

Chinese Communism Subject Archive

Sheng-wu-lien

Whither China?

A Radical Complaint Against the Emerging Establishment

1968

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- I. Scientific Foresight
- II. Storm of January Revolution
- III. Revolutionary Committees
- IV. February Adverse Current
- V. Local Domestic Revolutionary War of August
- VI. The Setback in September
- VII. Enlightenment of Political Thinking of the Working Class
- VIII. Refutation of the Reactionary "Doctrine of the Second Revolution"
- IX. Refutation of "Leftist" Doctrine of One Revolution

When the struggle to hit back at the February adverse current reached July, August, and September, the people of the whole country had a sense of vigorous growth, believing that there was hope of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution being "carried through to the end, and that all traditional ideas that fettered the mind of the people would be cast aside." However, an adverse current of counterrevolutionary reformism appeared after October at the upper levels and descended below. An atmosphere of class compromise, calling for an end to the first Cultural Revolution," suddenly grew in intensity. Again the people of the whole country were bewildered. Young intellectuals and students in particular, being extra sensitive, were the first to feel it. Again questions were asked: What shall we do? And whither China? The establishment of the Ultra-Left Faction Commune was first of all for the sake of answering this question.

To correctly answer this question, it is necessary to earnestly sum up

the very rich experience and lessons created by the greatest revolution in history in 1967, principally the experience of great historical significance created by the “January Storm” and the “August partial domestic revolutionary war.”

I.

Scientific Foresight

Contemporary China is the focus of world contradictions and the center of the storm of world revolution. Where is China going to? On this highly important question Comrade Mao Tse-tung—the great teacher of the world proletariat—has apparently only made an abstract prediction.

Just before the world-shaking Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was to rise from the East with the force of a thunderbolt, Chairman Mao announced to the whole world with the magnificent heart of the proletariat that the first Marxist-Leninist big-character poster of the country “is the manifesto of the Peking People’s Commune of the 1960s.” It was these words that announced the official beginning of the vehement development among the masses of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. These words also showed that Chairman Mao “brilliantly and ingeniously foresaw the appearance of a brand-new situation in our state machinery” (editorial of *Red Flag* no. 3, 1967), namely, political organs of the Paris Commune type. In the January revolution, Chairman Mao again proposed the name of “People’s Commune of China.” That meant that as an ultimate result of the first Great Cultural Revolution, China would advance in the direction of the “People’s Commune of China.”

However, as the revolution developed at the time only at a very low level, historical limitations enabled almost no one to understand the ultimate object of the first Cultural Revolution as pointed out by Chairman Mao. People regarded these words of Chairman Mao as words of general praise and have gradually forgotten them.

Even before the Cultural Revolution officially began, Chairman Mao had already practically sketched the content of the new political structure—"People's Commune of China"—in his famous May 7 directive. But people in general regarded the sketch in the May 7 directive as an idealistic "communist utopia." People think it impractical to make the May 7 directive the target of our short-range struggle at present. Only some intellectual youths still keep reciting the May 7 directive and declare loudly that they would fight for realization of the May 7 directive, because they realize that only the new society sketched in the May 7 directive, which is different from the existing society, is the society in which they may have liberation. But even among intellectual youths there are many who think it impractical to realize the kind of society as envisaged in the May 7 directive in the not-too-distant future. It is truer to say that their energetic propaganda about the May 7 directive is a self-consolation for their dissatisfaction with reality than that they are fighting with full confidence for realization of the May 7 directive.

Chairman Mao's scientific prediction leaves in people's mind a utopian impression. This is in accord with the fact that class struggle has not yet developed to an acute and high stage. The development of new productive forces in China today has brought in conflict the class that represents the new productive forces and the decaying class that represents the production relations which impede the progress of history. It will inevitably lead to a great social revolution, and a new society will inevitably be born amid the fierce flames. This objective law is the solid basis for Chairman Mao's scientific—not utopian—prediction. As people have not yet known this law, the scientific prediction naturally leaves people [with] the impression of a purely utopian dream about the beautiful future. People believe that China will pass peacefully into the society depicted in the May 7 directive.

But what happens in reality? “Peaceful transition” is only another name for “peaceful evolution.” It can only cause China to drift farther and farther away from the “commune” depicted in the May 7 directive and nearer and nearer to the existing society of the Soviet Union. What Chairman Mao puts forward, i.e., “the revolution in which one class overthrows another” and “great alliance of proletarian revolutionaries to seize power from the capitalist-roaders,” solves the question of practical transition toward the commune. The rule of the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie must be overthrown by force in order to solve the problem of political power. Empty shouting about realization of the May 7 directive without any reference to power seizure and utter smashing of the old state machinery will of course be an “utopian” dream.

II.

Storm of January Revolution

Lenin once made this famous statement: “All revolutions provided they are real revolutions are in the final analysis changes of classes. Therefore the best means of increasing the awareness of the masses and exposing the deception of the masses with revolutionary vows is the analysis of the class changes that have taken place or are taking place in these revolutions.” Let us analyze the class changes that resulted from the January revolution in accordance with this teaching, so as to expose the deception of the masses with revolutionary vows.

As everybody knows, the greatest fact from the January revolution is that 90 percent of the senior cadres were made to stand aside. In Hunan, Chang P’ing-hua, Chang Po-sen, Hua Kuo-feng, and the like had their power reduced to zero. At the Center, power seizure was

made in the Ministry of Finance, Broadcasting Affairs Administration Bureau, and other departments, and the power of Li Hsien-nien, Ch'en I, Tan Chen-lin, and the like as well as that of Chou En-lai who represented them, also fell greatly. To whose hands did the assets go at that time? They went to the hands of the people, who were full of boundless enthusiasm and who were organized to take over the urban administrations and the Party, government, financial, and cultural powers in the industrial, commercial, communications, and other systems. What the editorial called for, i.e., that the masses should rise to take control of the destiny of their socialist country, and to manage the cities, industry, communications, and economy, was truly realized.

The storm of the January revolution suddenly turned all this from the hands of the bureaucrats into the hands of the enthusiastic working class. People suddenly found that without the bureaucrats they not only could go on living, but could live better and develop quicker and with greater freedom. The bureaucrats had tried to intimidate the workers before the revolution, saying, "Without us, production would collapse and the whole society would be in a state of chaos."

But the facts were not like that. As a matter of fact, without the bureaucrats and bureaucratic organs, productivity was greatly liberated. After the Ministry of Coal Industry collapsed, production of coal went on as usual. The Ministry of Railways collapsed, but transportation was carried on as usual. All departments of the Provincial Party Committee collapsed, but work went on as usual. Moreover, the enthusiasm of the working class for production and its activism were greatly liberated. The management of industrial plants by the workers themselves after January was really moving. For the first time, the workers felt that "it was not the state which managed them, but they who managed the state." For the first time, they felt that they were producing for themselves. Their enthusiasm was never so high and their sense of responsibility as masters of the house was never so strong. Changsha Weaving and Spinning Mill and other factories also created rebel classes and numerous other new things.

That was the true content of the class changes in the January

revolution. In that short period, some places actually realized, though not very thoroughly, the content of the "People's Commune of China," and society was in a state of "mass dictatorship" similar to that of the Paris Commune. The storm of the January revolution told people that China would head for a society free from bureaucrats and that 90 percent of the high-ranking cadres at that time had formed a special class. The objective law of the development of class struggle caused most of them to stand aside in January. The fact that 90 percent of the senior cadres had to stand aside in the storm of the January revolution was certainly not the fault of the masses. "The masses are the real heroes." Those of the senior cadres who had perpetrated the most crimes were duly punished. "Only in very few cases was the punishment incommensurate with the crimes."

Facts as revealed by the masses and their wrath told people initially that this class of "Red" capitalists had completely become a decaying class that hindered the progress of history, and that the relations between them and the people in general had changed from relations between the leaders and the led to those between the rulers and the ruled, the exploiters and the exploited, from the relations of revolutionaries of equal standing to those between the oppressors and the oppressed. The special privileges and high salaries of the class of "Red" capitalists were built on the basis of the oppression and exploitation of the broad masses of the people. In order to realize the "People's Commune of China," it was necessary to overthrow this class.

The storm of the January revolution was a great attempt by the revolutionary people, led by Chairman Mao, to topple the old world and build a new world. A program for the first Great Proletarian Political Revolution was formulated at that great moment. Chairman Mao pointed out: "This is one class overthrowing another. It is a great revolution." That shows that the Cultural Revolution is not a revolution to dismiss officials from their office or a "dragging out" movement, nor is it a purely cultural revolution, but a revolution in which one class overthrows another." Seen from the facts of the storm of the January revolution, the overthrown class is none other than the class of

bureaucrats formed in China in the past 17 years. (Chairman Mao's "Comment and Instructions on Li Cheng-jen's On-the-Spot-Squatting Report," January 25, 1965.)

In the struggle to seize power in these units, the Marxist principle of smashing the old state machinery must be observed. Here there is no place for reformism, combining two into one, or peaceful transition. The old state machinery must be smashed utterly. "The old system of exploitation, revisionist system, and bureaucratic organs must be utterly smashed." The program of the first Great Proletarian Political Revolution was put forward in editorials in an embryonic, not very concrete state in the final stages of the storm of the January revolution. The decaying class that should be overthrown, the old state machinery that should be smashed, and even social problems, in which people formerly had not dared to express a dissident view, were put forward. This great development was an inevitable result of the courage and pioneering spirit demonstrated by the proletariat in the storm of the January revolution.

Problems of system, policy, and guideline touched upon in the January revolution were mainly those connected with the capitalist labor employment system of contract workers and casual workers as well as the revisionist movement of going to hilly and rural areas.

At present, the "ultra-Left" must organize personnel to sum up and study properly the multitude of things created during the storm of the January revolution. These new things are the embryonic form of a Paris-Commune style new society.

III.

Revolutionary Committees

Why did Comrade Mao Tse-tung, who energetically advocated the “commune,” suddenly oppose the establishment of “Shanghai People’s Commune” in January? This is something which the revolutionary people find it hard to understand.

Chairman Mao, who foresaw the “commune” as a political structure which must be realized in the first Cultural Revolution, suddenly put forward “Revolutionary committees are fine!”

Revolution must progress along a zigzagging way. It must go through a prolonged course of “struggle—failure struggle again—failure again—struggle again till final victory.”

Why can’t communes be established immediately?

This is the first time the revolutionary people tried to overthrow a powerful enemy. How shallow their knowledge of this revolution was! They not only failed to realize voluntarily the necessity of thoroughly smashing the old state machinery and overhauling some of the social systems, but did not see clearly that the enemy formed a class and the revolutionary ranks were dominated by ideas of “revolution to dismiss officials” and “revolution to drag them out.” The development of the wisdom of the masses had not yet attained the degree at which it would be possible to reform society. As a result, the fruit of revolution was in the final analysis taken by the capitalist class. (Communist Manifesto)

Any revolution must necessarily involve the army. Since a Red capitalist class is already formed in China, the army of course cannot detach itself from this reality. Yet the January storm has not touched in any way the vital problem of all revolutions, the problem of the army. Thus it may be seen that the revolution lacked depth and remained at a low stage of development. The degree of maturity of the political thought of the revolutionary people, too, was in conformity with this low level revolution—it too remained at a very immature stage.

At a time when utter victory is impossible, to try to win real victory will be Left adventurism. In accordance with the necessity of seizure of the fruit of revolution by the capitalist class, the correct strategic policy (now called strategic plan) is to enable the people to forge their political and ideological weapon in struggle at a higher stage and, through the oncoming and ebbing tides of revolution, to prepare strength for winning the final victory. Otherwise, if "communes" are established while the masses have not yet really realized that their interest lies in the realization of "communes" in China, the "communes" will be "communes" in name only, while in reality they will be sham communes essentially the same as the present Revolutionary Committees with powers usurped by the bourgeoisie.

Therefore, Comrade Mao Tse-tung, the great supreme commander of the proletariat, did not hesitate in the least to go against the dream, cherished by infantile revolutionaries, of immediate establishment of communes, adopted a correct strategic policy (i.e., strategic plan), and at the same time called upon the armed forces to support the Left." "Support the Left" is in fact Chairman Mao's ingenious means of carrying out Cultural Revolution in the armed forces. To prevent the damage to be caused by sabotage and resistance by the capitalist-roaders in the army against the proletariat, which was bound to take place if the "four-big" was directly unfolded in the armed forces, he called upon the army to support the Left. On the surface, "four-big" is not carried out in the armed forces, but in practice they are made to take part in the thundering local Cultural Revolution of "four-big." It is education for the armed forces and Cultural Revolution for the army rather than support for the Left. Meanwhile, Revolutionary Committees are gradually established in all parts of the country.

The three-in-one combination is the concrete content of Revolutionary Committees. The putting forward of three-in-one combination amounts to reinstatement of the bureaucrats already toppled in the January revolution. Inevitably it will be the form of political power to be usurped by the bourgeoisie, at which the army and local bureaucrats are to play a leading role. Chairman Mao too calls the Revolutionary Committee of three-in-one combination a

“provisional organ of power.” It is only a transitional form and not the ultimate product of the first Cultural Revolution. The ultimate product of the first Cultural Revolution is the “commune” and not the Revolutionary Committee. Chairman Mao’s summing up in August-September of the January revolution and the August revolutionary war in the country, and his great theory of “mass dictatorship” formulated from the summing-up, proves that after the first Cultural Revolution it will be “mass dictatorship,” not a three-in-one dictatorship of bureaucrats with the masses in a supporting role. However, the aforementioned transitional form is necessary. Denial of the transitional form will be Leftist empty talk.

IV.

February Adverse Current

The force and intensity of the January revolution caused the bureaucrats to carry out a hurried usurpation of power. Unlike their usual selves, they adopted the most urgent and savage means of suppression. This proves negatively the intensity of the “redistribution of assets and power” in the January revolution as a result of the stepping aside of 90 percent of the senior cadres. The tragic consequences of the February adverse current also proves the correctness of Comrade Mao Tse-tung’s prediction that “there can be no immediate victory.”

The “Red” capitalist class gained almost overwhelming ascendancy in February and March. The assets (means of production and power) were seized from the revolutionary people and returned to the bureaucrats. In early spring in February, Lung Shu-chin, Liu Tzu-yun, Chang Po-sen, Hua Kuo-feng, and bureaucrats in all the country and

their agents at the Center wielded unlimited power. It was their heyday, while the power of the revolutionary people dropped to zero. Moreover, large numbers of them were thrown into prison under the control of the bourgeois state machine—*Kung-chien-fa*.

Intoxicated by his victory of February March, Chou En-lai-at present the general representative of China's Red capitalist class-hurriedly tried to set up Revolutionary Committees in all parts of the country. If this bourgeois plan had been fulfilled, the proletariat would have retreated to its grave. Therefore, without waiting for the establishment of all the Revolutionary Committees, the Central Cultural Revolution Group issued the order to hit back. After that, the great August local revolutionary war in the country began to ferment.

In the struggle to hit back at the February adverse current, the important sign of the revolution's entry into a higher stage was that the problem of the army really began to make itself felt. The revolutionary people had very childish ideas about the army during the January revolution, believing that as soon as the local capitalist roaders were overthrown, the armed forces would unite with the revolutionary people to suppress the capitalist roaders in accordance with Chairman Mao's order of union from the upper to the lower levels. The sanguinary facts of the February adverse current told the people that the upper-to-lower order alone could not bring about an implementation of Chairman Mao's intentions in the armed forces, because unanimity of the interests of the capitalist-roaders in the army and those of the local capitalist-roaders would prevent the army from carrying out Chairman Mao's revolutionary line. It was necessary to carry out Cultural Revolution from the lower level upward in the army and to rely on the people's revolution—the locomotive of progress of history—in order to change the state of opposition between the military and the civilian population brought about by the control of the army by the bureaucrats.

The struggle since February has placed the grave problem of the army before the broad masses (formerly only before Chairman Mao and a small minority). This gradually provides the condition for

solution of the problem through the strength of the broad masses of the people. It is scientifically foreseen that military strength in the new society of communes" will be different from that of the present-day army. The struggle since February has enabled this idea of Chairman Mao to gradually grasp the masses.

V.

Local Domestic Revolutionary War of August

There have been innumerable writings about the army since the end of January. The nationwide, large-scale armed struggle that took place in the past and the beginning of the new stage with the local wars in Szechwan and other areas add the color of "war" and armed seizure of power to writings about the army. This is a gladdening phenomenon of the gradual maturity of the political idea of thorough social reform by the proletariat.

Due to historical limitations of the time, many of the writings about the army are very immature and have great shortcomings. But since these writings are new things, they will be proved by history to be significant things.

How well Engels spoke when he commented on utopian socialism: "Let the pedlars of the circle of authors solemnly find fault with the imaginations which at present can only make people laugh. Let them gratify themselves with the thought that their strict way of thinking is superior to such mad ideas. What makes us glad is the gifted ideological buds and gifted ideas that show themselves everywhere by breaking through the outer shell of imagination. These things the

mediocre people cannot see.”

There are two essential points in the writings about the army:

1. It is now seen that the army now is different from the people's army before the liberation. Before the liberation, the army and the people fought together to overthrow imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism, and feudalism. The relation between the army and the people was like that between fish and water. After the liberation, as the target of revolution has changed from imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism, and feudalism to capitalist-roaders, and these capitalist-roaders are power holders in the army, some of the armed forces in the revolution have not only changed their blood-and-flesh relations with the people that obtained before the liberation, but have even become tools for suppressing revolution. Therefore, if the first Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is to succeed, a radical change in the army will be necessary. The “ultra Left faction” has found the basis for its thinking in a quotation from Chairman Mao. In the same year after Chairman Mao issued the order for the armed forces to live in their barracks, (they are separated from the masses.

2. It is now seen that a revolutionary war in the country is necessary if the revolutionary people today want to overcome the armed Red capitalist class. The large-scale armed struggle between the proletariat and the Red capitalist class in August and the local revolutionary war in the country bore out the rebel factions' prediction in August (sic). The experience created by the local revolutionary wars in August is moreover unparalleled in history and rich and great. Contrary to the expectations of the mediocrities in general, history advanced in the direction predicted by the “heretics and evil advocates.” Hitherto unimaginable, large-scale gun-seizing incidents occurred regularly in accordance with the pace of historical development. Local wars in the country of varying magnitude, in which the army took a direct part (in Kiangsi and Hangchow the armed forces were directly involved in the fighting), erupted. The creative spirit and revolutionary fervor displayed by the people in August was very moving. Gun-seizing became a “movement.” Its magnitude and

the violence of the revolutionary wars gave the people a deep impression at the time. "The people, and the people alone, are the motive force of the creation of world history."

For a short time, the cities were in a state of "armed mass dictatorship." The powers of most of the industries, commerce, communications, and urban administration were again taken away from Chang Po-sen, Hua Kuo-feng, Lung Shu-chin, Liu Tzu-yun, and the like and put into the hands of the armed revolutionary people. Never before had the revolutionary people appeared on the stage of history in the role of masters of world history as they did in August. The heroic image of the primary school pupils who volunteered to work as traffic police and directed the traffic, and the pride with which Hsiang Chiang Feng Lei, Hung Chung Hui, and other mass organizations directly exercised some of the financial-economic powers, left an unforgettable impression.

August was the month when the power of the revolutionary mass organizations rapidly grew, while that of the bureaucrats again dropped to zero. A short lived and unstable redistribution of "assets and powers" took place for a second time. Once more, society tried to realize the great "People's Commune of China." Once more people tried to solve the problem raised in the May 7 directive, namely, "the army should be a big school" and "workers, peasants, and students should all learn military art." This attempt had not been made in the January revolution. Even before the liberation, the army was already a big school which maintained excellent relations with the masses and which combined the roles of soldiers, students, civilians, peasants, and workers. This was summed up by Chairman Mao just before the victory of the democratic revolution. But why, after more than ten years of liberation, the question of improving army civilian relations and the army should be a big school" is again raised? As has been said in the preceding paragraph, this is because after the liberation the army has undergone changes and is separated from the masses to greater or lesser degrees. As a result, this question is again put on the agenda.

The great pioneering act of the storm of August was the appearance of an armed force organized by the revolutionary people themselves. This force becomes the actual force of the proletarian dictatorship (or dictatorship over the capitalist-roads). The force and the people are in accord and fight together to overthrow the “Red” capitalist class. The people, instead of lamenting the fall of the military region command—a bureaucratic organ rejoice at it. Yet formerly they used to think that they could not go on without it. This fact has enabled the proletariat to foresee more realistically the direction in which China’s army advances, and envisage the armed strength of the new society, the “People’s Commune of China.” It may be said with certainty that China will be a society in which the army and the people are identical and united as one, and in which the army will have shaken off the control of the bureaucrats. If we say the January storm produced a program for the first Great Proletarian political revolution, then the August storm has not only enriched the program but also solved the method of the revolution—relying not only on the “four big,” but on armed seizure and internal revolutionary war.

VI.

The Setback in September

While people were rejoicing, advancing with great impetus, and loudly and unceasingly talking about a “thorough victory,” the great teacher of the proletariat saw a new danger on the horizon.

Let us look at the content of this new danger. On the one hand, owing to the nakedness of the “February suppression of rebellion,” even the “Red” capitalist class keenly sensed the inevitability of its own defeat. After May, China’s “Red” capitalists changed their tactics.

In many places, there appeared a trend of cadres “making appearances.” One after another, Red capitalists like Sung Jen-ch’iung of the Northeast and Chang Po-sen of Hunan—bloodsucking vampires who used to ride on the backs of the people—suddenly displayed “fervor” for the slaves’ revolutionary struggle. Individually they declared support for the revolutionary masses in their bombardment of the military region or district commands. As at that time the revolutionary people had not yet tried to overthrow the capitalist-roaders as a class, and as the proletariat and the broad masses of revolutionary people were still under the influence of the doctrine of “revolution through dragging out people” and “revolution through dismissal of officials,” people believed that the purpose of the Cultural Revolution was the purging of individual capitalist-roaders and that it was proper to use some of the revolutionary leading cadres (who were also bureaucrats) for hitting other bureaucrats. As a result, this tactic of all big and small Chang Po-sens easily deceived the people. This determined the objective inevitability of usurpation of the fruit of victory of the August storm by the bourgeoisie. Meanwhile, owing to the hurried suppression by the bourgeoisie and the proletariat’s speedy hitting back after February, dictatorship by the revolutionary committee—a power organ during the transition to the “commune”—had not yet begun. There was no period of transition in which the “Red” capitalists could fraudulently win the trust of the people and suppress the people. The people therefore could not learn from sanguinary facts that the capitalist-roaders were a class and did not accept the program of the first Cultural Revolution a revolution in which one class overthrew another. Thorough social revolution would be impossible.

On the other hand, to realize the demand in the May 7 directive for changes in the army, it was necessary to carry out the Cultural Revolution in the field armies through to the end. It was also necessary to let the field armies “support the Left.” In fact, in carrying out the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in the field armies, it was Leftist blind action to demand immediate victory before an all-out “support the Left” movement was developed in the field armies.

There was also the question of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in the rural areas. If there was no revolutionary storm in the rural areas, then no power seizure of any kind would really represent the interests of the peasants. The May 7 directive called for factories setting up and operating farms and rural villages setting up and operating factories. It indicated that in the new commune the differences between industry and farming and between urban and rural areas would be much smaller than they were at present. This reduction of the gap should be brought about by launching a peasant movement—a locomotive of historical progress of the revolutionary people guided by the thought of Mao Tse tung. To demand thorough victory of the first Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution before a peasant movement was launched would be empty talk. While thorough victory was practically impossible, the task of Marxist Leninists was to show completely the falsity of the cry, “Thorough victory!” If the Marxist-Leninists had power in their hands, they should exercise it in banning the cry, “Immediate overthrow of the revolutionary committee and establishment of the commune,” and any agitation for this purpose, so that the splendid name of “commune might not be tarnished by false practice.

Meanwhile, the capitalist, bureaucrat class in the Party and the army began to carry out sabotage against the Central Cultural Revolution Group in August and September. They deliberately created confusion in the army and caused stagnation in economic and other spheres. A senior army cadre openly and arrogantly assailed the Central Cultural Revolution Group, and that was their general policy in August-September. “Does the Central Cultural Revolution Group still want the P.L.A.? If it doesn’t, then we will pack up and go home,” and “The Central Cultural Revolution Group has so shifted the veteran army cadres that they are separated from their wives and children, their homes broken up and their kin lost!”

In view of this series of developments, where the proletariat had already made great gains and had ample room for retreat without having to retreat to its grave, when it was still impossible to win thorough victory immediately, and to consolidate the gains already

made and appease the bourgeois so that they might not leap over the wall like desperate dogs, the wise supreme commander Comrade Mao Tse-tung once more made a big retreat after September, in disregard of demands by impatient revolutionaries for victory. A political situation of bourgeois usurpation of power came about with the establishment of Revolutionary Committees or preparatory groups for revolutionary committees. But a period of transition toward the commune—a period of rule by revolutionary committees—also really began in accordance with the objective law of historical progress.

The extent of this retreat was unprecedented. The unlimited relaxation of the cadre policy after September was in fact an extensive concession to the capitalist roaders, who were allowed to mount the stage again. An outstanding example was the treatment accorded to Ch'en Tsai-tao. The Chairman went so far as to say that Ch'en studied very well and could come back to work again.

But because the revolutionary forces of the proletariat have been greatly strengthened, the retreat has not ended in a "rout" as the retreat in February had. The bourgeoisie cannot come near to swallowing the revolution as they did in March. The revolutionary forces in Hunan which bombarded Chou En-lai were not annihilated. Instead, they have formed *Sheng-wu-lien* and have made progress in certain respects.

To seize the fruit of victory won by the proletariat in August and turn the mass dictatorship again into bureaucratic rule, the bourgeois in the revolutionary committees must first disarm the working class. The guns in the hands of workers have boundlessly increased the power of the working class. The fact is a mortal threat to the bourgeoisie, who is afraid of it. Out of spontaneous hatred for the bureaucrats who tried to snatch the fruit of victory, the revolutionary people shouted a resounding revolutionary slogan: "Surrender of arms amounts to suicide!" They formed a spontaneous, nationwide mass "arms concealment movement" for the armed overthrow of the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie.

The arms-grabbing movement of August was great. It was not only

unprecedented in capitalist countries. Moreover, it accomplished the fact of turning the whole nation into soldiers for the first time in socialist countries. Before the Cultural Revolution, the bureaucrats dared not really hand over arms to the people. The militia is only a facade behind which the bureaucrats control the armed strength of the people. It is certainly not an armed force of the working class, but a docile tool in the hands of the bureaucrats. In the arm-seizing movement, the masses, instead of receiving arms like favors from the above, for the first time seized arms from the hands of the bureaucrats by relying on the brute force of the revolutionary people themselves. For the first time the workers had their "own" arms, Chairman Mao's rousing call, "Arm the Left!" was an intensive concentration of the courage of the working class. But the issuance of the September 5 order completely nullified the call to "arm the Left." The working class was disarmed. The bureaucrats again came back to power.

VII.

Enlightenment of Political Thinking of the Working Class

The July 1 editorial of 1967 raised the question of Party building. During the violent class struggle in July and August, a very small number of "ultra-Leftists" put forward the demand that the "ultra-Left should have its own political party." It was felt necessary to have the basic level organizations of a revolutionary party in order to realize Comrade Mao Tse-tung's leadership by [sic] the Communist Party, actuate the people to overthrow the newborn bourgeoisie, and fulfill the task of the first Cultural Revolution. In this way, the dream of individual intellectuals in Peking at the early stage of the movement to

rebuild the Marxist-Leninist group for the first time became a practical and steadily growing demand of the fighting proletariat: "To make revolution, it is necessary to have a revolutionary party!"

Since the past few months, the class struggle has entered a higher stage. What sort of a stage is it? In this stage, the revolutionary people have already accumulated the rich experience of "redistribution of assets and power" twice (the January revolution and August revolution). This experience is the program for the first Cultural Revolution produced by the January revolution, for a great revolution in China in which one class should overthrow another. It is "to overthrow the newborn bourgeoisie and establish the People's Commune of China"—a new society free from bureaucrats like the Paris Commune." There is also the method, suggested in the August storm, of gradually bringing about revolutionary changes in the army and armed seizure of power.

The reverses and higher-stage struggle after September also tell the revolutionary people why neither the January revolution nor the August revolution ended in thorough victory, why, after such prolonged struggle, the fruit of victory of revolution was taken away by bourgeois bureaucrats, why the old order was restored everywhere, why the bourgeoisie was able to recapture the assets and power which they had lost in August, and why the courage and pioneering spirit displayed by the proletariat in the January revolution and the August storm was almost completely extinguished and submerged. The appearance of a large-scale adverse current tells people that all illusions about bourgeois bureaucrats and distrust in the people's own strength must be thoroughly abandoned, and that the revolution of one class overthrowing another must be prosecuted.

However, the revolutionary committee is a product of the "revolution of dismissal of officials." In Hunan, Chang Ping-hua and Liu Tzu-yun were dismissed from office, but that did not remove the acute antagonism between the new bourgeoisie and the masses of the people. Instead, the acute antagonism between the preparatory group for (the) revolutionary committee and the people as represented by

Sheng-wu-lien is present in the new situation. A new bourgeois reactionary line and a new adverse current of capitalist restoration have again appeared, but a thoroughly stable “distribution of assets and power” has not been realized. The revolution by dismissal of officers is only bourgeois reformism, which changes in a zigzagging way the new bureaucratic bourgeois rule before the Cultural Revolution into another kind of bourgeois rule of bourgeois bureaucrats and representatives from several supporting mass organizations. The revolutionary committee is a product of bourgeois reformism.

Problems cannot be solved by merely dismissing several officials from office. Bourgeois reformism proves futile. The result of reformism—the revolutionary committee or preparatory group for the revolutionary committee—again brings about a new bourgeois dictatorship, which arouses even more violent opposition from the people. Heilungkiang, Shantung, Shanghai, Kweichow, Hunan, and other places where revolutionary committees or preparatory groups for such committees have been established have proved or are proving that China cannot move in the direction of bourgeois reformism through revolutionary committees, because that means capitalist restoration. China can only go in the socialist direction of thorough revolution of the “People’s Commune of China” as proclaimed by the “People’s Commune of Peking’ of the 1960s.

The people should be made to understand this truth and should make the resolution to act, instead of our making the resolution for them. “He is not a thorough materialist who ignores the role of the teacher by negative example,” because the “various incidents and changes in the struggle against capital cannot but make people realize—and more in defeat than in victory—that the panaceas so dear to them are completely useless. The defeats also enable them to understand more profoundly the true conditions for the liberation of the working class.” (Engels) Revolutions often take various reformist, unthorough roads. It is only when all panaceas are proved useless that the revolutionary people would resolve to follow the most painful and most destructive, but also the most thorough and true revolutionary

road. The struggle in the transition period of revolutionary committees will inevitably disillusion the masses about the panacea of bourgeois reformism which they love so much. Chairman Mao says: "Buddhist idols are set up by the peasants. When the time comes the peasants will throw away these idols with their own hands. There is no need for others to do it too soon." In the not-far-distant future, the revolutionary people will surely smash to pieces with their own iron hands the newborn red political power which they have secured with their own blood and lives.

The stage of struggle since September has been teaching the people about the newborn stage in this respect.

As a result of the practice of struggle having gained rich experience and entered a higher stage, the maturity of the political thinking of the revolutionary people in China has also entered a higher stage. A new trend of thought (called "ultra-Left trend of thought" by the enemy), including "overthrow of the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie," "abolition of bureaucratic organs," "thorough smashing of the state machine," etc. wanders among the revolutionary people like a "spectre" in the eyes of the enemy. The weapon of political thinking with which the revolutionary masses are to win utter victory in the proletarian socialist great revolution has begun to appear in a new form in the "ultra-Left faction." The thought of Mao Tse tung, which is carrying out a new social revolution in China, will gradually wake up the masses from all contradictions of the past. The revolutionary people are beginning to understand gradually in practice why revolution is necessary, who are to be liquidated in the revolution, and how revolution is to be carried out. Revolutionary struggle begins to change from the stage of spontaneity to that of consciousness, from necessity to freedom.

In the higher stage of the struggle since September, a higher stage of the fiery intellectual youth movement has also appeared as well as new struggle by contract workers and casual workers. This plays a great promotive role so far as muddled thinking in the stage of enlightenment is concerned. It absorbs the spontaneous, strong

demand on Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tse-tung's thought from these segments of the determined revolutionary forces and for a profound understanding of social contradictions in China. It also remedies the shortcomings of extreme lack of understanding of social contradictions and separation from reality of the "new trend of thought" among young intellectuals and students.

When the revolutionary people enter from blind ness into the stage of enlightenment of political thinking, when the formation of the doctrine of Mao Tse-tung into an independent, positive political trend of thought and political force among the masses begins gradually to become a reality, the organization and establishment of basic level organizations of the Chinese Communist Party—a political party of the doctrine of Mao Tse-tung—is put on the agenda by Comrade Mao Tse-tung, the revolutionary teacher of the proletariat. Comrade Mao Tse-tung puts forward the principle of rebuilding the Party and reorganizing the class ranks under new historical conditions, i.e., "The Party organization should be formed of advanced elements of the proletariat. It should be a youthful and vigorous vanguard organization capable of leading the proletariat and the revolutionary masses in a fight against the class enemy."

The putting forward of the principle for building of a revolutionary political party—the Mao Tse-tung Doctrine Party (or Chinese Communist Party), that will lead the people to overthrow today's class enemy—the new Red bourgeoisie—shows that in order to fulfill the first true proletarian socialist revolution and build in China the "commune" as delineated in the May 7 directive, the existing Communist Party of China must undergo revolutionary changes. The Ninth National Congress of the Party about to be convened is not expected to be able to thoroughly settle the question of where the Chinese Communist Party is going to. The political party that is produced in accordance with the provisions promulgated by the Center for rehabilitation, regulation, and rebuilding of the Party (if such a party can be formed) will necessarily be a party of bourgeois reformism that serves the bourgeois usurpers in the revolutionary committees. The convention of the Ninth Congress will only be a

reflection of the transition period of local “revolutionary committees” in the Center. That decides that the Ninth Congress will not be able to thoroughly settle the question of where China is going, (the core of which is where the Chinese Communist Party is going to and where the Chinese P.L.A. is going to).

When a truly stable victory gradually becomes possible, the following several questions will take a prominent position.

1. The unevenness of the revolution will assume a prominent position. The possibility of winning true, thorough victory in one or several provinces first, overthrowing the product of bourgeois reformism—the rule of revolutionary committees, and reestablishing a political power of the Paris Commune type becomes a crucial question as to whether the revolution can develop in depth at high speed. Unlike the preceding stage of blind, spontaneous development, here unevenness of the revolution no longer plays an immaterial role.

2. To really overthrow the rule of the new aristocracy and thoroughly smash the old state machinery, it will be necessary to go into the question of assessment of the past 17 years. This is also a major problem of teaching the people fundamentally why it is necessary to carry out the Great Cultural Revolution and what the ultimate object of the revolution is.

3. To really make the revolution victorious, it will be necessary to settle the “question of primary importance in revolution”—“Who are our enemies, and who are our friends?”—and to make a new class analysis of China’s society where “a new situation has arisen as a result of great class changes,” so as to reorganize the class ranks, rally our friends, and hit at our enemies.

This series of new questions was raised by Comrade Chiang Ch’ing in her speech on November 12, 1967. This speech of Comrade Chiang Ch’ing announced the beginning of a new stage, unparalleled in history, in which the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution had entered. This important speech dealt with the literary and art circles alone, but “literary and art revolution is the harbinger of political

revolution,” and the prosperity of China’s literary and art circles and their fiery struggle is the direction which China’s revolution will take. Comrade Chiang Ch’ing’s speech tells us practically that so far the revolution—no matter whether it took the form of work teams criticizing and repudiating the reactionary line or hitting back at the February adverse current—has basically dealt with only the problems of the Cultural Revolution and the problem of the 50 days that shielded the past 17 years, and has only touched the charm that protects the bourgeoisie. It tells us that the real revolution, the revolution to negate the past 17 years, has basically not yet begun, and that we should now enter the stage of tackling the fundamental questions of China’s revolution.

Comrade Chiang Ch’ing’s directive in which she raised the question of unevenness of the revolution, the relationship between the past 17 years and the 50 days, and reorganization of the class ranks (the vanguard of which is the revolutionary political party), and Vice Chairman Lin’s October 24 directive have concretely indicated where China should go and where Hunan should go. China must go in the direction of carrying the first true socialist revolution through to the end, and must not follow the direction of putting a stop to it and restoring capitalism. Comrade Chi Pen-yü said, “Comrade Chiang Ch’ing’s speeches of November 9 and November 12 have summed up the experience of the Great Cultural Revolution of the past year, greatly promoted the development of the Great Cultural Revolution, and produced great influence on the whole country.” This in effect shows that the great November 12 speech and October 24 directive form the only general guideline for our revolutionary struggle in 1968.

We shall separately deal with in detail the three problems mentioned in Comrade Chiang Ch’ing’s great November 12 speech. (The third of the three problems includes the problem of reformation of the Chinese Communist Party.)

The October 24 directive amounts to a declaration that Hunan is the vanguard area of revolutionary struggle of the whole country. Thus the genesis and development of Hunan’s *Sheng-wu-lien* is an outstanding

representative of the growth in strength of the proletariat since September. *Sheng-wu-lien* was in fact born of the experience of the people-run) civil offense and armed defense command headquarters—a form of mass dictatorship of the January revolution. It is a power organ of mass dictatorship of a higher order than those of January and August. It may be compared to the soviet of the January revolution in [the] U.S.S.R. when power was usurped by the bourgeoisie, while the preparatory group for the provincial revolutionary committee (*Sheng-ko-ch'ou*) is comparable to the bourgeois Provisional Government of that time. The opposition between *Sheng-wu-lien* and *Sheng-ko-ch'ou* is the new situation in which “power organs of two systems coexist,” but in practice power is in the hands of *Sheng-ko-ch'ou*—the bourgeois provisional government.

Sheng-wu-lien is a newborn sprout comparable to the soviets. It is the embryonic form of a more mature “commune” than that of January and August. No matter how the bourgeoisie alternately employ suppression and the reformist tactic of encouraging the activities of a third force, *Sheng-wu-lien* as a true newborn Red political power will surely grow and gather strength continuously amid big gales and storms.

VIII.

Refutation of the Reactionary “Doctrine of the Second Revolution”

The current answer to the serious question of where China is going, an answer which occupies a ruling position in the ideological sphere, is the reactionary “doctrine of second revolution.” People’s minds are greatly confused, and they say almost unanimously: “The first Great Cultural Revolution can only do so much. There is nothing we can do except wait for a second revolution.” After the failing of the Great Revolution, open warlordism became the rule of “commanders-in-chief of the Kuomintang Revolutionary Army.” To maintain Chiang Kai-shek’s rule and prevent his demise, Ch’en Tu-hsiu’s reactionary “second revolution” came into being. The “doctrine of second revolution” deceived the people with superficial changes of the political power, declaring that imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism, and feudalism had been overthrown; that China’s bourgeoisie was in control of political power; that the democratic revolution was accomplished; and that there was nothing to do but wait for the socialist revolution. This reactionary trend of thought not only occupied the ruling position in thinking circles in the whole country at that time, but enjoyed considerable popularity even in the Communist Party.

However, the task of China’s bourgeois democratic revolution as prescribed by the basic contradiction of Chinese society—the contradiction between imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism and feudalism on the one side and the popular masses on the other—was not yet fulfilled. Therefore, although the apparently powerful second revolution prevailed for some time, the more violent and intensive development of the antiimperialist, antifeudal people’s revolution still remained an objective law that did not change according to man’s wishes. Similarly, the task that has to be accomplished at the “end” of the first Great Cultural Revolution is prescribed by the social contradictions that led to the current revolution. Unless the program of the first Great Cultural Revolution laid down by these social contradictions is carried out, the first Great Cultural Revolution will not be brought to an end.

As has been said in the preceding paragraphs, the basic social contradictions that gave rise to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution are contradictions between the rule of the new

bureaucratic bourgeoisie and the mass of the people. The development and intensification of these contradictions decides that society needs a more thorough change—overthrow of the rule of the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie, thorough smashing of the old state machinery, realization of social revolution, realization of a redistribution of assets and power, and establishment of a new society—“People’s Commune of China.” This is also the basic program and ultimate object of the first Great Cultural Revolution.

At present, are these basic contradictions of Chinese society resolved? Is the object of the first Great Cultural Revolution fulfilled?

As has been said above, the form of political power is superficially changed. The old provincial Party committee and old military district command have become “the revolutionary committee” or “preparatory group for revolutionary committee.” However, old bureaucrats continue to play the leading role in the “new political power.” The contradiction between the old provincial Party committee and old military district command on the one side and the people on the other, and the contradiction between the capitalist-roads of the 47th Army and the people, remain basically unresolved. The contradiction between the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie and the mass of people is also basically unresolved, but assumes the new form of contradiction between *Sheng-wu-lien* and the “new political power.” The overthrow of the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie, changes in the armed forces, establishment of communes, and such basic social changes, which the first Great Cultural Revolution must fulfill, are not fulfilled. Of course, such “redistribution of assets and power” were temporarily and in a limited way realized during the January revolution and the August storm. But the fruit of victory of both the January revolution and the August storm has been basically usurped by the bourgeoisie. Social reforms were aborted, social changes were not consolidated and thoroughly realized, and the “end” of the first Great Cultural Revolution has not been reached. As the masses have said, “Everything remains the same after so much ado.”

Since the basic social contradictions that led to the eruption of the

first Great Cultural Revolution are not resolved but are developing more and more acutely in a new form, and although an apparently powerful, reactionary "doctrine of second revolution" dominates the thinking circles and the masses are deceived with superficial changes of the form of political power, the more intensive and violent forward development of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is still the objective law that does not change according to the wishes of man. The usurping bourgeoisie hope to corrode the resistance of the revolutionary people with the doctrine of second revolution, but those who support their rule and sinister scheme will surely go bankrupt, just as Ch'en Tu-hsiu's "doctrine of second revolution" was unable to save the life of the Chiang family dynasty and the powerful rule of religious thought failed to stop the disintegration and collapse of the feudal economic base. The new trend of thought (the ultra-Left trend of thought) is not yet quite mature and is still very weak, but its overcoming of the apparently powerful traditional ideas and the rotten, mummified doctrine of second revolution will be an inevitable tendency of historical development.

The bourgeoisie always represent the form of political power of their rule as the most perfect, flawless thing in the world that serves the whole people. The new bureaucratic bourgeoisie and the brutes of the right wing of the petty bourgeoisie who depend on them are doing exactly that. They ignore the provisional character of the "revolutionary committee" and nauseatingly praise it. Marxist-Leninists must ruthlessly expose the suppression of the revolutionary people by the revolutionary committee, energetically declare that the People's Commune of China is the society that we proletariat and revolutionary people must bring about in this Cultural Revolution, and energetically make known the inevitable tendency of the revolutionary committee to collapse.

The reactionary "doctrine of second revolution" is expressed concretely in various forms. There is the "doctrine of the new stage" and "doctrine of transformation of the left" which Comrade Ch'en Po-ta criticized and refuted long ago. Then there is the naked "doctrine of return to the origin" and "doctrine of putting an end to the show," as

well as the preposterous view that the Cultural Revolution would come to an end in the third year, etc., which has prevailed for some time. Chiang Ch'ing's November 12 directive and Comrade Lin Piao's October 24 directive are a heavy blow to the reactionary "doctrine of second revolution."

Some people criticize us for wanting to arrive at communism in one step and immediately abolish class and the three major differences. They say that political power of the Paris Commune type as envisaged by Chairman Mao is a dream, and that all this is unrealistic before the realization of communism. These people deliberately distort our views. We certainly do not want to immediately do away with class, the legal rights of the bourgeoisie, and the three major differences. This is indeed impossible before the realization of communism. This can only be our highest program, not our lowest. Our lowest program calls for the overthrow of the rule of the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie and narrowing of the three major differences. It is of course impossible to destroy the exploiting classes. After the victory of the first Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, there will inevitably be new class changes. It is these new class changes that again lead to new social reform and so push history forward.

In the same way, China's bourgeois democratic revolution succeeded in overthrowing the rule of imperialism, bureaucratic capitalism, and feudalism in China, but could not destroy the possibility of the birth of new exploiters.

People who criticize us in this way merely want to assert that all our efforts will be in vain, that society cannot take a new leap, and that assets and power cannot be "redistributed," but can only be changed somewhat. Forgetful gentlemen, the January revolution and the August storm did bring about (although only temporarily and locally) a "redistribution of assets and power" and a qualitative leap of the whole society. Has that not already picked to pieces the grey liquidationist views you spread?

Cadres of the proletariat have not yet politically matured and the revolutionary people have not yet naturally produced cadres who have

true proletarian authority, but all people almost unanimously condemn us, saying that we want to set aside all cadres and that we have no use for them. This is because many people still cherish illusions about the bureaucrats. People have not raised their perceptual knowledge of the January revolution and the August storm. They still think that without the bureaucrats, society will “collapse.”

We really believe that 90 percent of the senior cadres should stand aside, that at most they can only be objects to be educated and united. This is because they have already constituted a decaying class with its own particular “interests.” Their relation with the people has changed from the relation between the leaders and the led in the past to that between the exploiters and the exploited, the oppressors and the oppressed. Most of them consciously or unconsciously yearn for the capitalist road, and protect and develop capitalist things. The rule of their class has completely blocked the development of history. Instead of overthrowing this class, can they not be persuaded to relinquish their high salaries and other invested interests of bourgeois legal rights, and follow the socialist road instead of the capitalist road? The proletariat have really been making efforts in that direction. Chairman Mao’s repeated extensive concessions to the bourgeoisie are a concentrated expression of these efforts. However, they (the bureaucrats] hit back at and carry out counter reckoning against the revolutionary people with increasing madness, pushing themselves nearer and nearer the guillotine. All this proves that no decaying class in history would voluntarily make an exit from the stage of history.

In the new society of the Paris Commune type, this class will be overthrown. This was demonstrated by ironbound facts of the great changes of the January revolution and the August storm so unexpected by mediocre people. The class (of bureaucrats) will be replaced by cadres with true proletarian authority naturally produced by the revolutionary people in the struggle to overthrow this decaying class. These cadres are members of the commune. They have no special privileges. Economically they get the same treatment as the masses in general. They may be dismissed or changed at any time in accordance with the demands of the masses. These new, authoritative cadres have

not yet made their appearance.

But these cadres will be spontaneously produced following the increasing maturity of the political thinking of the revolutionary people. This is an inevitable result of the political and ideological maturity of the proletariat

IX.

Refutation of “Leftist” Doctrine of One Revolution

Some infantile revolutionaries of the revolutionary ranks suggest that there is no first or second Cultural Revolution, that the revolution should go on till communism is realized. This is the “Leftist” doctrine of one revolution. People who have this idea are very few in number. Their shortcoming is their low political level. Chairman Mao’s theory that the transitional period will be divided into different historical stages is the best enlightenment for them. The revolution is still necessary to be divided into stages. We are for continuous revolution, but also believe in revolution by stages.

Advocates of the “Leftist” one-revolution doctrine have not put forward a program for the first true socialist revolution. In practice, they have lowered our task for the present stage, so that the revolutionary people may fight confidently for the targets of this stage which they think they can fulfill. The doctrine is therefore also harmful and must be corrected. Where China goes to also determines where the world goes to.

China must necessarily go toward the new society of “People’s

Commune of China.”

If dictatorship by the revolutionary committee is regarded as the ultimate object of the first Great Cultural Revolution, then China will inevitably go the way of the Soviet Union and the people may again return to the fascist bloody rule of the capitalists. The revolutionary committee’s road of bourgeois reformism is impracticable.

This is because the present age is the age of the great banner of the doctrine of Mao Tse-tung, a great age in which imperialism is going downhill toward its debacle while socialism goes uphill toward worldwide victory. The world today is one in which capitalism is definitely dying and socialism is definitely prospering. In this great revolutionary period of unprecedentedly great significance and this sweeping era, “miracles—at present not yet thought of but completely conformable to the law of historical development—are bound to happen in the history of mankind.” (Ch’en Po-ta, March 24)

Victory of the Chinese proletariat and the broad masses of revolutionary people and the extinction of the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie are likewise inevitable. The world-shaking great festival of the revolutionary people—the overthrow of the revolutionary committee and birth of the “People’s Commune of China”—will surely arrive.

The commune of the “ultra-Left faction” will not conceal its viewpoints and intentions. We publicly declare that our object of establishing the “People’s Commune of China” can be attained only by overthrowing the bourgeois dictatorship and revisionist system of the revolutionary committee with brute force. Let the new bureaucratic bourgeoisie tremble before the true socialist revolution that shakes the world! What the proletariat can lose in this revolution is only their chains, what they gain will be the whole world!

The China of tomorrow will be the world of the “Commune.”

Long live the doctrine of Mao Tse-tung!

[1] *Sheng-wu-lien* is also translated by some scholars as "Federation of the Provincial Proletariat", or "Provincial Proletarian Alliance". — *marxists.org*

Chinese Document Subject Section