

[49] A quotation from Mao Tse-tung.

[50] *Report to the Ninth National Congress of the Communist Party of China,* pocket edition, p. 56.

[51] Editorial of October 1, 1968, which appeared simultaneously in *People's Daily, Red Flag,* and *PLA Daily.*

> We must take into the Party fresh blood from the proletariat—above all, progressive elements with communist awareness from among industrial workers—and select outstanding Party members who are resolute in carrying out Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line for leading posts in the Party.

This was the conclusion of the Central Committee in the collective decision of its Twelfth Plenary Session.[52] The 'fresh blood' would therefore have to be taken from among the revolutionary organizations, especially from the industrial workers, and, as Yao Wen-yuan wrote, 'a leading nucleus which resolutely implements Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line will gradually be formed.'[53] This leading nucleus could no longer be the Party alone, but was now to be the unified leadership in the service of the Party.

The meetings, which consummated the work of the study classes, and which we have called conferences of activists in the Thought of Mao Tse-tung—or 'people's revolutionary congresses'—were used to select the progressive elements. Shanghai took the lead in this movement,[54] in which the purification of revolutionary organizations was combined with selecting delegates to the forthcoming Party congress.[55] In Shanghai the 'progressive elements of the proletariat' were principally industrial workers. This advance was a good sign of their political awareness at a time when the students in Peking were revealing nothing

[52] *Communiqué of the Enlarged 12th Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China,* Peking, 1968, p. 7.

[53] *Peking Review,* no. 35, August 30, 1968, p. 6.

[54] 'Kyūzentaikai he Isogiashi,' *Asahi Shimbun,* morning edition, March 15, 1968. The revolutionary leaders did not mind rapping Peking's knuckles in referring to the progress made by Shanghai at the great rally to criticize Yang Ch'eng-wu held in the Workers' Stadium on March 27th.

[55] On the study classes see the previous section.

but their quarrels. This and other evidence confirmed the 'leading role of the working class.'

Nomination to the congress was equivalent to admission to the Party. The revolutionaries who were nominated doubtless served a probationary period before the congress opened. Others who were not chosen as delegates served a trial term in the local organizations of the Party. The Party was preparing its blood transfusion. But the main scene was now being played in Peking, where 1,512 delegates were holding the main meeting of the Party's restoration.

The Ninth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party opened ceremonially on April 1, 1969, in Peking. It heard Lin Piao's report, elected a new Central Committee, and revised the Party constitution. The election of a new Central Committee was an event of great political significance. It marked a formal end to the revolutionary period. For over two years the leading organizations at the top had expelled those of their members they regarded as unworthy to participate in the revolution. The Central Committee's Cultural Revolution Group had played an exceptional part in this policy. Now the Ninth Congress restored the Central Committee to its supreme position, and put the various organs that had formed part of the Centre back to their jobs in government and propaganda.

The composition of the new Central Committee should have given a clearer picture of where power now lay; but examination does not reveal a great deal, except that a good number of its members were comparatively unknown.

The assembly, on which sat all the powerful figures in the Party who ran its apparatus in the provinces and the national ministries, lost its old sense of collective identity. Only a third of the members of the former Central Committee were re-elected. The new members were doubtless chosen on the strength of their attitudes in the Cultural Revolution. The lists of candidates were drawn up by commissions that attached more weight to reports of local events than to any other considerations. The procedure followed left much initiative to provincial delegates: the

small leading group in Peking could not dictate the choice of members of an organ as large as the Central Committee.

The delegates to the Congress from the provincial revolutionary committees and those from other organizations that came with them were doubtless influenced by their idea of what sort of local order there should be at the end of the Cultural Revolution. The people they chose to represent them on the Central Committee were probably those who had distinguished themselves both by their local effectiveness and by their loyalty to the Centre. This would explain the large number of soldiers, whose representation in the central organization rose from 36 per cent to 45 per cent. At the same time the representation of senior administrative cadres was also increased. This may be explained by the role played by the ministries and the national services in keeping China functioning during so long a period of disorder. Those who lost out were the Party cadres, who gave way to revolutionaries from the people.

The new Party constitution adopted by the Congress obliged the Party to unite more closely with the masses in choosing its members and carrying out its duties. Party control over the army, the organs of state power, and the revolutionary mass organizations was doubtless strengthened, and the constitution stipulated that organizations of workers, poor and lower-middle peasants and Red Guards would have to submit to Party control.[56] On the other hand, applicants for Party membership would not be admitted without scrutiny by the people.[57] The Party initiated campaigns, but it could carry them out only with the people's representatives. The unified leadership, in which representatives of the people joined with those of the Party, would be reconstituted every time the latter sent out teams to carry out its policies.[58] In other words, the people were expected to play their part in the executive field.

In addition, precautions were taken to ensure that Party

[56] Article 5.
[57] Article 2.
[58] Article 7.

members should feel more free to argue with the leadership, make reservations on policies of which they disapproved, and make their criticisms known at the highest levels.

> It is essential to create a political situation in which there simultaneously exists both centralism and democracy, both discipline and freedom, both unity of will and individual ease of mind and liveliness.[59]

The constitution thus insisted on the necessity of keeping a way open, so that the renunciation of individual sovereignty should not rule out the instinct of making up one's own mind.

Contradictions did of course remain dangerous. The individual spirit could rebel against discipline. Had not the Cultural Revolution itself been a 'rebellion?' Unified leadership might also, in practice, conflict with obedience to Party control. But the constitution's authors relied on discussion to resolve the contradictions, and their work was itself the product of a dialogue. In his report Lin Piao explained that the draft constitution had incorporated many suggestions from the masses and had been referred back to the masses for discussion.[60] If the revolution had indeed established a dialogue everywhere, particularly between the Party and the masses, this was a great achievement.

The old Party had put its organization above all other values. Now the new voices were demanding that the first priority be accorded to living ideology, affirming that henceforward it would be served by the 'progressive elements of the proletariat.' The Cultural Revolution opened the doors of the Party to many new members who had not undergone old training. The newcomers had won

[59] Article 5.

[60] The Twelfth Plenum drew up a draft constitution on the basis of several thousand suggestions submitted by primary Party organizations acting on Mao Tse-tung's suggestions of November 1967, and returned it for discussion among the revolutionary masses, the Party, and the army before the congress. See Lin Piao, *Report to the Ninth Congress*, p. 76.

their spurs through 'revolt,' and they would doubtless bring like-minded people in with them. The Ninth Congress insisted that they should 'be on guard against careerists' and become the pupils of the masses. In Lin Piao's words, 'The great proletarian Cultural Revolution is the broadest and deepest movement for Party consolidation in the history of our Party.'[61]

[61] *Report to the Ninth Congress*, p. 72.

Author's Note

The late date at which the Congress was called and the paucity of information on its work have made it impossible to make any profound analysis of the Congress's results. This book is, besides, based primarily on information gathered directly from the press by the author during a stay in China that ended in June 1968.

Conclusion

It is no longer possible to dispute that the Cultural Revolution really was a revolution. It was led by Mao Tse-tung and a few of his close associates who were convinced that the Party could not be regenerated without action by the people.

The movement thus called into being was so strong that it almost became another revolution, sweeping away the Communist Party. From January to September 1967 revolutionary detachments overturned the policies of the people in power. Ambitions arose to seize control of the revolution. Passions went beyond the level the leaders had encouraged in their desire to arouse the masses. At any rate, in the cities the sudden surge of interest in politics won for a time complete freedom of the press, of association, and of the right to run one's own place of work.

The Centre achieved the victory of the Party spirit over anarchic tendencies, and in this operation the army played an indispensable part. So many new political positions did the army control as a result of this that there were fears of a military regime. But there was a special relationship between the Chinese Communist Party and the People's Liberation Army.

The slogan that 'the working class should lead the way in everything' ensured that the army would have to hand over to others all the responsibilities that were not its own. But it proved easier to decentralize the state than to es-

tablish control over the political power that had to be centralized. The Cultural Revolution had been launched to bring about control through the Mass Line. In the last resort, the continued existence of the people's organizations was more important than the revolutionary committees.

Few revolutionary organizations were disbanded. In order that the reformed Party should have the popular critics it deserved, Mao Tse-tung went to great trouble to keep political enthusiasm alive wherever it had developed. For a long time the main difficulty had been to stimulate the activity needed to awaken political consciousness, while saving the revolutionaries from their besetting temptation to exploit the revolution for their own pleasure. 'It is too easy,' Chiang Ch'ing had said. 'When you want to bite a peach, you take a mouthful. But if you eat it all you lose it.' The leaders of the revolution were trying at the same time to give the Chinese the taste for peaches and to keep all the fruit on the tree.

The outbreaks of violence reported in the Western press often obscured the efforts that the revolution's propaganda made to urge the masses not to lose interest too quickly. The leaders' concern was to draw as many as possible into the struggle from which a new alliance was to be born. We saw it explained in these terms above:

> Alliance and unity pass through struggle to division, and a new alliance is formed on the basis of the Thought of Mao Tse-tung. Such is the dialectic of the Cultural Revolution.