2. The Polarization of the Communist Party

The period from 1959 to the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution was one of clashes and secret conflicts inside the Communist Party from which no appeals were made to public opinion. Some of the leaders wanted draft schemes regarded as settled when they had been examined by higher authorities but not yet fully approved. Other leaders dragged their feet over the publication of schemes that revived earlier more advanced programmes of collectivization or socialization; alternatively they truncated schemes, only issuing the non-revolutionary parts to their subordinates, or changed the texts, on the grounds that these were still in draft form. Their opponents angrily tried to make known their real points of view instead of the mutilated versions, but this was against Party rules.

The political struggles always followed this sort of scenario, with the authorities in the Party machine taking the part of conservatives and the mass-liners as radicals.

The radicals were aggressive. Whenever they could they made their views heard at the highest levels, and in their criticisms they showed as little consideration to their friends as to their enemies. They were more interested in stating their views than in widening their connections, and showed no apparent regrets for strength lost and alliances wrecked. The main conservative tactic was inertia. They only acted when respect for the correct forms or the pressure of a sector of public opinion influenced by the radicals forced them to put on a show of acting. There was no majority in favour of bringing about new socialist transformations.

The majority of them felt, sincerely perhaps, that the transition to socialism had been in the main achieved. They reduced radical schemes to minor reforms that stayed at the project stage. The radicals then tried to stir up public opinion. If the debate was over collectivization and the political role of the poor peasants they visited the countryside. Another concern of theirs was the return of 'Right opportunists' to political life, and as these latter held key positions in literature and the arts, the radicals launched Marxist literary criticisms, making the most of the freedom of the press available to them and trying to win positions in the world of journalism.

Needless to say, all the issues dividing the two sides were important questions on which all Communists had to take a stand, and the split was gradually spreading right through the Party.

The organization and working of the Party

The numerical strength of the Chinese Communist Party was not very high, comprising only some twenty-five or thirty per thousand of the population, with a much lower proportion in the countryside than in the towns. There was nothing unusual for a commune brigade of 1,500 people to have only three to five Party members. This was a tiny handful with which to arouse the masses, particularly in view of the size and number of the tasks before them. This may have encouraged the Party's representatives in small communities to make too much of their personal authority.

The Party's structure was like that of all other Communist Parties, and its institutions worked on the principle of democratic centralism. In principle, important decisions had to be put to the vote of delegates elected directly or indirectly from the basic levels, and it was to these that the authorities entrusted with their execution were responsible. Decisions once taken had to be strictly carried out.

The Party's highest executive body was the Central Committee, which was in principle elected for a five-year period by the Party Congress, though at the time of Cultural Revolution the Central Committee had been in existence for almost a decade. According to the Party Constitution it was supposed to meet in plenary session at least twice a year to re-elect its executive agents: the Political Bureau, the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau, and the Secretariat. One result of the splits within the Party was that 'work conferences' were called instead of plenary sessions.

Local and national government rested on a system of people's congresses and 'people's committees' parallel to that of the Party. Party committees guided the 'people's committees' of the same level, right up to the level of the State Council or Cabinet. Within the Central Committee's bureaus were specialized departments guiding the ministries. The key organs and bodies in the country—ministries, army units and staff departments, offices, factories, banks, newspapers—in effect were run by the collective leadership of their Party committees. These were known as the Party committees of the 'unit.'[1]

The most influential figures tended to hold concurrent positions in the Party committee and 'people's committee' of each level. Each committee had its standing committee or central group—in the case of the Central Committee's Political Bureau it was its own Standing Committee—and a secretariat responsible for the day-to-day work under the guidance of the standing committee. The secretary of a committee was as a key figure, and Mao Tse-tung always laid great stress on the training of the men who filled it.

> A party committee has ten to twenty members; it is like a squad in the army, and the secretary is like the 'squad leader'. It is indeed not easy to lead this squad well.

[1] A factory, a department store, an agency, or a people's commune, for example, are 'units.' The term 'system' is used for a whole nationwide network of services under a single political and technical leadership: industry, communications, finance, commerce, agriculture, forestry, foreign relations, etc.

> . . . To fulfil its task of exercising leadership, a Party committee must rely on its 'squad members' and enable them to play their parts to the full. To be a good 'squad leader' the secretary should study hard and investigate thoroughly. . . .[2]

What is true for the secretary of a unit's committee is even truer for the secretary of the Central Committee. The Secretary General, Teng Hsiao-p'ing, and the Second Secretary, P'eng Chen, had considerable power. The Second Secretary in particular included among his functions that of confirming the appointments of cadres to positions in the Party. This gave P'eng Chen influence and capabilities which went far beyond his responsibilities as mayor of Peking.

The pre-1969 Party Constitution provided for sanctions against its members in order to allow for errors to be put right. They ranged from a warning to suspension from one's position in Party organizations. An accused member might be put on probation for a period not exceeding two years. He had the right to speak in his own defence, and could in the last resort be expelled from the Party. Decisions concerning him could only be taken by higher authority in the Party, and the masses did not have the right to judge him.

The provisions for suspension and probation, which could be for periods as short as ten or fifteen days, explain the absence of certain personalities during the Cultural Revolution which often attracted attention, followed by their reappearance shortly afterwards.

The average age of the leaders was old in 1966: over sixty for members of the Central Committee, and not much below this figure for candidate members. Several younger, dynamic men, such as Teng Hsiao-p'ing, P'eng Chen and T'ao Chu, seemed capable of replacing the historic leaders. Events spared none of them.

Foreigners used to regard the leaders at the Centre—the common abbreviation for the Central Committee, its com-

[2] 'Methods of Work of Party Committees' (March 13, 1949), *Selected Works*, vol. 4, p. 377.

missions and central services—as united. In September 1964 the *People's Daily* listed Liu Shao-ch'i, Chou En-lai, Teng Hsiao-p'ing, P'eng Chen and Lin Piao as Chairman Mao's closest companions in arms.

Campaigns before the Cultural Revolution: the Great Leap Forward, the People's Communes, and 'Readjustment'

The most famous of the rectification campaigns carried out to give the Party a 'popular treatment' was that of 1942. Mao Tse-tung decided to put right all sorts of bad habits among the cadres: authoritarianism, dogmatism, pedantry, mystification, dullness, unintelligibility, alienation from the masses. Other such movements took place in 1947–48 and in 1950 to encourage non-communists to express their views on the Party's work, so as to invigorate the united front between Communists and non-communists.

In 1956, a year of great importance because during it the Eighth Party Congress was held, a great open-door operation was carried out. The news media were reformed, and the Chinese were urged by propaganda to express their views. This was the Hundred Flowers campaign. Although the intellectuals did most of the talking, the campaign was also aimed at the workers and peasants.

This movement for free criticism came to an abrupt halt. Probably most of the Party wanted the criticisms stopped. In any event, the Party had its own interpretation of a speech that Mao Tse-tung had just made, and it made the most of it. Edgar Faure, who has observed the cyclical nature of such movements as the Cultural Revolution since 1957, has noted tactics used by the Party machine.[3] A passage from Mao Tse-tung's report 'On the correct handling of contradictions among the people' was revised before being incorporated into an editorial that appeared in the *People's Daily* on April 14th.

[3] Edgar Faure, *The Serpent and the Tortoise*, Macmillan, London, 1965.

In this passage the theory of contradictions was brought into the campaign for rectifying ways of working. It was made commonplace. While affirming that mass struggles were not yet entirely over, he was quoted as saying that 'large-scale class struggle between ourselves and our enemies has, in the main, ended.' There remained contradictions among the people, mainly due to mutual misunderstanding between the people and the leaders. The Party therefore had to put itself right, and that concerned nobody but the Party itself. 'Was there at this point a conflict of views with concessions by Mao, or was this simply general agreement to resort to a tried formula, a good publicity gambit?'[4] In any event Teng Hsiao-p'ing, the Party's Secretary-General, left no room for doubt over how the clause in the new Party constitution on disagreements was to be interpreted: 'The right of disagreement applies in day-to-day questions, but never over principles, or in practical activities. The basis of the Party is a unified ideology.'[5]

On June 14, 1967, perhaps on the pretext of the rather serious incident of June 12th at the Party offices in Hanyang (the modern industrial suburb of Wuhan), the movement for self-criticism and submission to the Party by which atonement was already being made for the Hundred Flowers, became a very tough campaign against Right deviationists.

From 1958 onwards a new five-year plan was mounted, and political questions tended more and more to be seen through the prism of economic development. At the second session of the Party Congress in May 1958 Liu Shao-ch'i called for intensified efforts in rapid industrialization and modernization. The congress adopted the general line of building socialism to obtain 'more, better, quicker and more economical' results. The leap forward was to begin in the industrial enterprises. Mao was concentrating more than ever on the countryside, doubtless believing

[4] Faure, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

[5] Robert Guillain, 'Que fleurissent cent fleurs, que cent écoles révalisent,' *Le Monde*, March 7, 1957.

that the spirit of economic progress could be used to intensify rural collectivization.

The first people's communes were founded on the initiative of agricultural co-operatives in Liaoning and Honan. Then, rather hastily, a Central Committee work conference at Peitaiho decided to generalize these experiments by adopting on August 29, 1958, the 'Resolution on the establishment of the people's communes.' This resolution was expanded in a number of basic articles in the theoretical organs that tried to go more deeply into the matter; but most of the articles thus produced could scarcely conceal the extent to which they had been improvised.[6] This was in contrast to the 'Resolution on agricultural co-operatives' adopted at the end of the first session of the Eighth Party Congress.[7] Such vital questions as the number of households to a commune, the retention of private property in the form of individual plots of land, collective dormitories, and the time span over which the communes were to be organized were touched on only vaguely. One is left with the impression that the main point on which agreement was reached was that an example—that of the Weihsing (Sputnik) Commune—should be popularized. The position taken by Liu Shao-ch'i and his supporters on agricultural collectivization emerged later in official press commentaries during the Cultural Revolution. If these are entirely to be believed, it is not surprising that it was hard to find a majority in the Central Committee in 1968 to support Mao Tse-tung's revolutionary schemes. A 1967 article comments on the

[6] The text of the resolution, two editorials in the *People's Daily* and three in the *Red Flag*, all published between August and October 1958, were published together with the rules of the Sputnik People's Commune in the pamphlet *People's Communes in China*, Foreign Languages Press, Peking.

[7] The result of a report by Mao Tse-tung ('On the question of agricultural co-operation,' *Selected Readings from the Works of Mao Tse-tung*, Peking, 1967, pp. 316–39—translator) made on July 31, 1955, in which Mao argued with all the skill and the force of his conviction, but which was not published until October 11th. (See Gilbert Etienne, *La Voie Chinoise* PUF, Paris, 1962, chs. 10 and 19.)

observations Liu Shao-ch'i is supposed to have made at an earlier period on a resolution from Shansi about mutual-aid teams.

> However, working behind Chairman Mao's back, China's Khrushchev wrote the following vicious comments on a report: 'After the land reform, the peasants' spontaneous tendency toward capitalism and class polarization began to find expression in economic developments in the countryside. Some comrades of the Party have already expressed fears of such a spontaneous tendency and class polarization, and have attempted to check or prevent them. They cherish the illusion that this tendency can be checked or prevented by means of mutual-aid teams and supply and marketing co-operatives. Some people have already expressed the opinion that steps should be taken gradually to shake the foundations of private ownership, weaken it until it is nullified, and raise the agricultural mutual-aid organizations to the level of agricultural producers' co-operatives as a new factor for 'overcoming the peasants' spontaneous tendency.' This is an erroneous, dangerous and Utopian conception of agricultural socialism.[8]

This text shows that even when different leaders made the same diagnosis they were pursuing different courses of action.

The people's communes, 'a form of economic, administrative, cultural and military decentralization . . . an attempt at popular self-government and local organization of the whole of social life,' were nevertheless confirmed by the next plenary session of the Central Committee (November 28th–December 10th, at Wuhan). But the Committee set at fifteen to twenty years, if not longer, instead of three to six years as at Peitaiho 'the period of transition

[8] *People's Daily, Red Flag*, November 23, 1967: 'Conflict between two policies towards China's rural areas.' (See *Peking Review*, 1967, no. 49, p. 13—translator.) The comment was on a 1951 report from the Shansi Party Committee called 'Raise the mutual-aid organizations in the old liberated areas to a higher level.'

from collective ownership to that of ownership by the whole people.' And it accepted Mao Tse-tung's proposal that he should give up the Chairmanship of the People's Republic, an act of the greatest importance, and keep only the Chairmanship of the Party.

It was to be a long time yet before regulatory documents confirmed the institution of people's communes. Although a very large number of communes were formed in the first flush of enthusiasm, 'containing 90 per cent of the rural population at the end of 1958,'[9] it was only in 1961, after the change of social and economic policies known as the 'readjustments,' that texts of constitutions appeared, and these were still provisional and not backed up by legislation. In the circumstances it is not surprising that the texts, drafted, redrafted, and drafted again, and distributed three times, one after the other, did not show all the radical enthusiasms of the original intentions.[10]

Meanwhile the plenary session of the Central Committee at Lushan in August 1959 spelled out certain details of the organization of the communes[11] and thoroughly refuted a letter from P'eng Te-huai, the Minister of Defence, criticizing the mistakes made in the Great Leap Forward and the policy of collectivization. P'eng Te-huai and certain other figures were condemned as Right opportunists, which may have restored the unity of the Party but probably made its splits worse in the long run.

Liu Shao-ch'i was not convinced that P'eng Te-huai's attitude merited so serious a condemnation. 'The Great Leap Forward in 1958 and 1959,' he said, 'only made us increase our numbers and lose time. And at the Lushan

[9] Marthe Engelborghs-Bertels et René Dekkers, *La République Populaire de Chine: cadres institutionnels et réalisations,* vol. 1, p. 21.

[10] May 1961, draft; June 1961, revised draft; September 1962, revised draft. The text of the second draft is in *Ajia Keizai Jumpo,* no. 691, Tokyo, 1967, p. 22.

[11] Confirmation of the system of the three levels of production—production team, production brigade, people's commune. The production team corresponded to a group of households or a hamlet. The brigade had a thousand or more members.

meeting Mao Tse-tung treated anyone who did not agree with the Great Leap Forward as a Right opportunist.'[12]

Chou En-lai himself had felt doubts, as he later acknowledged. 'I too have my share of responsibility for the resistance to the Great Leap Forward in 1956, but I have made my self-criticism.'[13]

In the event he defended the Leap even when it met with difficulties.

> In his April 1959 report to the standing committee of the National People's Congress, Chou En-lai declared that one should not in any way underestimate the mass campaign launched last year for the production of iron and steel, or fail to see the importance of the huge numbers of little furnaces for the future production of iron and steel.[14]

The Ninth Plenary Session of the Eighth Central Committee, held in January 1961, recognized that the Great Leap Forward had met with relative setbacks in some areas. It decided to reduce the scale of basic investment and to 'readjust' the rhythm of economic development.[15]

It is almost certain that these decisions were taken at the direction of Liu Shao-ch'i; and it is said that Mao Tse-tung was not present at the meeting. After this the government adopted new financial policies, stressed productivity, approved rewards for increased output, made concessions to the peasants, and reinforced 'vertical control' in a reaction against the tendency of decentralization in the previous period. When later on revolutionaries investigated the events of this period, it was a meeting known

[12] *Mōtakutō no Chōsen,* Tokyo, 1968, p. 119.

[13] *Hsinghua Chantoutui* of the Second Faculty of the Peking University of Engineering, in a poster quoting a meeting of Premier Chou with the State Economic Commission and the State Planning Commission on April 6, 1967, in Peking.

[14] *'L'industrie sidérurgique chinoise.'* Documentation by the Presidency of the Council, Paris, November 12, 1959, in *Notes et Études documentaires,* no. 2591, p. 22.

[15] *Red Flag,* 1961, nos. 3 and 4.

as the 'Meeting in the Western Building' that drew most of their anger.[16]

Those present at this meeting, held in Peking at the beginning of 1962, included Liu Shao-ch'i, Teng Hsiao-p'ing, Ch'en Yün, and Po Yi-po, another member of the standing committee of the Political Bureau who was also an economic expert. Ch'en Yün's report presented the conclusion that stocks were exhausted, factories were being badly run, with an excess of manpower and excessive production costs, and a monetary inflation was provoking a flow of funds back to the countryside, thus involving the risk that the peasants would have nothing to buy with their money. The meeting therefore approved the system of temporary labourers to stimulate production, an increased number of technicians 'in defiance of the popular line,' and the strengthening of direct control by the Central Committee.

In the countryside some land was returned to peasant ownership in the form of individual plots; it was learned later that in some places up to a third of the arable land was redistributed in this way. Free markets were restarted almost everywhere. It was agreed to set production norms on a household basis. This was the period of *san tzu yi pao:* 'Three freedoms and one contract.' The freedoms were those of the private plot, the market, and small-scale private enterprise, and the contract was to deliver agricultural products to the collective. The last draft rules for the working of the people's communes appeared in September 1962, when an article of sixty clauses was distributed to local committees. According to this the production team was to be the smallest autonomous decision-making unit, and it was also decreed that the system should not be changed for the next thirty years.

The production team was more or less equivalent to

[16] At least two Red Guard papers bear witness to this: *Tung fang hung* of the Second Red Guard Headquarters, January 27, 1967, in an article by the Red Guards of the Peking Institute of Aviation; and *Shoutu Hungweiping* of the Third Red Guard Headquarters, January 7, 1967, in an article by the Red Guards of the Central Institute of Finance and Credit.

village. For the Chinese peasants, who have always d forms of association among the inhabitants of a vil- e or a neighbourhood, or among the hands working the same farmer, it was following time-honoured cus- m to become a group, sharing a cart and a bicycle. In establishing a type of collective ownership that was as ose as possible to that of a family group, and in guaran- eing the peasants' personal incomes from the work-point stem, their own sales and their handicrafts, an attempt s being made to carry out a policy of social peace. A lind eye was turned to class differences.

After the Tenth Plenum of the Central Committee

he Central Committee met for its Tenth Plenum in Sep- mber 1962. One can well imagine that at this point Liu hao-ch'i and his political friends were primarily con- erned with closing the Party's ranks, while Mao Tse-tung nd his supporters kept up the struggle to have their ideas ccepted. All references to this meeting indicate that it was a dramatic one.

When Mao Tse-tung launched his appeal, 'Never forget class struggle!' it could be seen, said one commentator, that a fight was on, and that it 'inevitably was reflected in the Party.' The two rival factions may have already envisaged that a purge would be needed, the one wanting to overthrow the other, while the latter wanted to strengthen its authority in the Party.

Soon afterwards the leaders drafted the campaign of the 'Socialist education movement' from which both were to draw advantages in the years that followed. While one group saw it as a step forward towards genuine people's communes and power for the masses, their rivals used it to strengthen the Party's position. At the beginning of 1963 the movement had probably not yet been given either its name or its definitive slogans, only its aims. The slogans were to be taken from a note written on May 9, 1963, by Mao Tse-tung on 'Seven well-written documents from Chekiang province on the participation of cadres in manual labour.' These were class struggle, the struggle for produc-

tion, and scientific experiment.[17] The movement was given the same name as that of a 1957 one with more didactic slogans.[18] In the months that followed, precious time slipped by while the secretariat of the Central Committee appeared to do nothing. Mao Tse-tung took up a plan that had been drafted by his supporters for April 1, 1963, on the application of the socialist education movement to the countryside, rewrote it himself, and had it put on record by a meeting of leading members of the Central Committee that met in somewhat obscure circumstances on May 20, 1963. This document, the 'Draft decision of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on certain problems in our present rural work,' is generally known as the 'Earlier Ten Points.'[19] It was only to be officially adopted by the Central Committee at its Eleventh Plenum in August 1966, when the Cultural Revolution was in full flood. It took thirty-eight months for these ideas to be accepted by the majority of the Party's highest body.

However, three successive versions of the Ten Points were to appear. Could it have been that the Party machine diverted their ideological aims by switching them into questions of social morality, thus running counter to the intended direction of the programme for socialist education on which the leaders had agreed in September 1962? Special emphasis was put on the 'Four Clean-ups' movement. At first the four matters to be set right were account books,[20] property, the work-point system of payment, and the running of the collective granaries. In a

[17] See *Peking Review*, 1968, no. 51, p. 3. 'Peasant experts and the Revolution in Agricultural Education' (from *Red Flag*, no. 5, 1968).

[18] 'Respect the laws, understand the relationship between the workers and the peasant, and understand the relationship between the individual and the mass.' See *Ajia Keizai Jumpo*, no. 692, Tokyo, 1967, p. 1.

[19] See *Ajia Keizai Jumpo*, no. 701/2, Tokyo, 1967, pp. 19 and 34, for the text and commentaries. (See also Baum and Teiwes, *op. cit.*, pp. 58–71 for a full English translation—translator.)

[20] Formerly accounts were often kept by creditors, with the object of using them as pledges on private property.

later formulation the four issues were politics, economics, organization, and ideology, which corresponded better to the political objectives of the cadres.[21] Liu Shao-ch'i was accused of having the cadres watched by informers under the pretext that the contradictions between the 'four goods' and the 'four evils' could not be cleared up without discreet enquiries, which amounted to favouring a purge of the Party rather than having it cleaned up by open class struggle.

The implication seems to be that after their first trial applications the original Ten Points were modified, for in September 1963 a second version came out with the preamble that 'the cadres have now been trained and proved by prepared tests.'[22] This second version was still only a draft, but was apparently not acceptable, since a third one was published a year later, apparently drawn up by P'eng Chen on the request of Liu Shao-ch'i. It was this final version which was the most sharply criticized two years later by the revolutionaries.

It is noticeable that, for example, instead of referring to uniting 95 per cent of the cadres and the masses in order that the class struggle be adapted to include the people, the third version required that '95 per cent of the cadres and 95 per cent of the masses' should be united, as if the one were the precondition of the other. It also advocated starting with the cadres when dealing with the problem of the 'four evils'. It seems that according to this third series of directives the whole question was to be treated as one of rectifying and strengthening the Party. In May 1967 an article criticizing Liu Shao-ch'i in the *People's Daily* stated: 'He deliberately removed the class content from the struggle inside the Party.'[23]

On January 1, 1965, Mao Tse-tung called a working

[21] *Ajia Keizai Jumpo*, no. 692, Tokyo, 1967, p. 2.

[22] *Ajia Keizai Jumpo*, no. 692, p. 8. The texts of the second and third versions are in issue no. 701/2 (and in Baum and Teiwes, *op. cit.*, pp. 72–94 and 102–17).

[23] 'The class struggle is essential to a Communist Party' New China News Agency, French language release no. 051219, 1967.

party of the Political Bureau at which he took the chair. He criticized Liu Shao-ch'i and brought the matter to a close by replacing the whole series of Ten Point directives with the Twenty-three Articles. This final document,[24] as it was now described, was not a draft but a 'digest of the minutes of the Central Committee Political Bureau's working party.' It brought back the concept that there were contradictions between socialism and capitalism within the Party and the masses. This had been eliminated by the previous documents with their stress on organizational matters.

The opposition between the ideological aims represented by the 'Mao Tse-tung line' and the organizational ones of the 'Liu Shao-ch'i line' was to be the basic theme of the later criticism of Liu over his book *How to Be a Good Communist,* generally referred to in the press during the Cultural Revolution as the 'Book on self-cultivation.'

Analysts of the following period noticed that Liu dropped all reference to class struggle from the 1962 edition of his book. Taking their criticism further, they noted that he put Party members on the sidelines of the clash of class interests, and said, 'Their different ways of seeing problems lead members of the Party to resolve them by different methods, and cause the growth of divergent views and opinions within the Party.'[25] Their special position had to be earned through self-improvement. But if Party members held themselves aloof from the struggle for socialism, did they have the right to participate in the institutions which the masses had entrusted to them for their control? Could the privileged leaders exploit the will of the masses in order to issue orders to them?

On February 12, 1966, at the dramatic moment when the Party was being split into two centres, a Maoist resolution declared that it was necessary to 'develop socialist education and let the masses know that democratic centralism had to be carried out thoroughly, and that all deviations from democratic centralism were evil tendencies.'[26] This resolution explained that leaders whose ideals were based on the idea of master and pupil were contravening the principle of democratic centralism. Work conferences on democratic centralism held in ministries and systems during March and April 1966 attracted attention. A fuller analysis would have revealed that this was the point at issue. However, the writings of Liu Shao-ch'i were being more widely distributed than those of Mao Tse-tung. A new, revised edition of *How to Be a Good Communist* was published in August 1962, admittedly a little after the policy of 'readjustment' came into effect. From September 1962 to July 1966 14,899,500 copies of this were printed, compared with 6,261,000 copies of the *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* in the same period.[27] Possibly every member of the Party had a copy of Liu, but they did not yet all have a copy of Mao.

'Readjustment' encouraged other writers to criticize the regime. Teng T'o, for example, used a historical anecdote:

> In the reign of the Dowager Empress Ming Su, the Sung government became daily more corrupt. There was no intelligent and capable prime minister at the top with assistants responsible enough to take charge of personnel and administration, so that the local officials in the lower ranks did exactly as they pleased. As a result the problem became inordinately confused.[28]

The Party machine had to fight on two fronts, against unbelievers and radicals.[29] In these conditions the machine

[24] 'Some problems currently arising in the course of the rural socialist education movement' (January 14, 1965). Text in *Ajia Keizai Jumpo,* no. 701/2, p. 67 ff. (Baum and Teiwes, *op. cit.,* pp. 118–26–translator).

[25] New China News Agency, *ibid.*

[26] Quoted in *K'ochi chanpao,* June 2, 1967, *op. cit.* The passage is taken from a Central Committee Notice of February 12, 1966, on the publication of Mao Tse-tung's speech on January 30, 1962, at the enlarged work meeting.

[27] See *Ajia Keizai Jumpo,* no. 683, Tokyo, 1967.

[28] (*Peking Review,* 1966, no. 22, p. 10–translator.)

[29] We have seen above how it had been forced to act on two fronts earlier: on the internal one with the article of April 14, 1957, during the Hundred Flowers, and against the critics in the resolution of the Conference in the Western Building at the beginning of 'readjustment.'

decided not only to reform itself through discipline, but also to strengthen its foundations. In late 1964 and throughout 1965 outside observers were surprised to see that political departments had been attached to such widely differing sectors of government as industry, agriculture, trade, and finance.

There was a strong temptation to see them as extensions of the system of political commissars in the army; it was as if, from now on, there could not be a good banking service or factory workshop without a political instructor. The fact that some of these newcomers were demobilized soldiers made the similarity to political commissars even stronger. They spread the Thought of Mao Tse-tung as they had learnt to do in the army. But one cannot draw the implication that the army had infiltrated them into the administration in order to propagate Mao's thought: even at this period everybody had to express their respect for the Thought of Mao Tse-tung.

This is how the paper *Takung Pao* welcomed the veterans:

> The millions of employees and workers in commerce and finance welcome the comrades from the army. Many of them do not care about politics and expect no benefit from it. It is good that some people should be against politics because they can be held up as bad examples. The newcomers from the army naturally do not know much about commerce; Why? Because, it is said, they have changed their jobs, everything is new to them, and their previous experience is of no use. This is indeed a strange opinion; all they have is the Thought of Mao Tse-tung, and they keep a firm grip on it. In fact they have not started new careers, only taken up new postings. Now they have to work in commerce and finance and learn the financial policies of the Centre and the State Council.[30]

There is a touch of irony here. No doubt some people

[30] *Takung Pao,* May 10, 1965. On this topic see *China News Analysis,* no. 581, September 17, 1965, from which this quotation is taken.

were delighted that the newcomers fell under the influence of the majority in the Party bureaucracy. Was this also an infiltration by activists, or a plan for centralization designed to stifle the machine? The answer can be found, it would seem, in the proportion of army veterans in the new political structure.

According to the *Takung Pao*,[31] 54 per cent of the new political instructors were former Party branch secretaries, 10 per cent came from the government, and only 32 per cent from the army. A large majority of them would thus have been in favour of the existing machine, which makes the hypothesis that the operation was designed to strengthen central control seem the more probable one.

Departments of this sort were installed down to the level of cities and *hsien* in order to structure commercial and financial activities. But this reinforcement was not limited to the low-level units; it reached right up to the Central Committee's bureaus, the political offices in charge of the systems. A political department was attached to each of the existing Central Committee bureaus in charge of agriculture, industry and communications, and trade and finance. This procedure showed that the new political organs in the economy were intended to come under the control of a special centralized apparatus.

All this recalls the method whereby the decisions of the Conference in the West Building were applied, for all that these were restricted to economic problems. We may conclude, then, in view of this analysis of its structure, that the Party was merely engaged in strengthening its position.

Cultural politics

Meanwhile, campaigns were periodically launched against intellectuals overinvolved in obsolete ways of thinking, some of whom sought to break free from the constraints of propaganda. The most individualistic of them wrote

[31] June 16, 1965.

in allegory, substituting historical or legendary events for contemporary situations, or telling stories with a double meaning. They took liberties with socialist morality. When the policy of 'readjustment' was adopted they became bold enough to write about more dangerous subjects.

One of them was Wu Han, deputy mayor of Peking, an historian and occasional dramatist; another was T'ien Han, chairman of the Chinese Theatrical Association.

Wu Han had written *The Dismissal of Hai Jui,* a play which described how a Ming emperor ordered Hai Jui, one of his officials, to put right the wrongs suffered by the peasants who had been stripped of their land by the gentry, and then dismissed him under pressure from landlord interests. Hai Jui had become dangerous because he took the cause of the peasants too much to heart. The play was later criticized on the grounds that it depicted a character so forgetful of his own class origins that he could seemingly serve with sincerity the interests of his own class enemies. Wu Han created a mandarin deliberately prepared to sacrifice himself for the peasants, which was a literary fiction.

The work was not condemned on academic grounds alone. The play had ulterior political motives, and the matter was more serious still because the character of Hai Jai was connected with that of P'eng Te-huai, the 'Right opportunist' who had claimed to be defending the peasants when he attacked the Party and the people's communes. Wu Han seemed to be pleading for the rehabilitation of the rightists condemned in 1959. This gave apparent support to the view that such men were about to return to active politics.

Whether he was unaware of the criticism that was to follow, or was defying it in advance, Wu Han had his play published in the January 1961 issue of the Peking *Literary and Artistic Review,* at the same time as the Ninth Plenum of the Central Committee, which formally marked the failure of the Great Leap Forward. This was enough for it to be seen as an act of defiance.

Wu Han was not the only writer to take subjects and characters from the past. 'A mass of ghost stories and

other pernicious operas were once again staged at the Peking opera house,'[32] said Lu Ting-yi, then director of the Central Committee's Propaganda Department. He was not exaggerating. From 1961 to 1966 there was much talk in China about ghost stories. These 'ghosts' were the favourite heroes of feudal and bourgeois literature: emperors, generals, mandarins, and scholars, all irrelevant to the contemporary world because they were 'politically dead.' Mao Tse-tung did not confine himself to pronouncements on the subjects of plays; he declared that much of the control of culture was in the hands of the dead.[33]

One critic, however, did not shrink from writing a story called 'Ghosts do no harm' in a Peking evening paper in August 1961.[34] He was Liao Mo-sha, head of the United Front Department of the Peking Municipal Party Committee.[35] Liao collaborated with Teng T'o, a member of the secretariat of the same committee, and Wu Han, to write short essays in the form of cautionary tales under the joint pseudonym of 'Wu Nan-hsing.'

These pieces came out under the heading 'Tales of a Three-Family Village'[36] in the municipal Party committee's journal *Ch'ien Hsien* ('Front Line') between October 1961 and July 1964. Their rather insolent tone, which soon made them popular with malcontents, must have drawn some reaction even from within the Party committees responsible for the contents of the magazine, because after September 1962 the 'Three-Family Village' changed its approach somewhat. Instead of amusingly retold stories

[32] Speech of Lu Ting-yi at the opening of the Festival of Peking Operas on Contemporary Themes (June 5, 1964). See *A Great Revolution on the Cultural Front,* FLP, Peking, 1965.

[33] 'December 1963 instructions to cultural circles,' quoted in *Peiching Hungse Hsüanch'uanping,* May 10, 1967.

[34] Translated text in *Enzan Yawa,* Mainichi Shimbunsha Yakuben, Tokyo, September 1966.

[35] Also candidate member of the North China Bureau of the CCP Central Committee. At the end of 1961 P'eng Chen, with the encouragement of Liu Shao-ch'i, went through the Central Committee's directive and Mao Tse-tung's speeches of 1958–60 and compiled a twenty-nine point 'list of errors.'

[36] Allusion to a poem by the Sung writer Lu Yu.

from the past, and observations on morals, education, and the arts, there now appeared more dramatic articles such as the 'Ode to Petroleum' extolling one of the regime's great achievements, the Tach'ing Oilfield. It was said later that the 'Three-Family Village' was covering its tracks.

Teng T'o, former chief editor of the *People's Daily* and still active in journalism, also wrote essays and fables on his own account for the *Peking Evening News* from March 1961 onwards.[37] This series lasted only until September 1962, when the leaders had it out with each other at the Tenth Plenum of the Central Committee.

During this short time he published 153 of his 'chats,' which Yao Wen-yuan later inveighed against for 'using the past to make mock of the present.' One can form one's own opinion from the following excerpt, together with the angry comments of the cultural insurgents, as quoted in a critical article which appeared early in the Cultural Revolution.

> In *New Stories of Ai Tzu,* Lu Chuo, who lived during the Ming Dynasty, relates a *typical case of amnesia:* 'There was once a man in the Kingdom of Ch'i who was so forgetful that he forgot to stop once he started walking, and forgot to rise once he lay down. His wife was much worried. She said to him, "I have heard that Ai Tzu is a clever and resourceful man who can treat the most baffling diseases. Why don't you go and consult him?" "I will," said the man, and rode away on horseback, taking his bow and arrow with him. Having gone a short way, he felt an urgent need and dismounted, sticking his arrows into the earth and tying his horse to a tree. Having relieved himself, he looked to his left and, seeing the arrows, exclaimed: "Heavens! What a narrow escape! Where are these arrows from? They nearly got me!" Then he looked to his right, and saw the horse, and cried out with joy, "I may have had a bad fright, but here's a horse for me." He was preparing to remount, with the reins in his hands, when he trod in his own stool. He stamped his feet and cursed, "Damn! I've trodden in a dog turd and ruined my shoes." Then he spurred on his horse and rode home. As he arrived, he hesitated before the gate, wondering, "Who lives here? Is this Master Ai Tzu's house?" His wife saw his bewilderment, realized that he had lost his memory again, and gave him a scolding. The puzzled man said, "We are not acquainted, Madam, so why are you abusing me?"
>
> 'This man certainly seems to have a bad case of amnesia. *But we cannot tell for sure what turn the illness will take when it reaches its crisis point: probably either insanity or imbecility.*
>
> 'According to ancient Chinese medicine books . . . one of the causes of amnesia is the abnormal functioning of what is called the vital breath. In consequence of this the patient not only suffers from loss of memory but also becomes *eccentric,* has great difficulty speaking, *grows irritable, insane, and finally raving mad.* Another cause is brain injury. The patient feels numb at times, and the blood rises to his head, causing occasional fainting fits. Unless treated in time, he will become an idiot. Thus if anyone finds either of these groups of symptoms present in himself, he *must take a complete rest at once, stop talking, and refrain from all activity. If he insists on speaking and acting, he will soon suffer a catastrophe.* Is there then no effective method for curing this disease? Certainly there is. For example . . . when a patient has a bad attack, *take a bucketful of dog's blood and pour it over his head, followed by some cold water to make him a little more clear-headed.* . . . According to modern Western medicine, one way is to *hit the patient on the head with a specially made club to induce a state of shock, and then recall him to his senses.'*
>
> ('A Special Treatment for Amnesia,' *Front Line,* no. 14, 1962)

Comments: The attacks contained in this article reveal the bitterest hatred of our great Party. Medical books nowhere include as symptoms of amnesia the patient's failure to keep a promise, or attacks of 'eccentricity,' 'insanity,' 'raving madness.' Still less do they prescribe

[37] They were called 'Evening chats at Yenshan' after the small mountain range northwest of the capital in the region of the Great Wall, which would have unmistakably suggested Peking to any Chinese reader. Teng T'o wrote them under the pseudonym Mao Nan-tun.

such treatment as dog's blood or blows with a club. *New Stories of Ai Tzu* by the Ming writer Lu Cho are really political satires and have nothing to do with medicine. Teng T'o is talking politics here, not medicine. This cannot be denied.[38]

What must have made this piece seem all the more blasphemous and shocking were the rumours about Mao Tse-tung's health that would have occurred to the reader.

Liao Mo-sha and Teng T'o, who had to make a self-criticism for the piece they had called 'Confucian morality may have its uses,'[39] were probably reprimanded. The Peking Party Committee told them to show more discretion, and in September 1962 the publication of *Ch'ien Hsien* ceased. It would have been virtually impossible to aim the thunderbolts of official criticism at such senior figures without severe repercussions. The Party as a whole turned a blind eye, which encouraged the bolder spirits at the very time when the advocates of 'readjustment' were beginning to lose ground.

Mao Tse-tung does not seem to have devoted himself to strictly cultural questions with the same tenacity that enabled him to win out on the peasant problem. Teng T'o's satirical sketches were not challenged until long after they were written. Chiang Ch'ing, Chairman Mao's wife, maintained in a 1967 statement that Wu Han had to be published before he could be criticized.[40]

The radicals therefore countered the rival movement by means of occasional criticisms, and also by example. The first festival of new operas on modern themes was held in Peking in April 1960. Peking opera, it should be said, is still popular in China. The North Chinese, espe-

[38] 'Teng T'o's "Evening Chats at Yenshan" are anti-Party, anti-Socialist double talk.' First published in *Wenhui Pao* and *PLA Daily*. Translation from *The Great Socialist Cultural Revolution in China* (2) FLP, Peking, 1966, pp. 17–19.

[39] *Enzan Yawa,* Mainichi Shimbunsha Yakuben, Tokyo, September 1966, p. 40 ff.

[40] Speech on April 12, 1967, to the enlarged meeting of the Central Committee's Military Commission reported in a Red Guard leaflet of April 1967.

cially the Pekingese themselves, are very fond of it. It would have been ill-advised to suppress this art, even though the affectation and stylization of its form were offensive to the revolutionary spirit. It was a much better idea to 'chase away the ghosts,' write more plays on contemporary issues, take themes from the revolutionary wars, 'class struggle, production, and construction since Liberation,' and bring in some socialist education. Peking opera had to be prevented, as far as possible, from being a refuge for those who sought memories of another way of life.

The job of 'workers in literature and art' was to create new operas on the themes of socialist life. There were pieces on the Leap Forward in the countryside, on the Vietnam war, on not devouring the surplus in harvest feasts, or letting privately owned ducks graze in the collective fields. But there were also *The Red Lantern* and *Shachiapang,* which could be given as examples. They were badly needed. For a critical audience prone to mockery there were too many duds among the pieces on prosaic themes produced to order by the workers in literature and art. Mao Tse-tung himself spoke twice on the subject. He issued instructions in December 1963,[41] and again in June 1964. After his first directive Liu Shao-ch'i, Teng Hsiao-p'ing, P'eng Chen, and Chou Yang[42] met on January 3, 1964. They agreed that from then on there would be a socialist literature and theatre, but that it was also necessary to preserve the traditional theatre alongside the modern one. They kept clashes to a minimum, though not without offering some provocation in the process, and kept the classical theatre alive.[43]

Mao Tse-tung's second directive was issued when the Festival of Peking operas on contemporary themes opened on June 5. He condemned the prevailing tendency, and

[41] Speech quoted above.

[42] Long regarded as a kind of Chinese Zhdanov, Chou Yang was deputy head of the Central Committee's Propaganda Department.

[43] *Peiching Hungse Hsüanch'uanping,* May 10, 1967.

said that the Party's policies had not been applied for the past fifteen years.

Mao Tse-tung had expounded his policies on literature and the arts once and for all in his *Yenan Talks*. By now he had some reason for feeling irritated. Little inspiration had been drawn from them and they were not being referred to often. One may also observe that his wife, the former actress Chiang Ch'ing, had resumed her activities and was busying herself with the productions of the Second Peking Opera Company. Through her Mao Tse-tung must have been better aware of the divergences of opinion in cultural circles.

Chiang Ch'ing had much to say. The First Peking Opera Company was unwilling to alter its style, hence her decision to fall back on the Second Company. When she wanted to adapt *Spark Among the Reeds* to make it a truly socialist piece free from compromise over class struggle—this was to become *Shachiapang*—her ideas were not accepted.[44]

Mao Tse-tung's friends still had all kinds of comments to make on the state of politics in artistic and educational circles. Young workers and peasants were always the victims of discrimination in the universities, they maintained; and schools where study and practical work were equally divided according to Party principles were neither numerous enough nor sufficiently suited to the education of the masses. While it should have been the intention to educate people who would spend the rest of their lives working in fields and factories, the aim these schools seemed actually to have set themselves was only to combine manual labour with study, for the benefit of students to whom the Party would give as good jobs as possible. Besides, the schools held up as models by Lu Ting-yi—Chiaot'ung University and the Harbin Polytechnic School—were quite simply capitalist or Soviet revisionist in type.[45] In the cinema industry weeds were springing up and the Thought of Mao Tse-

[44] On Chiang Ch'ing see Kosei Shoden in *Chūōkōron*, Tokyo, December 1967 and January 1968.

[45] See *Red Flag*, 1968, no. 3, translated in *Peking Review*, 1968, no. 37, p. 16.

tung was not being properly taught. It was reported later that in the *People's Daily* the chief editor, Wu Leng-hsi, was even giving secret instructions that the diffusion of the Thought of Mao Tse-tung was to be checked.[46]

The army spared no efforts in spreading the movement for the Thought of Mao Tse-tung—a movement it had nurtured itself—and the *PLA Daily* led all the other papers in publicizing it. So much so that to all outsiders it appeared to be pouring out without let or hindrance. The 'heroes' of the Thought of Mao Tse-tung appeared one after another: sincere, modest youngsters, persevering in their work and ready for self-sacrifice. National campaigns in their honour were organized among the army and the people by the propaganda machine. Their stories were very simple. They were of proletarian origin, had read the works of Mao Tse-tung by themselves, would go to any lengths for others, and one day died or were seriously injured to save the lives of their comrades or of children.

They were nearly always the victims of a machine or a piece of technical equipment symbolizing progress—a lorry, an oil-well in flames, a load of shells, often a railway locomotive. The modern, technical world came upon them, overwhelmed them, and continued inexorably on its course after the moment of drama in which a disaster was avoided. Perhaps the lesson to be drawn was that the younger generation should not expect any profit for itself in the building of socialism, and should not hope to enjoy the fruits of their efforts in peace. They were to sacrifice themselves for the sake of posterity.

There were fifteen or twenty heroes of this type, from Lei Feng to Men Ho, in the period from 1965 to 1968. Most of them were soldiers. One hero alone was distinct from the others: Chiao Yü-lu, the party secretary in a poor district, who despite his cancer pushed himself to the very limits of his strength to help the people protect

[46] 'Speech to the editorial and reporters' staffs of the Jenmin Jihpao, April–May, 1964' according to an editorial appearing simultaneously in *Red Flag* and the *People's Daily*, September 1, 1968. Wu Leng-hsi was editor-in-chief of the *People's Daily* and director of the New China News Agency.

their fields from floods, and to make barren land fertile. He read both Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-ch'i, and was probably conceived of by the Party machine in response to the other heroes as a demonstration that there could be models of a different kind, less political and more concerned with production. He went out of favour for a time before being revived a year after the beginning of the Cultural Revolution.

In addition to launching these heroes, some people within the propaganda organs were already searching Mao Tse-tung's works for pieces that could be read with profit by the less educated. They recommended the 'Three Old Articles': 'Serve the People' (how to devote one's life to the service of others); 'The Foolish Old Man Who Moved Mountains' (God helps those who help themselves); and 'In Memory of Norman Bethune' (people from outside can also be decent and good). But even these basic virtues were not spared by the mockers. Cheng T'ien-hsiang, a member of the Peking Municipal Party Committee's secretariat, said at a meeting of the committee that when the workers in a transport company recited 'The Foolish Old Man Who Moved Mountains' together as they loaded coal on a lorry, 'far from making them work harder, it slowed them down.'[47]

Although Mao Tse-tung was doubtless primarily concerned with problems of the communes and socialist education, it was finally on the cultural front that he allowed the revolution to break out.

An enlarged meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau was held in September and October 1965, with the heads of the Central Committee's regional bureaus taking part.[48] It had been called to study the question of Vietnam, and finally agreed on the key decision that it would have to reject a common initiative of socialist countries to give aid to the Vietnamese war effort. It was a very stormy meeting, and soon afterwards Mao Tse-tung withdrew to Shanghai, abandoning the Centre. In

[47] *K'ochi Hungch'i,* February 18, 1967, *loc. cit.*

[48] 'Circular of the Central Committee of the C.P.C.' May 16, 1966.

her book, *The Cultural Revolution in China,* the economist Joan Robinson, who visited China two years later, includes the 'report' given her by a member of the Shanghai Revolutionary Committee, and in this we read that 'in 1965 the Chairman called for the repudiation of the Wu Han.'[49] He does not appear to have got it.

On November 10th an article by Yao Wen-yuan criticizing Wu Han in the strongest terms was published in the *Wenhui Pao,* a Shanghai paper that was to be on several occasions the main organ of the Cultural Revolution. Ch'i Pen-yü, another prominent activist in the Cultural Revolution, wrote later that 'Under the leadership of Comrade Chiang Ch'ing the proletarian revolutionaries of Shanghai undertook the criticism of *The Dismissal of Hai Jui. . . .*'[50] thus confirming that Yao Wen-yuan had acted not in isolation but together with Chiang Ch'ing and a small group of radicals.

The attack was clearly aimed at the Peking municipal Party. P'eng Chen, the mayor of Peking, angrily asked Yao Wen-yuan, 'Why wasn't the publication of this document announced [in advance]? Where is your Party spirit? Doubtless this criticism came from the boss.' He added, 'What's going to come of it? But all are equal before the truth.'[51]

Why did they choose this time and place to take the initiative? One reason was given by Yao Wen-yuan himself, who wrote that their enemies 'were attacking with exceptional savagery and moving the centre of gravity from politics to organization.'[52] Perhaps in the eyes of the Maoists their opponents were so strongly entrenched that the struggle could be confined to ideas alone without jeopardizing their own safety. The choice of cultural terrain

[49] *Op. cit.,* p. 50.

[50] Ch'i Pen-yü's speech on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Yenan Talks, quoted in New China News Agency, no. 052417, French edition, May 24, 1967.

[51] *Chingkangshan* of the Red Guards of Tsinghua University, Peking, May 27, 1967, quoted in Konno, *Pekin Kono Ichinen,* Shinnihon Shuppansha, Tokyo, 1968, p. 31.

[52] 'On the Three-Family Village' in *The Socialist Cultural Revolution in China* (1), FLP, Peking, 1966.

for the attack probably owed much to the way Wu Han, Teng T'o and Liao Mo-sha were embodiments of the Peking municipality, that impenetrable 'independent kingdom.'

The Party split into two Centres

The year 1966 opened with the Party's leaders in disarray. At their last work conference they had discussed aid to Vietnam, a question that was to come up again during the visit of a Japanese Communist Party delegation. They found themselves disagreeing on the line to take with the Soviet Union over joint action. They may well also have discussed the new five-year plan due to start in 1966. Agreement on this would also have been virtually impossible, with some of them insisting on a new leap forward in the countryside while others wanted heavy industries developed, both sides becoming more and more inflexible.

There is no documentary evidence that the Third Five-Year Plan was adopted at this meeting. Occasionally the press stated that industry, agriculture, or the economy as a whole was fulfilling the first year of the Third Plan, but that is by no means the same thing. Doubtless the units suggested a plan for the year as usual to be approved with or without modification by the Party's bureaus. But this was not at all equivalent to the long-term economic programme moulded by political attitudes involved in a five-year plan.

Just as individual heroes were held up as examples, the radicals also had their economic models, principally Tach'ing and Tachai. Tach'ing, on the marshy and inhospitable plains northwest of Harbin, was one of the regime's triumphs. Starting out with scanty resources but ample courage, it had grown into a centre of oilwells and refineries. About 40,000 people, many of whom had come from the cities, worked there living in rustic shacks beside brackish lakes. The Tach'ing movement was also a campaign to encourage the opening of virgin lands.

Tachai was a production brigade in east-central Shansi which, in the face of a hostile environment, had brought

fertility to the soil and cultivated the hillsides with a system of high-level terracing. Despite suffering from an alternation of torrential downpours and prolonged droughts, Tachai always managed to get by on its own resources, making constant improvements on the basis of experience and at the minimum cost to the state. Tachai had, moreover, put into effect a system of payments for collective work whereby everyone decided for himself what he had really earned. Tachai was an example of simplified administration and a model for the building of socialism in agriculture. Neither Tach'ing nor Tachai had been created in the year which had just elapsed, but the propagandists only got hold of them now; and the publicity given the two models was intended to compensate the public for the absence of a five-year plan.

Despite the split in the Centre the Party's work was not fatally hindered, since the central services were still concentrated in Peking. But the atmosphere in which Party members worked must have been bad, since it was inevitable that the split at the top was common knowledge. Even in the 'independent kingdom' of Peking some Maoist radicals recruited supporters and made difficulties. The Party machine meanwhile was doing nothing to carry out those of Mao Tse-tung's instructions with which it disagreed. According to a later inquiry, these were the means Peking used to block a study on the progressive mechanization of agriculture that Mao Tse-tung had approved in February 1966:

> At this time China's Khrushchev was still resisting tenaciously, and he resorted to various tactics in order to disregard Chairman Mao's instructions. First he asked several departments and his own running dogs to 'study the question and make suggestions.' Several days later this was done, 'so that a meeting of the Central Committee could be called to discuss the question.' Having thus postponed Chairman Mao's instructions for twenty days, he made the new suggestion that a certain department of the Central Committee should 'first study differences in conditions, make a number of separate reports on the question and submit a plan for discussion

by the Central Committee.' Finally he decided on his own authority that 'the document from Hupei province should not be distributed to the regions for the time being.'[53]

The first foreigners to see that something was amiss were the Japanese Communists. A Japanese Communist Party delegation, led by Secretary-General Miyamoto himself, left Tokyo on February 7th on a tour of North Vietnam, China, North Korea, and back to China. Apart from its aim of having serious talks with the CCP, the mission wanted to bring about, with the consent of the Vietnamese Party, co-ordinated aid to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam by the Socialist countries. On the eve of its departure *Akahata* published an editorial under the title 'How to strengthen the united front for joint international action against American imperialism.'[54]

On their second journey through Peking the Japanese delegation was welcomed by P'eng Chen, who said in his speech, 'Modern dogmatism must be opposed at the same time as modern revisionism.' This sentence set the visitors thinking.

When the Japanese passed through the first time the Chinese Communists raised many objections to the joint action that was proposed to them in principle, and seemed very reserved. But some progress was made at the end of March, and a joint communiqué was agreed on with the Chinese working party under Chou En-lai. Liu Shao-ch'i was abroad at the time and Teng Hsiao-p'ing was travelling in China. The communiqué, which mentioned only the points on which agreement had been reached, and was silent on the rest, was settled on the basis of a draft prepared by the Chinese, signed by both parties and celebrated at a banquet.

The Japanese delegation could have returned to Japan satisfied, but it asked for an interview with Chairman Mao

[53] *Akahata* (national paper of the Japanese Communist Party), February 4, 1966.

[54] *Chūgoku Bunka Daikakumei wo dō miru ka,* Shinnihon Shuppansha, Tokyo, 1968, p. 209.

Tse-tung and was received by him at Hangchow on March 28th.[55] Although the communiqué had been signed by both Parties, Mao Tse-tung wanted an addition to be made, that this would be an international anti-American and anti-Soviet united front. The Japanese delegation refused, and Mao Tse-tung vetoed the publication of the communiqué.[56]

This was happening at the very time when Mao Tse-tung had just violently abused P'eng Chen because of the decision of his work team on the Wu Han case. After the incidents described earlier, and the publication of Yao Wen-yuan's article in Shanghai, Mao Tse-tung apparently declared that 'The point of the play is the dismissal. Hai Jui is P'eng Te-huai.'[57] But the self-criticism of its author, Wu Han, was very mild. A work team was set up to determine the matter, and in case of need to pronounce the necessary condemnation. This was the first 'Central Committee Cultural Revolution Group.' It was later known as the 'Group of Five.'[58] Its only job had been to set out the principles later known as the February Theses. The Theses were condemned on account both of their content

[55] *Ibid.,* p. 210.

[56] See Konno, *Pekin Kono Ichinen,* pp. 20–21.

[57] *Ibid.*

[58] It seems that this group was formed by P'eng Chen and K'ang Sheng, and in addition to them to have included Lu Ting-yi, Wu Leng-hsi and perhaps Chou Yang. Six others also took part in the February 3rd meeting that produced the text of the 'Principles suggested for the press by the Cultural Revolution Group on the present academic controversies' and the February 7th meeting that adopted them. (See *Chunghsüeh Hungweiping,* May 20, 1967.) These six included Liu Jen and Cheng T'ien-hsiang, thus strengthening the representation of the Peking Municipal Party Committee.

K'ang Sheng, in charge of the Party's international relations and candidate member of the Political Bureau in the 1956 Central Committee, now ranks fifth in the Party hierarchy. In 1969 he was promoted to the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau.

Liu Jen was then political commissar with the Peking Garrison Forces of the PLA, second secretary of the Peking Municipal Party Committee, and secretary of the North China Bureau of the Central Committee.

and the manner of their distribution within the Party. As far as their content was concerned, it was a question of 'purging the academic world of all bourgeois thought, a problem that has been solved neither in the USSR nor in other socialist countries.' They watered down the Maoist cultural programme, according to which the workers should build a store of knowledge by themselves, for themselves, and of practical applications. All they promised was 'a new historical period in which workers, peasants and soldiers will themselves *master*[59] the theoretical weapons of Marxism-Leninism, the Thought of Mao Tse-tung, as well as science and culture.'[60]

In any case, these Theses were discreet, asking for the maximum of caution in press criticism, and forbidding the publication of the names of the criticized. The movement was to remain within the Party, needing the approval of the appropriate bodies before a criticism was made.

This is why it is open to suspicion that these *Principles* were not transmitted in the regular way, according to the rules applicable to a document of this nature. P'eng Chen was attacked for putting them out in the name of the Central Committee without its approval. During the time the Party was split into two centres both sides avoided discussions, as this would have made a plenary meeting of the Central Committee essential and neither side would win. It is almost certain that Mao Tse-tung was told of the Principles, if not before they were published then at the same time. Konno,[61] who has gone into the problem, concludes that Mao Tse-tung did not forbid their publication.

If it is true that Mao Tse-tung saw the report on February 28th as a normally reliable Red Guard Paper maintains, his angry reaction was not immediate. It was only on March 28th that he exploded:

> The Tenth Plenum has decided on class struggle, so it is said. Then why has Wu Han written pieces libelling the Party? Is there nothing the Cultural Department [of the Central Committee] can do about it? Why is it allowing a decision of the Centre to become a dead letter? . . . The big clique of academics is repressing Leftist writings and concealing anti-Communist intellectuals. The [Central Committee's] Propaganda Department is the abode of the King of Hell. It must be knocked down and the young people set free. We must raise innumerable Sun Wu-k'ungs, one after the other, and storm the Palace of Heaven.[62]
>
> At last September's conference I saw comrades from all the regions and asked them, 'What will you do if revisionism appears in the Central Committee?' It is a considerable danger.[63]

[59] Author's italics.

[60] According to the text published in *Peiching Jenta Sanhung* (a journal of Peking People's University) in May 1967.

[61] *Op. cit.*, p. 31.

It became clear later that at about this time another Cultural Revolution Group was taking shape as a result of the initiatives of Lin Piao, Chiang Ch'ing and their friends. But this group was itself Maoist. A 'Discussion on literary and artistic activities in the army' took place in Shanghai from February 2nd to 20th with Chiang Ch'ing in the chair.[64] On March 20th Lin Piao sent by letter an

[62] Allusion to *Journey to the West* a sixteenth-century fairy story by Wu Ch'eng-en, also known as 'The Monkey Pilgrim.' Sun-the-Monkey, the offspring of a rock, had the power to metamorphose himself in seventy-two different ways, and could cover 108,000 miles with a single somersault. He went down to the Palace of the Dragon King at the bottom of the Eastern Ocean, demanded a magical cudgel from him—the golden cudgel of Mao Tse-tung's poem—then went to Hell, where he struck his name off the register of death. The Jade Emperor who reigned in Heaven was so incensed that he sent troops to destroy Sun Wu-k'ung. After their failure the Emperor invited Sun-the-Monkey to Heaven, put him in charge of the stables, and gave him the title of Great Wonder-worker, Heaven's Equal. Mao's poem on this theme is called 'An answer to Comrade Kuo Mo-jo' (November 17, 1961). In this poem two lines are particularly well known:

> The Golden Monkey raises his magic cudgel,
> And the Jade Palace is cleared of dust.

See *Chinese Literature*, 1966, no. 2.

[63] Tsinghua University's *Chingkangshan*, May 27, 1967.

[64] *Chūgoku Bunka Daikakumei wo dō miru ka*, Shinnihon Shuppansha, Tokyo, 1968.

abstract of these discussions (in the editing of which Mao Tse-tung took part on three occasions), to the members of the Central Committee's Military Commission. Four days later *Red Flag,* the Party's theoretical journal, published an article criticizing certain historians[65] and signed by Ch'i Pen-yü, Yen Chang-kuei, and Lin Piao himself.[66] With this should be considered another article by Kuan Feng[67] in the *People's Daily* of March 19th. Ch'i Pen-yü and Kuan Feng were later to be members of the Central Committee's Cultural Revolution Group, an important body in the control of the uprising.

Given the strength of the Party machine, it undoubtedly needed courage for these men to insist that the editorial committees accept their articles, despite the instructions of the Group of Five, but they probably already formed a group.

Once the conflict reached the press, newspapers and literary figures who had been discredited were induced to make their self-criticisms. This may even have been done at the demand of the heads of culture and propaganda, who were trying to keep their freedom of manoeuvre by the tactic, later denounced, of 'sacrificing a knight to save a queen.' The Peking papers that had published Teng T'o and Liao Mo-sha tried to limit the discussion to academic problems as far as they possibly could, but on April 16th they published a note in which they criticized their editorial policy.

Wu Han admitted his sins in the *Takung Pao* of April 23rd. Meanwhile the famous historian Kuo Mo-jo, the head of the Academy of Sciences, made his self-criticism on April 14th to the standing committee of the National People's Congress. He did it in style, saying that all his

[65] 'A necessary critique of Comrade Chien Po-tsan's history,' *Red Flag,* March 24, 1966.

[66] Ch'i Pen-yü was a young historian known for his work on the T'aip'ing history, and an editor of *Red Flag;* Kuan Feng was a *People's Daily* editor; Yen Chang-kuei was perhaps a pseudonym.

[67] *Mōtakutō no chōsen,* Tokyo, *op. cit.,* p. 26.

work should be burnt, and declared his intention of becoming the pupil of the workers, peasants and soldiers.

The Peking Municipal Committee was attacked inside the Party on April 24th. Its leadership was 'crossed out from one end to the other with a black line,' *Red Flag* was later to declare.[68] Liu Shao-ch'i found himself forced to give up his attempt to protect P'eng Chen. Liu Jen, a key man in the municipal group as he was Political Commissar to the Peking Garrison, tried to organize a defence for it on April 17th, but without success.[69] He was dismissed at the same time as P'eng Chen, and arraigned with P'eng in the same public trial at the beginning of June.

The army had been put on the alert and its discipline strengthened since January, when Lin Piao had issued directives declaring a state of emergency in preparation for war.[70] It is unlikely that P'eng Chen and Liu Jen could have obtained the co-operation of the army, even to enter the universities, which were in such a state of agitation at the end of May. It was thus tactically essential that Liu Jen should be eliminated immediately.

There was no plan for the Cultural Revolution before the one that was put forward on May 7th, perhaps the most ambitious of all those to be formulated in the eventful period then beginning. It took the form of a letter from Mao Tse-tung to Lin Piao, almost a private document; a letter from thinker to doer, written without any heed of the Party machine.

The essential feature of this directive was that there was to be no more specialization or exclusiveness in any field of activity. Soldiers had to study politics, till the land,

[68] Editorial in *Red Flag,* no. 8, 1966, 'Long live the great proletarian Cultural Revolution.' Translation in the Foreign Languages Press, Peking, *The Great Socialist Cultural Revolution in China,* Part 4.

[69] See Fernand Gigon, *Vie et Mort de la Révolution Culturelle,* Flammarion, Paris, 1969, pp. 122–23.

[70] Article by Hsiao Hua, *PLA Daily,* January 19, 1966. See *Chūgoku Bunka Daikakumei wo dō miru ka,* Tokyo, 1968, p. 208.

and go into industry; similarly workers, peasants and students were to extend their activities to other fields, as were people working in trade, public services, Party and government. Of course, the main task of the workers was to work in their factories and of the peasants to till their fields; but by going in for kinds of work outside their usual range they would destroy the barriers between town and countryside, between workers and intellectuals. Everybody needed all-round development, leading to the growth of proletarian political awareness, which would make new Communists of them all. Mao Tse-tung's letter to Lin Piao was not published in the press until the end of July.

The man Mao Tse-tung had chosen to carry out his ideas, from now on the only man to be called his 'closest comrade-in-arms,' had unbounded faith in the leader and was apparently utterly confident about the future. At an enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau on May 18th Lin Piao said:

> Mao Tse-tung is our Party's greatest leader, and his every word sets a standard for our movement. The whole Party will settle the score of those who oppose him, the whole Party will criticize them. Mao Tse-tung has done a great deal more than Marx, Lenin or Engels. They did not direct a proletarian revolution in person. They are nothing like Mao Tse-tung. What a great role he has played in political struggles, and above all what a great role in military struggles! Lenin did not live as long as Mao Tse-tung. The population of China is ten times Germany's, triple that of Russia, and China is teeming with revolutionary experiments. In every respect China is superior. Mao Tse-tung is the greatest man in our country and in the whole world.[71]

It was at this meeting of the Political Bureau that the new Central Committee Cultural Revolution Group was appointed, and the activities of the Group of Five were brought to an end after being condemned in the most

[71] *K'echi Chanpao*, organ of the revolutionary rebels of the System of the State Science and Technology Commission, June 2, 1967.

ignominious terms by the Central Committee's *May 16th Circular*.[72]

Neither the meeting nor the circular was confined to the dismissal of the Peking municipal authorities. Both threatened all the 'representatives of the bourgeoisie who have infiltrated into the Party, the government, the army and cultural circles,' adding:

> Some of them we have already seen through, others we have not. Some are still trusted by us and are being trained as our successors—persons like Khrushchev, for example, who are still nestling beside us.

All who read the document in May—in other words, Party men of a certain rank and above—must have taken note that the Chairman had turned the revolutionary spirit against the Party and was challenging it.

The Central Committee's Cultural Revolution Group, which came directly under the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau, was soon to take over the media of propaganda which it lacked at first. Yao Wen-yuan's fulminations against the 'Three Family Village' of May 10th came out in the Shanghai paper *Wenhui Pao* and the *PLA Daily*. From May 18th onwards the latter was criticizing the *People's Daily*, thus causing many repercussions. On May 20th a programme of homage to Mao Tse-tung in a new style was broadcast on the radio.

At this point the revolution was still only cultural. It was being called a 'revolution in the superstructure.' But the press was not slow to remind its readers that the 'fundamental question in revolution is the question of power.'[73]

[72] Only published on May 16, 1967 (see *Peking Review*, no. 21, 1967, pp. 6–9 and correction in no. 25, p. 35—translator).

[73] 'Let us sweep away all harmful influences.' *People's Daily* editorial, June 1, 1966. See *Peking Review*, 1966, no. 23, pp. 4–5.