

CHOU EN LAI  
and  
the Chinese Revolution

by Debbie Davison and Mark Selden



Conversations  
with  
Americans

*Interviews by William Hinton*

Chou En-lai  
Conversations with Americans

Interviews by William Hinton

Waiting for a meeting with China's Premier, American travelers and long-term residents in China mark time in Peking hotels and guest houses. They have been called back from tours and tasks in distant provinces so that there will be no delay when Chou En-lai finds time to see them. But official welcomes for heads of state—Rumania, Ethiopia, Albania—and other matters of national importance occupy the Premier's time.

Suddenly word comes. It will be tonight. Fed, washed, dressed in our best, we wait with quiet excitement. A meeting at this level may well provide answers to major questions that have arisen in the course of countless interviews and experiences at the grassroots. Our children and their friends play hide-and-seek in the intricate garden courtyards of the Peace Hotel. In the darkness, elfin voices criss-cross in a mixture of tongues—Laotian, Chinese, East Coast American. Better not drink too much iced whiskey. We need to be alert for the next few hours. But in spite of our best intentions, we fall asleep in the huge armchairs and overstuffed sofas that crowd our quarters.

Hours later—what time is it anyway?—we stumble half awake into cars and are driven swiftly through all but empty streets to the Great Hall of the People looming up in the moonlight like some vast Egyptian temple. It is one o'clock in the morning.

"Hurry, hurry, don't keep the Premier waiting," says Wang Hai-jung, Mào's capable young niece, as we mount the steps and pass into the brightly lit foyer through doors three men tall. That climb in the cold has jarred us into full consciousness.

Chou En-lai greets us inside—graying hair, eyebrows dark and full, face lean, body also lean, a little too slight to fill out the well-made gray suit as it should. But the eyes are as sharp and alert as ever, the handshake firm and warm, and the lips ever on the verge of a smile. The contrast between the grandeur of the surroundings and the informality of our host, a man with close ties to the people, is striking.

We are led into the Honan Room, one of 26 carpeted meeting halls, each decorated by the artists and craftsmen of a province with local themes and materials. Seated in a circle

of lace-covered armchairs, 15 or 20 in all, in a room designed to accommodate hundreds, we seem to float in space. Time has mysteriously dissolved. The sense of rush we have been living with for weeks suddenly gives way to an open-ended tranquility.

"Your *ai ren* (beloved)," the Premier says of my wife, Joanne, then hesitates and laughs over this revolutionary term for married partner, often translated as lover. "It's a hard term to get used to. It fits a young couple but how can I call Teng Ying-chiao my *ai ren* (lover)? We've been married fifty years!"

Chou En-lai has invited some Peking people to meet us—a distinguished professor, a university administrator, a factory manager, two Liberation Army commanders, a Foreign Ministry Bureau head. He guides the conversation onto American social conditions, asks crucial questions, then turns the floor over to others. When a topic has been covered to his satisfaction he adroitly turns our attention to another. Relaxed staff members serve tea and cakes. The Premier pauses to take some pills and washes them down with a cup of water.

We begin to sense that this is not an interview but a seminar. The Nixon visit is impending. Contacts with America will open up. China's leaders need to know Americans and understand American conditions. Chou En-lai has not squeezed time from his busy schedule to be polite to a few foreign guests. He is carrying out an essential political task. He is laying foundations for an opening to the West.

When he himself begins to talk of the progress and problems of China it is clear that his words are not meant for his visitors alone. These are political analyses to be transcribed, reproduced, and circulated as study material all over China. Like a stone cast into a pool, a meeting like this spreads its influence in all directions.

We take notes at a killing pace but it is impossible to keep up. Much is lost, particularly nuances. We should have a tape recorder but somehow that would be an intrusion on such a free-wheeling, friendly session.

We pass through an extraordinary range of topics. Three times at least Chou En-lai rings for water by pressing a button under the arm of his chair. Who can keep count of the cups

of tea? Then all at once our host says, "That's all for now. We'll have to continue at another session."

As we leave the Hall he embraces us—not just a handshake, but a warm hug for everyone. It is completely unexpected and especially moving for that reason. We return his embraces in the spirit in which they are given and wander out into the cold air on the steps. The sun is already rising over Peking. Chang An Street is full of people on bicycles.

Back at the hotel the children are still asleep. They are not usually allowed to play hide-and-seek until midnight.

## Classes, Customs and Revolutionary Change

*During my trip to China in 1971, from May to November, I participated in five long interviews with Premier Chou En-lai. One of these was attended by 73 Americans then in Peking. Others were smaller affairs that included long-term American residents in China, or in one case, only members of the Hinton family.*

*In each instance Premier Chou En-lai spoke to American friends at length about conditions in China, certain major political problems, the Cultural Revolution, China's foreign policy, the impending Nixon visit, and two-line struggle in the ongoing socialist revolution.*

*For lack of a suitable vehicle these interviews were never made public. With the launching of New China it seems to me that the time and place for publication have arrived.*

*For this first installment I have chosen Chou En-lai's remarks on classes and class struggle in the socialist period. China's Communist leaders have always used class analysis as their primary tool for understanding society and developing a program for social change. Just as they saw peasant vs. landlord as the central internal conflict of the pre-1949 period, so they see worker vs. capitalist as the central conflict*

of the present period. "Capitalist" in this context is exemplified today by people in positions of power whose policies would lead China toward capitalism. These are what the Chinese call "capitalist roaders." The surging political tides, the turbulent mass movements, the rise and fall of factions and individual leaders, and pitfalls in the transfer of power to a new generation are all seen as aspects of a continuing class struggle. It is this struggle in fact which calls forth the lively political energy of the people, challenging them to transform the old and create the new.

In this interview Chou En-lai explains the turbulence of Chinese politics in terms of class struggle. An industrial working class numbering only about 30 million, allied with several hundred million peasants, many of them still influenced by their small landholder's past, is struggling under Communist leadership to transform completely the old society. Feudal ideology, latent throughout the inherited culture, is tenaciously propagated by millions of expropriated former landlords and rich peasants. Bourgeois ideology is propagated by many ex-capitalists and a segment of the intellectual and professional elite that once served them. Continuing social and economic differences, impossible to abolish quickly, still generate pockets of privileged managerial and technical personnel who tend to crystallize out as a new ruling class. Recognizing the existence of class struggle against these left-over and newly emerging reactionary elements is "a question of political principle . . . if we didn't admit class struggle, how could we direct our work? What would be our guiding principles?" asked the Premier.

Hinton: We have been impressed by the progress and enthusiasm for socialism we've seen everywhere. Why does political conflict continue?

Have you ever heard about the old-fashioned method of childbirth that is still practiced in some parts of Shansi? Did you investigate that? In Shansi some people still follow a very bad custom. After a woman has given birth to a child, she must sit up on the kang [a heated sleeping platform made of brick]. She is not allowed to eat anything and has to sit upright. Many women have ruined their backs in this way. In the course of childbirth a woman has already lost a lot of

strength but in Shansi she can't eat anything nourishing—not even bean milk, to say nothing of an egg or two. She is given only a little rice or millet gruel.

You haven't heard of this? Well, your investigations are not very thorough.

Of all the provinces, Shansi's population has increased the least. To this day it has not topped 20 million. Before Liberation there were quite a few provinces with a population below 20 million—Fukien, Kwangsi, Yunnan, Kweichow, Shensi, and Shansi. Now all but the last exceed 20 million, even neighboring Shensi. And the reason for this is not because Shansi has done well in birth control but only because, though lots of babies are born, many don't live. In Shansi infant mortality is still high. We have done a lot of work on this but we still haven't found a lasting solution.

It is very hard to change old customs. West Shansi is the worst. In one county there is a brigade made up of immigrants from Honan. They pay much attention to hygiene. Their children survive and grow up in good health. But the Shansi villagers all around won't learn from the immigrants. Instead they look down on Honan people.

In the last few years we have sent them a number of medical teams. Some of them have been People's Liberation Army teams, others have been regular government teams. When they demonstrate modern methods, the people appear to pay attention, but when the teams leave they go right back to their old habits. Some even go back to consulting witch doctors (there still are some in Shansi today) when they get sick. In the old days the Eighth Route Army stayed in those mountains. They never lost control of them during the Japanese War (1937-45) or the Liberation War (1946-49) either. They were in revolutionary hands right up until Liberation. Yet these backward things still exist.

Did you unearth anything like that?

*Carma Hinton: People might say we were looking for faults.*

Now you are getting too sensitive! After all, there are thousands and thousands of backward phenomena. But no matter how you look at it, Chinese society is advancing. This I believe you will all affirm. But to get rid of these backward things during the course of making progress is not easy. The



thinking of feudal society over several thousand years is stamped in people's minds. And so are the old class habits. In the countryside, even though the former poor and lower middle peasants are in the majority and the former landlords and rich peasants\* make up only a minority of around 7 percent, still these old exploiters continue to exist. Their thinking influences others. They make up a reactionary force that must be struggled against.

In the countryside, under socialism, classes still exist. There are, of course, some special places where old exploiters are few in number or even absent. In Tachai, in Shansi Province, not many landlords or rich peasants remain. You've been to Shashiyu (Sandstone Hollow) in Hopei Province. All the people there were beggars to begin with so you won't find ex-landlords or rich peasants there today. Nevertheless, you can't say that classes don't exist, because all around these spots there are communities that have many former exploiters. In many cases land reform took place only 20 years ago (1949-52), so there are ex-landlords and rich peasants in large numbers almost everywhere.

As for the offspring of these people, if they were young at the time of Liberation they never took part in exploitation. Some have become students, others have become laborers. Nevertheless, the influence of their parents on them may be quite deep.

If you take the total as 7 percent and realize that there are over 600 million rural people, then the ex-landlords and rich peasants number over 40 million. If half of them have been transformed, the total of unreconstructed persons is still over 20 million, and this is putting the best light on the matter because it is not easy to transform them.

\* Poor peasants are farmers who had to give up a large part of their crop as rent and/or who had to work as hired laborers to survive. Lower Middle Peasants are farmers who owned some land and farm implements but who needed to rent land from others, borrow money, and pay very high interest to make ends meet. Landlords are those who owned enough land and other property so that they didn't have to labor but rather rented out their land, loaned money, and frequently controlled such crucial enterprises as rice mills. Rich Peasants are farmers who owned land, livestock, and implements but who got more from rent, interest, and hiring laborers than from their own work.

Are there any left in Long Bow Village?\*

*Hinton: A few.*

So classes still exist even though the old rulers no longer hold any power but on the contrary are supervised by our people's power.

As for the cities, before the Cultural Revolution the class situation was even more clear. There was a bourgeois group that owned and operated profit-making enterprises. At first we adopted a policy for the transition period (1949-55) of use, restrict, and transform. Then at the end of 1955 and in the spring of 1956, with drums beating and cymbals clashing, (this bourgeois group marched into socialist society all together. Some gave up their enterprises and turned them over to the public, some entered joint state-private management schemes, others set up cooperatives, as in the handicraft field. All this occurred as collectivization, the move toward higher-stage cooperatives, went forward in the countryside.

After this shift to socialist ownership, we paid interest to the capitalists based on the estimated value of their property. Naturally our estimates were somewhat low. The proletariat (working class) is not likely to over-value the property of the bourgeoisie.\* At that time we estimated the total capital in private hands at 2 billion, 200 million yuan, or 900 million U.S. dollars. At 5 percent we paid out 110 million yuan or 45 million U.S. dollars annually to the former owners. From 1956 through 1966, for ten years, right up until the first year of the Cultural Revolution, we paid out this money. Then the payments stopped. It was a coincidence—our payments went on for just ten years, not more, not less.

You all know about the beginnings of our industrial and commercial policy—the buying out of the bourgeoisie—so I won't dwell on that. What I want to emphasize is the aid we originally gave to private capitalists. Right after Liberation private textile plants could not obtain cotton, so they were subsidized by the state. We helped them carry on so that

\* Village in Shansi Province where William Hinton stayed in 1948 and gathered material for his book, *Fanshen*. In 1971 he revisited and restudied the village.

\* Bourgeoisie: Owners of income-producing property—agricultural, commercial, industrial. Petty bourgeoisie own and operate small, often family-sized, enterprises. Big bourgeoisie are Western-style capitalists.

their workers could draw their pay every month and continue their jobs. From this the bourgeoisie also benefitted. Then, as interest payments, they got back just about half of what they had invested—450 million U.S. dollars. Of course, this isn't applicable in every case. Some people never took the interest due them. Others became "democratic personages" and drew a salary for the job they held.\* They were reluctant to accept any interest. Some people refused the money because their share was so small. Once you accept any of it you are called a capitalist. For some it was hardly worth it. So not all of the money due was actually paid out to capitalists.

When the Cultural Revolution broke out, the masses wouldn't allow the banks to pay out any more interest on private capital. At this point the bourgeoisie didn't dare demand it, so the payments ended. But after all, these people still constitute a bourgeois class. They still exist. Furthermore, their number is quite large. Their percentage in the cities might well be higher than that of the landlords in the countryside. We figure 10 million people altogether, counting in all family members.

Then there is another bourgeois category—the petty bourgeoisie. For example, the upper-middle peasants in the countryside. They retained their land in the land reform, they worked, they became commune members, but they still have some rich peasant or upper-middle peasant thought. If you divide the peasants into three categories—upper, middle, and lower—among the middle peasants there is also some individualist thinking and this is petty bourgeois thinking. Even ordinary poor peasants and lower-middle peasants have a lot of petty bourgeois thinking. Before they had no economic status at all, so that they could be called semi-proletarian. But after land reform they held and worked their own private land for a period. After they joined cooperatives and communes they pooled their land and held it collectively, but each family still saved out a private plot. Places like Tachai, where no one has private plots today, are in the minority. Does Long Bow have any?

*Hinton: Yes; but they are jointly cultivated.*


\* Democratic Personages: Outstanding non-communist individuals who receive recognition for their work in helping the country develop.

The brigades that don't have private plots are a minority and they are socially advanced. The majority still have them. But of course we are not like the Soviet Union where agricultural production is concentrated on private plots. There people expend little energy on their collective land; most of their time is spent on their plots. As a result, the state often cannot purchase enough grain for public use. Yet there is plenty of grain available on the free market.

We do not follow the Soviet example in the way private plots are used, but we still need to have them. In order to stimulate the initiative and enthusiasm of the peasants we still advocate private plots, so that in addition to their collective income they can earn something on the side and also insure some variety in their diet. We have collective pig-raising but individuals can also raise pigs. We allow free markets but grain, cotton, and a few other basic items cannot be sold on them. An egg or two doesn't matter. We also have fairs. They are free markets, but they are supervised by the state.

Does Hsiyang County have any free markets? [Chou En-lai asked this of the Chinese staff members present but no one volunteered an answer—W.H.]

Look at your investigations! Your work is not careful enough.

 What I want to stress is that in the countryside petty-bourgeois thinking still exists on a wide scale. From a Marxist point of view the petty-bourgeoisie belong to the bourgeois class and not to the working class or proletariat. In the cities, the little merchants and storekeepers have merged their enterprises into cooperatives but there are still people who go around with carrying poles, who buy from state enterprises at wholesale prices, and who sell to the public at retail prices, and there are still household inns, restaurants, and shops—what we call husband-and-wife inns or shops.

This shows that the petty-bourgeoisie are quite numerous. While at the same time the working class, the true proletariat, is quite small. How many workers do we have? We have no more than 30 million industrial workers. If we count workers, doctors, teachers—that is, all salaried and wage-earning personnel—there are still only 50 million. If we count only real workers who satisfy Marx's definition as com-

modity producers, there are no more than 30 million. Looked at in this way America certainly has more workers than we do, and even Japan, where industry is growing very rapidly, may surpass us in this category. This 30-million figure refers to individual employed workers. If you count family members, dependents, and children, then of course there will be a lot more people in the working class.

In China, as a general rule, every one works. Sometimes the woman in the family stays at home, but in many cases both husband and wife work. Thus 50 million workers does not mean 50 million families. The figures tend to double up.

We estimate the urban population at 100 million, and the rural population at 600 million.

Obviously the 50 million wage and salaried workers are not all in the cities. If so they would make up half the urban population, which is impossible. [Children, old people, and other dependents usually make up more than half of any population—W.H.]

My basic point is this—in China's socialist society there are still classes. Classes still exist. On this question there are people who disagree, but once you point out the objective facts, how can they refute you?

Given the figures mentioned above, it is obvious that, in terms of ideology, proletarian class rule is minority rule. The minority dictates to the majority. But if we look at the question in terms of class alliances, then it is the other way around: we have a majority of workers and peasants dictating to the minority of former exploiters. But within the great alliance of the workers and peasants, proletarian thinking is not universal. There is still a lot of petty-bourgeois thinking.

One can talk about this in two ways:

(1) China is a socialist society. We have established a socialist system with two kinds of ownership—public and collective. From this point of view we can say that this society is a worker-peasant society, a socialist society. It represents the majority dictating to the minority of former exploiters.

(2) The working class must lead in everything. That is to say, the proletarian world outlook must predominate. This then is minority leadership.

So, once again, in China's socialist society there are classes, there are class contradictions, and there is class struggle.

Internal factors are influenced by external ones. Internationally we are encircled by capitalists and revisionists, and the revisionist ideas are especially corrosive\* so to say that in China there is only ideological struggle, only a struggle between the advanced and the backward, is wrong. Advanced and backward thinking itself reflects class struggle. Even among working people there is backward thinking which reflects the thinking of the exploiting classes. Before we had liberated any cities, Mao Tsetung said that classes would still exist and that in the future, after our victory over Chiang Kai-shek, the struggle would then be between the working class and the bourgeoisie. Since then the problem of which road to take has not really been solved. The struggle continues right to the present day. All this was pointed out by Mao Tsetung before the end of the Democratic Revolution in 1949.†

*Hinton: What about newly generated bourgeois forces, those capitalist roaders who arise due to privilege? If one looks only at former landlords isn't one apt to be disarmed before the newly emerging bourgeoisie?*

Yes. I was just about to discuss that. I started with a static analysis and said that certain classes exist, secondly that these reactionary classes are influencing the petty bourgeoisie and the working class. Thirdly, bourgeois elements will be newly generated. In the development of socialism right up until today, if the directors of industry—the accountants, engineers, managers, etc.—expand and consolidate special privilege, a new privileged class will be generated and its members will be the capitalist roaders whom you have just mentioned.

So, once again, we have to admit that classes exist. If we don't struggle we will find new bourgeois elements rising up. And if we don't oppose bourgeois thinking, it will corrode the ranks of the working class. Thus we have:

✱ (1) Old exploiters still around.

\* Revisionists: Those who have revised Marxism to the point that reform replaces revolution.

† Revolution to free China from foreign interests and break the control of the landed class.

~~XX~~ (2) Newly generated bourgeois class forces.

~~XX~~ (3) Ideological influence and corrosion.

This last, the old habits, customs, and ways of thinking left over from the past, are widespread. Lenin had especial hatred for such things, the bad things left over from the exploiters. The old way of childbirth in Shansi which I discussed at the start is one of the bad things left over. In highly industrialized societies, this kind of thing is less common or even absent. But in a backward country like ours there are lots of things of this sort.

So whether you admit that classes exist or not is crucial. Recognizing the existence of classes and class struggle is a question of political principle.

Liu Shao-chi thought that after the three great transformations [of agriculture, of industry, and of commerce] class struggle would die out. This is reactionary thinking. On this question, furthermore, he was not alone. Chen Po-ta also had the same idea. In over 20 years of socialist revolution, the struggle against such ideas has been very sharp. But if we didn't admit class struggle, how could we direct our work? What would be our guiding principles?

## Slogans and Hero Worship

*In this article I have brought together Chou En-lai's remarks on categorical or absolutist thinking typical of the old feudal society, but often appearing today draped in "red." The slogan "all public, no self" which was so widely used and abused during the Cultural Revolution was adapted from Mao Tsetung's description of the spirit of the Canadian surgeon, Dr. Norman Bethune, who died at the front during the War of Resistance against Japan. Mao praised his "utter devotion to others without thought of self." As a standard for the behavior of Communists, this concept is widely upheld in China. But those who have tried to make it the basis for agricultural and industrial policy have practiced extreme equalitarianism which leads to the expropriation and transfer of the property and earnings of laboring people, with adverse influence on social cohesion and production.*

*Chou En-lai makes a critical analysis of the absolutist thinking typical of the old feudal society but often appearing today cloaked in revolutionary rhetoric. As the guiding principle for China's socialist upsurge he rejects the slogan "all public, no self" in favor of "public first, self second." Warning against the mechanical application of any slogan or policy, he says, "You can travel 10,000 li looking for a magic method but you will never find it."*

*Hinton: Did Mao Tsetung describe himself as a monk with an umbrella? It sounds mystical.*

You have all read Edgar Snow's article in *Life Magazine* [April 30, 1971] about his interview with Mao Tsetung. Generally speaking, the material in that article is correct. Snow reported what Mao said but there are a few mistakes that are due to misunderstandings, such as Snow's phrase about a "lone monk walking the world with a leaky umbrella."



Mao said, "I am like a monk under an umbrella, *wu fa, wu tien* [without hair, without heaven]." It is a double pun. A monk has a shaven head, hence no hair. A monk under an umbrella is cut off from the sky, hence, no heaven. But *fa* also means "law," and *tien* also means "heaven" in the sense of supreme ruling power. Thus a monk under an umbrella is a man without law or limit—a rebel like Monkey [who accompanied the monk Tripitaka on his legendary journey to India], unbound by established rules, institutions, or conventions, whether earthly or divine.

Mao Tsetung talked with Snow on December 18, 1970. The background for his remarks was the success of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. We mobilized the masses and they rebelled against the capitalist roaders. Armed with Mao Tsetung Thought they dared to criticize and express their views, put politics in command, developed production, made preparations against war, and moved everything forward. This was the positive side, the main current, but at the same time some adverse currents arose.

The worst thing, what Mao disliked the most, was the trend toward absolute statements, absolute ways of thinking and speaking. For example, the use of the "four greats"—Great Helmsman, Great Leader, Great Teacher, and Great Supreme Commander—when speaking of Mao Tsetung. The "four greats" were first put forward by Chen Po-ta. He had been head of the Cultural Revolution Group of the Communist Party Central Committee, but was removed from all posts during the second session of the Ninth Central Committee of the Party in August 1970.

Chairman Mao said that "teacher" ought to be enough, but to do away with these "four greats," to cut the four back to one, is not easy. Demanding it once did not work. It took us a long time. We expended a lot of effort. Now we have been able to reduce the designation to "Great Leader" or "Great Teacher." Mao Tsetung would like to drop the "great" as well. Just plain "teacher" would suit him. But this is not easy. The masses won't approve of it. Hundreds of millions repeat these phrases every day. We can't do away with them all at once.

Then there is the slogan, "Go all out to establish the absolute authority of Mao Tsetung Thought." This is entirely

wrong. How can there ever be absolute authority? Mao Tsetung may be an authority on some questions, but as to questions that are not in his field, how can he be an authority on them? There is also a question of time. There is the whole future to consider. You may be an authority today, but does that mean you are an authority tomorrow? If you make Mao Tsetung Thought an absolute, how can there be any development? Such a theory would freeze all social progress. It is quite wrong. We would end up in a passive position.

Furthermore, authority can only be recognized and supported by the masses of the people who test its validity through struggle. How can anyone set up such an authority? It can only come out of the struggle of the masses. All ideas about establishing authority are wrong.

Then there are those Mao Tsetung pictures and Mao Tsetung statues that have been put up all over the place without regard for time or circumstance. This is also wrong. This turns a good thing into its opposite. There is much too much of this. Mao considers it *tao yen* [a nuisance]! All this display is not genuine, nor is it respectful. Chairman Mao and Edgar Snow joked about this. Mao said, "Look at me standing there blown by the wind and washed by the rain. What a pity!" And Snow replied that he too could not think through why Mao should be standing there all alone in the wind.

In the Peking Hotel, at the counter where they sell merchandise, there is a big portrait of Chairman Mao. I asked the clerks, "Is Mao here to serve at the counter for you?" In the elevator there is also a portrait of Mao. "Is Mao watching the elevator for you?" I asked the operator. All this has been overdone and it is harmful.

There are too many statues. They must be done away with. As you can see, inside the Great Hall of the People, they have been removed.

*Hinton: One can still see plenty of them elsewhere.*

Yes. Too many have been put up and if people refuse to take them down the only thing we can do is issue orders that they be removed.

Of course, this question of leadership has two sides and Mao's views on it differ from those of the revisionists. A class has its rank-and-file, its party, and its leaders. Lenin spoke of



Chou En-lai in Tientsin during the May 4th Movement in 1919.

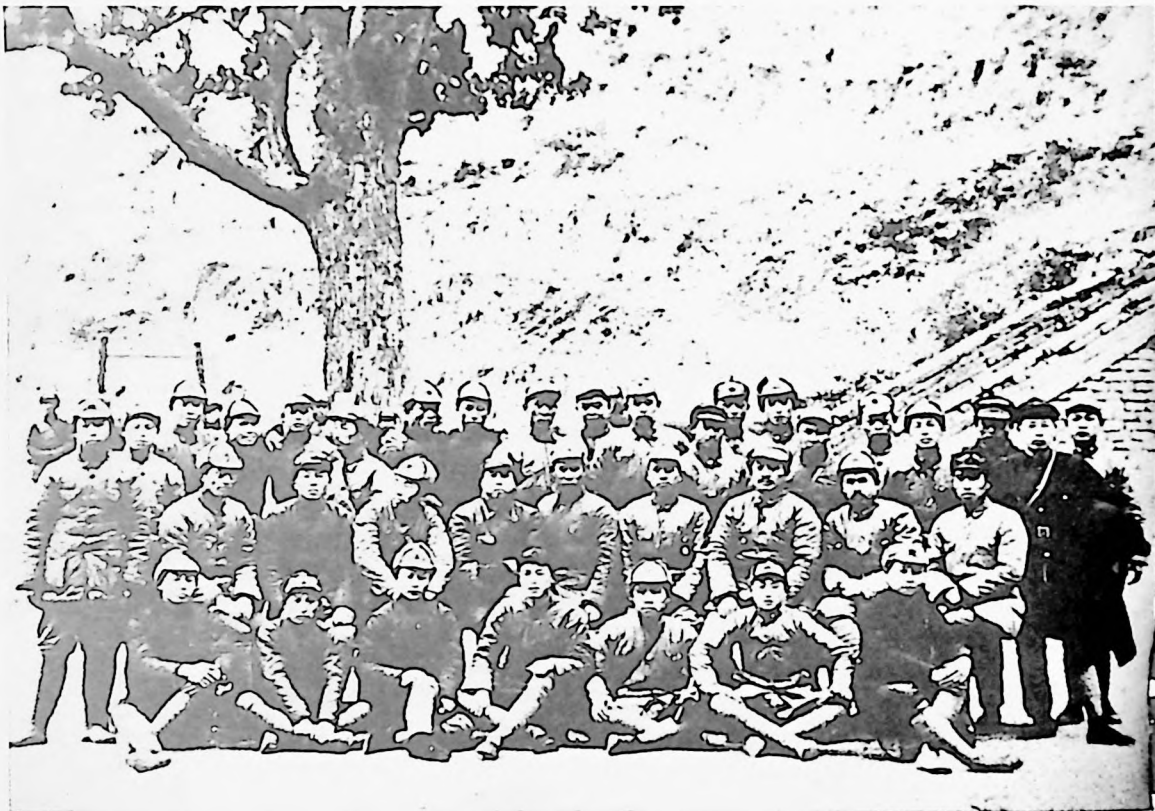
Chou as Director of the Political Department of the Whampoa Military Academy, Kwangtung Province, 1924-26.



In France and Germany, 1920-1924, Chou publicized Marxism, joined the CPC in 1922, and led the Communist Youth League of China in Europe.



Chou in north Shensi during the Long March, Oct. 1934-35.



Part of the Red Army's 2nd Front Army on arrival in north Shensi.



Mao and Chou in Yanan, 1945.

Chou at the 2nd Plenary Session of the 7th Central Committee of the CPC, March 1949.



The founding ceremony of the PRC, Tienanmen Gate, Peking, October 1, 1949.



Left: Chou En-lai at the Eighth Route Army Sian Office during the War of Resistance against Japan. Right: Chou helps plan a resistance strategy to the Kuomintang's March 1947 attack on the Shensi-Kansu-Ningsia Border Area.





On August 24, 1973, Chou delivered a political report to the 10th National Congress of the CPC on behalf of the Party's Central Committee.

Mao and Chou on the rostrum at the 10th National Congress of the Communist Party of China.



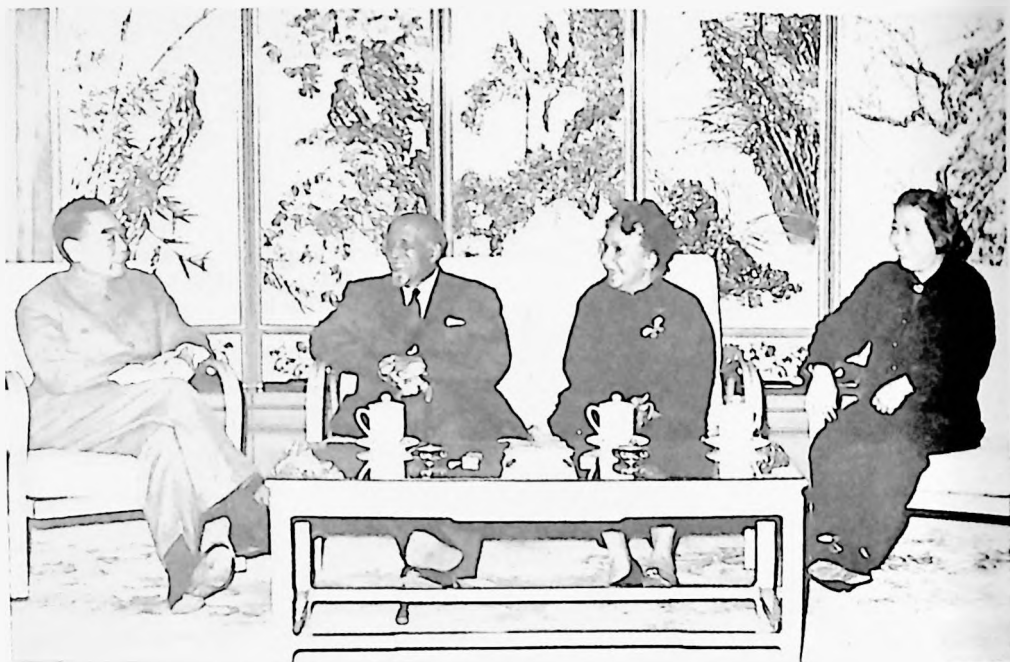




Visiting Tachai Production Brigade in Shansi, China's model agricultural unit, May 1965.



Receiving Wang Chin-hsi, "iron man" of the Taching Oilfield, and other representatives of advanced units of China's oil industry in Peking in October 1966.



Chou and his wife, Teng Ying-chao, visit with W. E. B. and Shirley Graham DuBois, April 1959.

Chou meets with J. R. L. Kotsokoane, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Lesotho, while in hospital in Peking, May 21, 1975.





Representing the People's Republic of China, Chou En-lai attended the First Asian-African Conference held in Bandung, Indonesia, in April 1955.



Accompanied by Chen Yi, Chou En-lai visited Albania, ten African countries and three Asian countries between December 1963 and February 1964. They receive a warm welcome from the people of Peking on their return.



Author Edgar Snow first met Chou En-lai in a Yenan cave in 1936. In Peking, after three decades, they discuss new China's changing role in the world.

In 1957, at the height of the Cold War, 42 Americans risked loss of their passports to visit China. Chou En-lai met with them to encourage their initiative, and that of the Chinese youth organization which invited them.



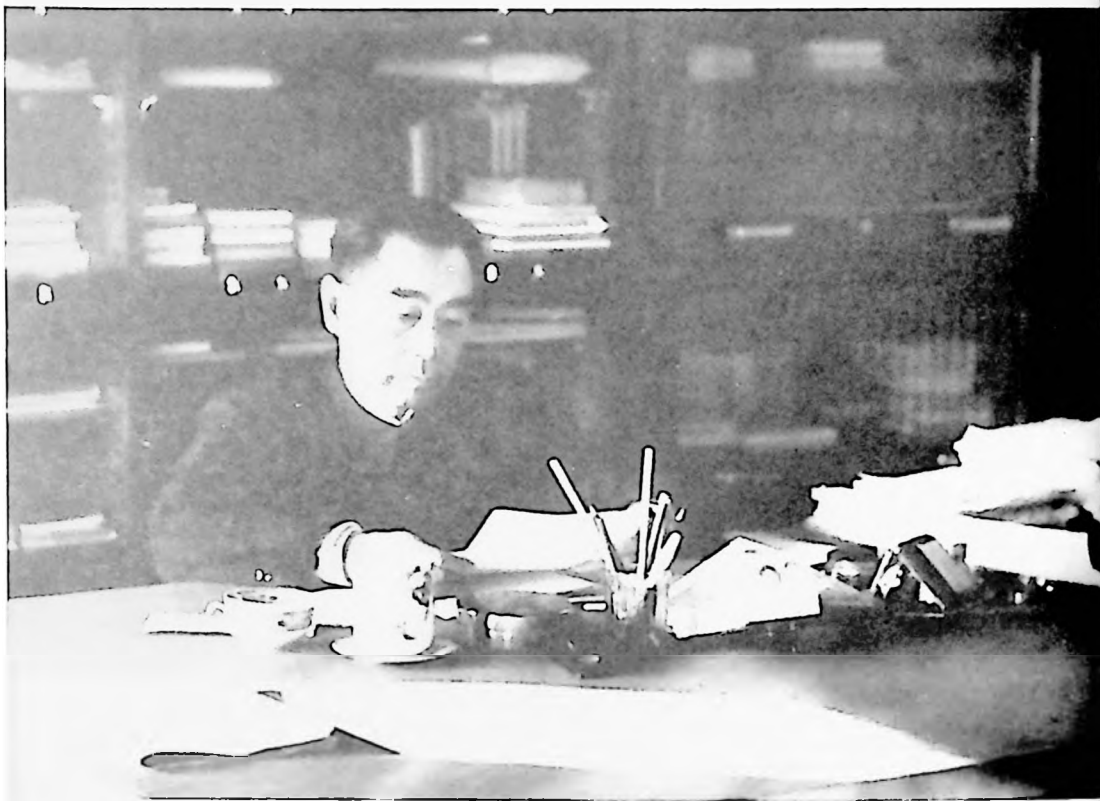


Premier Chou En-lai flanked by William and Joanne Hinton. Back row from left: Hsing Chiang, Chen Chi-hung, Huang Hua and his wife Ho Li-liang. Taken the evening of the first interview, May 24, 1971.

Left: Then-President Gerald Ford toured the Summer Palace in Peking on December 4, 1975, accompanied by Chinese Vice-Premier Li Hsien-nien. Right: Richard M. Nixon, former President of the United States, called on Madame Teng Ying-chao in Peking on February 22, 1976, and expressed his deep condolences on the death of the late Premier.



Chou En-lai working in his office.





"... THE DARKNESS WOULD SOON PASS, AND THE SUN BREAK THROUGH."

*-Chairman Mao Tse-tung*

this in his "*Left-Wing*" *Communism*. The masses of any class need leadership. But all this has been negated by Khrushchev. He lumped the whole problem under one label, "personality cult." His goal was to overthrow Stalin's influence. Though Stalin made mistakes, his merits exceeded his faults. I talked about this with Reston [James Reston, *New York Times* columnist]. No doubt he did not approve of Stalin. But I asked him, when Hitler marched to the east, could he have been stopped without Stalin? Under Stalin the Soviet Union carried on a war of resistance for three years. Without this resistance there could not have been any landing in Normandy. England might well have fallen. How could the Russian people have been mobilized like this without Stalin? Reston could not deny this.

What enabled Stalin to play this role was that after Lenin died he fought against many wrong tendencies and led the way in socialist construction so that the Soviet people and Party became powerful. Only thus were they able to carry on the anti-fascist struggle. Of course, in his theoretical work and in his method of leadership Stalin made mistakes. But his merits outweigh those mistakes. Khrushchev's opposition to Stalin was based on personal ambition. When Stalin was alive he called him "father." But when he died Khrushchev made a secret report that was soon published in America. Even if we disregard the question of Party spirit and speak only of personal morality, Khrushchev showed up very badly.

We cannot get rid of veneration and respect for leaders just because Khrushchev opposes these. The first question one must ask of a leader is: Do you deserve respect or not? The second question is: Are you recognized by the masses as a leader or has your image been artificially created? In the American War of Independence, Washington was the leader. This cannot be denied. Without him could you Americans celebrate 200 years of independence in 1976? Nixon wants to be President on the 200th anniversary of the United States. If Washington had never lived how could Nixon accomplish this?

Talking of veneration, Washington's name is used a lot. The capitol is Washington, there is a state of Washington, and many other places and things bear his name, but you can't say that this is artificial. It is a natural development. The



American working class taking power in a revolution, when reflecting on history, would still not be able to deny Washington's role. The same is true of the French Revolution of 1789. Robespierre was executed, but his contribution was still very great. It can never rust away.

So Mao Tsetung has discussed this question of the cult of the individual in a matter-of-fact way. A leader should always be modest and this means to proceed in a matter-of-fact, down-to-earth way.

*Hinton: "All public, no self" seems to be rather absolute. At least it has been used that way by many people.*

"Public" versus "self" describes two opposite sides of a single phenomenon. Without "self," where is the "public?" This is the same thing as without small there is no big, without low there is no high. "All public, no self" makes no sense at all. For instance Lei Feng, Li Wen-zhong, and Ouyang Hai [three exemplary Communist youths who died young, the latter two while saving the lives of others], these heroes who forgot themselves completely at the moment of death—they still have a self. Without that personal self, what showed their selflessness? If they had no self how could they demonstrate a public spirit?

Bourgeois society makes fun of us, saying, "You Communists only talk about public as if there were no self." But this is not true. We hold that without individuals there is no collective. What we advocate is putting the collective first. The action of each individual should be merged into the collective. Are we not individuals here tonight? We get together but each of us has different thoughts and different words. In the end we may agree on a few basic things and for these goals held in common we should fight together. But as soon as we go into action each will arrive at his or her own personal explanation again, so that our unity is temporary and our differences protracted. In spite of this we may make agreement our main direction and set our differences to one side as exceptions, as individual variations.

For example, I doubt very much if the members of the Hinton family all think alike. The old mother will not have the same thoughts as her son Bill, and his wife Joanne thinks in still another way. Young Carma won't think just like her mother either, will she? There are and always will be

individuals. A collective only becomes possible when there are individuals.

The bourgeoisie curse us and say we only want the collective and no individual expression, but that is not correct. In fact it is the capitalists who carry the thing to extremes by stressing only the individual and no collective responsibility. This creates anarchy in production. Take pollution, for instance. This problem cannot be solved under capitalism. You have seen our East Is Red Refinery [a petrochemical complex southwest of Peking where the waste from each process serves as the raw material for another so that only clear water flows away]. There we have solved the problem of waste. We raise ducks and fish and we irrigate crops with the left-over water. But still we are not satisfied. We want that waste water to be pure enough for people to drink. So we have to add still another precipitation process to our refinery.

But in America things are not going so well in this respect. The fish in the Great Lakes are all dying and the fish offshore are dying too. So Americans are fighting over the fish off Peru. In self-defense Peru and her neighbors have set up a 200-mile limit. Our government supports this. It was one of the conditions we agreed to in setting up diplomatic relations with Peru. Monopoly capitalism not only pollutes its own shores, but it goes after other peoples' offshore wealth as well.

Japan also has serious pollution problems. The mayor of Tokyo came to visit recently. He is a progressive who belongs to no party. The mayor of Yokohama, who belongs to the Socialist Party, also came. They went to the East is Red plant to have a look. I asked them what they meant to do about pollution. They said that under the system they have now there is no way to solve the problem. Luckily, old and small enterprises predominate in Tokyo. Japan's capital city does not generate a whole lot of waste water and there are no big oil refineries. Nevertheless, cars create a problem of air pollution. Tokyo residents are helpless in the face of smog. Their mayor envied Peking with all its bicycles. But he said he couldn't do anything to change things. The monopoly capitalists all want to sell cars. In order to make a profit they

want a big market for cars and they want people to exchange their old cars for new ones.

Conditions around Yokohama are worse. The fish near the sea coast have all died. This is due to the big refineries. Individualism developed to such a high peak causes people to crush and harm one another. It leads to pollution. Only large increases in investment can do away with pollution but these add to costs. It is possible to lose money, so the owners won't do it. Thus capitalism at its highest stage damages its own national environment and is inhuman. Our socialism, on the other hand, puts individuals and the collective into an appropriate relationship, but it is not "all public, no self." Socialism cannot so transform things that there is no personal interest and only public interest. Our aim is to have people subordinate their personal interest to the public interest and to bring collective and self into harmony.

The Tachai Brigade [a model farming collective] is a good example of this. They no longer cultivate private plots. The people live side by side in community housing. Their actions are more or less unified, that is, they get up in the morning at about the same time, but not everyone. Little children don't. Sick people don't. Old people don't. Also, those people who work all night—they don't get up, they have to rest during the day. So there are always differences in behavior and this shows up in the difference between public and self. The collective sets up a discipline, or a system, but there are always variations.

*Carmelita Hinton: Some peasants plant one kind of flower, others plant different kinds, while some don't plant any flowers at all.*

[Delighted, claps his hands.] Very good. Yes, some people like one sort of thing, while others like something else. Also, if Joanne's children want milk while at Tachai, they should have it. If I were there I would see to it that they get milk. You can't force them to bear unusual hardships.

During our Long March, when we got to the north, the soldiers from the south were not used to millet. We cooked thorn-dates with it and gradually they got used to it. North Shansi people, when they kill a chicken or a pig, throw the innards away. It is a strange custom. People from the south like all these things. So we rescued the innards, the liver and

sweetmeats, and cooked them for the southerners and gradually they got used to eating millet. If, on the other hand, you want North Shansi people to eat liver and sweetmeats, they won't touch them. So we can't demand that boys and girls accustomed to milk adjust to life without milk all at once. [Chinese customarily do not drink milk.]

Tachai, then, is a good example of "public first, self second." At harvest time they first set aside the public grain [tax grain and grain for sale to the State]. They then set aside seed for the next crop. With some of the money from State grain sales they set aside investment capital, capital for next year's production and for construction such as housing. They also store away some grain reserves in case of disaster. What is left they divide as per capita shares, as individual income. Of course, this final portion should increase a little each year. If it remained the same year after year people could not maintain their enthusiasm, their interest in production.

If a brigade can so arrange "public" and "self" in this all-around way, that's not bad. You become a model for the whole country. So what we must stress about Tachai is "public first, self second." If the whole country can follow this example it will be much better off. We take such a place as a model because it is advanced, but also it is because people can study and copy this advanced experience. If it was so advanced that nobody could hope to reach such levels, how could it be a model? Am I right?

Li Wen-zhong and Lei Feng can only be a minority. If everyone set out to die, as they did, what could we do? No one would be left alive. That's not necessary. It certainly would not do for everyone to find a way to die gloriously. Such heroes can only be a small minority. There aren't so many chances to make one's death as "heavy as Mount Tai," and if you go around looking for such a death it would still only be as "light as a feather" [phrases from Mao's funeral eulogy, "Serve the People"]. That would be a form of fascism, of militarism. It wouldn't do at all. That isn't serving the people. So, generally speaking, it is "public first, self second," and that everyone can learn from.

In Tachai during the Cultural Revolution people quarrelled about this many times. Some ultra-leftists insisted that

Tachai people followed only public interest and had no self-interest. Others said that underneath all the rhetoric, Tachai people, too, were out for self. When Xie Zhen-hua, chairman of the Shansi Province Revolutionary Committee, went to Tachai, he challenged both views, saying that Tachai was in fact an example of "public first, self second." This upset many Tachai people. When Chen Yung-kuei, leader of the Tachai Brigade, came to Peking, we talked it over. Chen supported our view, which was the view of the Central Committee, and we had good reasons for it.

*Hinton: What about self-reliance? How far can that be carried?*

Tachai expresses self-reliance in the main, but this is not an absolute either. During a year of very serious natural calamities the State gave Tachai peasants loans. They paid the money back the very next year. One year later Chen Yung-kuei went to the conference of the People's Congress and talked with Mao. It was a disastrous season, first drought, then flood. But that time Chen refused all State aid and Tachai people solved the problem themselves. But in any case they were still short of water.

It was 1965. Mao Tsetung had already issued his call, "In agriculture, learn from Tachai!" I went there and saw this problem. The terraces had all been built on the north slope of Tigerhead Mountain but there was no reservoir for water, no source of supply for irrigation.

"What if there is a drought? What if it doesn't rain?" I asked Chen.

"It always rains a little every year," he said.

"But what if a year comes along when no rain falls?"

Well, I arranged for them to get a pump to lift water up from the base of the mountain. After they pumped for a while there was not much water left in the river, so they dug wells. Ever since they dug these wells and put into operation the pump that the State helped them buy, they have done better. But you can't say they didn't get *any* help from the State. Take chemical fertilizers: the State allocated some to them first. Of course they had to pay for it with their own funds.

So it is self-reliance *in the main*. You can't be completely self-reliant. You should not say things in such an absolute

way. It is much more appropriate to leave out the "absolute" part. Then the whole country can learn from you.

Just because Tachai is advanced, does that mean it has no shortcomings? No. It has some shortcomings. If we are able to see these shortcomings, does it mean we are more able than they? No. It is only because we have seen many more places, so we can make some comparisons. For instance, there are very few trees on their mountains. If they had started earlier to plant trees, especially oil-bearing trees, they would have achieved much more. Also walnut and thorn-date trees—all these are very suitable.

*Carmelita Hinton: I saw many places in the north where there weren't as many trees as there should be. Why? Is it because brigades are short of labor power?*

There could be a problem of labor power, but there is also a problem of custom, of habit. There is an old Chinese custom and it is a bad one—people cut more trees than they plant. It is hard to change this and cultivate a habit of planting trees.

Well, we have to advocate a direction, establish an example like Tachai. But this has to be an example that many people can reach. It wouldn't be any good if they couldn't attain it, if they couldn't accomplish the same things. When you have a proper example that people can aspire to, you need to propagate this example and push for people to study it. But in your publicity you have to be flexible and take into account different conditions and different places. You can only advocate a direction. As to the concrete details—these have to be decided by the people in each locality who take into account their own special conditions. If everyone ran to study Tachai as if it were scripture, they couldn't help but lose out and suffer harm. We must never study mechanically.

*Hinton: Could you give us some examples?*

Tachai has brigade accounting [village-wide sharing of per capita income]. But there are only 80 families and about 400 people in Tachai, which is about equal to the size of an ordinary production team [the smallest collective unit in most villages] on the Hopei plain. If large teams in Hopei all got together to do brigade accounting it would not work. It would lead to *ping diao* [leveling and transferring of property]. Those who produced a surplus would lose out to

those who fell behind. The activism of all rural producers would be affected.

In other areas we have the opposite problem. In the mountains of Southwest China there are teams with only a few families, perhaps ten or a dozen. To merge all these small account units into one brigade like Tachai would not be good either. The people would be running up and down the mountains all the time keeping track of each other. In some parts of Yunnan, the mountains are very high. Up above, the climate is cool. Down below, it is hot. The above and below are very different, so you can't merge these units even though they are on the same mountain.

Tachai's accounting system should not be copied mechanically, nor should Tachai's stone houses. Originally all Tachai people lived in earthen caves. Most of these caves were washed out in a big flood. After that Chen Yung-kuei led his people to build stone caves in long rows. This style of construction leaves no room for privately owned gardens nor is there any place for the family pigsty. If all villages were to apply this method, things would be in an awful mess. In most places popular consciousness is not high enough to do away with privately owned gardens and pigsties.

So what we really want to learn from is none of these concrete details such as the accounting system or the housing but the way the Tachai people have carried out a living study of Mao Tsetung Thought and the honest, practical, down-to-earth application of this to their own community. What we want to study is the way Tachai people carry out a policy of "public first, sell second" and "self-reliance in the main."

There is no such thing as a perfect example, a perfect model. There is no place about which one can say "everything there is good." Long Bow Village, Xigou, Shashiyou all have their strong points. We want each county, each province, each municipality to create its own Tachai. You can travel 10,000 li looking for a magic method but you will never find it.

# The Cultural Revolution and the Struggle between Two Lines

*In this third installment of the series, I have brought together Premier Chou's remarks on the Cultural Revolution. He traced its origins to the sharp controversy over the Great Leap Forward of 1958,\* the two-line struggle in the Socialist Education Movement of 1963-1966, and the movement to reform classical Peking opera which began in that period. He described how cadres at all levels were personally tested by rebellion from below and how he himself became a target of certain ultra-left youth temporarily misled by reactionary individuals in high positions. In order to minimize such tendencies in the future, he said, "We must use history, the history of the Communist Party, the history of two-line struggle, and struggle over policy to educate people."*

## The Start of the Cultural Revolution

*Hinton: How did the Cultural Revolution begin?*

The beginnings of the Cultural Revolution, the first signs of the conditions that led up to it, were already evident in 1962. The report of the Tenth Session of the Eighth Party Congress (September 1962) was actually a repudiation of Liu Shao-chi, though not by name. In 1963 this was followed by Mao Tsetung's Ten Points for carrying through the Socialist Education Movement. When Liu Shao-chi substituted ten points of his own, Chairman Mao issued a Twenty-three Point Directive in 1965. At about this time Comrade Chiang Ching (Mao's wife) advocated the revolutionizing of the classical opera and began work on the modern operas of today. In the winter of 1965 Yao Wen-yuan's critical article on the play

\* The Great Leap Forward was a movement launched in 1958 to realize the full potential of China's new socialist economy by involving the whole people in iron- and steel-making, water conservancy projects, land reclamation, and industrial construction.



Hai Jui Dismissed from Office was published.\* Then in May, 1966 an enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau put out the May 16th Circular.† This began the Cultural Revolution in earnest.

All of these steps were a part of the struggle against the revisionist line supported by Liu Shao-chi. This struggle between Marxism and revisionism has been protracted and serious during the entire socialist period in China. Intense struggle dates from the summer of 1966 when Mao Tsetung issued his call to "Bombard the Headquarters" and mobilized millions of people in the battle against revisionism. This battle continues to this day.

*Hinton: What was the issue in 1962?*

For those who don't admit the continued existence of classes and class struggle, the alternative can only be the "theory of the productive forces." Liu Shao-chi said that the problem of the relations of production had been solved but that the productive forces lagged behind. That is, we have advanced relations of production [system of ownership, system of management, and system of distribution] but backward forces of production [capital equipment, technology, and working skills]. But this violates Marxism. Marx teaches that the productive forces may be held back by (1) the relations of production, and (2) the superstructure of society—the way people think and the rules they live under, their institutions and their culture.

Liu Shao-chi stated his theory of advanced relations and backward forces at the Eighth Party Congress. According to his view, China's social relations were already very advanced. The productive forces had already been liberated. Hence there was no further change in relations of production that could unleash a Great Leap. Since he didn't believe in any leap, he opposed and undermined the Great Leap. He carried

\* A play by the Vice-Mayor of Peking, Wu Han, that implicitly criticized Mao Tsetung for the removal of Defense Minister Peng Te-huai in 1959. Shanghai journalist Yao Wen-yuan's criticism of this play began the great debate that led to the Cultural Revolution.

† Key document of the Cultural Revolution issued by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in 1966. Probably written by Mao himself, it sets forth the basic orientation of the Cultural Revolution and calls for an end to the stifling of political debate. Not to be confused with the May 16th Group, which adopted this name for the prestige it would lend them.

out a line "left" in form but right in essence that was characterized by extreme "left" slogans, slogans that could not be realized in practice. This was actually an attempt to wreck the Great Leap.

Liu also opposed the Great Leap by protecting the existing superstructure. He did not want to transform the superstructure which was blocking the forces of production. Later, people such as Chen Po-ta [Central Committee member and leader of the Central Cultural Revolution Group until 1969] joined with Liu Shao-chi in opposition to Mao Tsetung's Ten Points for the consolidation of socialism in the countryside. Surely you have read the Ten Points.\*

*Hinton: No, I am not familiar with them.*

### Socialist Education Movement

As I said a few moments ago, in 1963 Mao Tsetung issued Ten Points to guide the Socialist Education Movement.† Liu Shao-chi countered with a second ten points—complicated and full of meaningless detail, an exercise in scholasticism. Liu opposed coming to grips with capitalist roaders as directed by Mao. He proposed instead to differentiate between being clean-in-four-ways and being unclean-in-four-ways [economics, politics, organization, and ideology]. Everyone, holding a big job or a small job, inside the Communist Party or outside it, could be knocked out of office if he or she was unclean in any of the four spheres.

With such a program, the scope of attack could not help being greatly enlarged. Among the cadres in the countryside petty selfishness does exist—such things as taking a little collective property for private use. If such acts as this make them bad elements, then almost all the cadres in the countryside, with only a few exceptions, must be overthrown. For instance, suppose something is left in the field [a basket, a sack, or a length of rope]. A cadre takes it home for

\* Mao's Ten Points was the basic charter for the Socialist Education Movement. This document emphasized the continued existence of class struggle and called on peasants to supervise all aspects of cadres' work and on all cadres to take part in productive labor.

† Socialist Education Movement was aimed at consolidating and developing cooperative agriculture in the face of various individualistic, capitalist trends previously promoted by Liu Shao-chi and some other members of the Chinese Communist Party.

his own use. Is he a grafter or not? If all this is called serious corruption the consequences are hard to estimate. It would be *bude liao* [an awful mess]!

Such acts can only be placed in the same category as *xiao, tou, xiao mo* [petty theft—a term that does not imply misuse of power as does graft]. Cadres in factories are not free from such things. Take, for instance, the person who uses some plant stationery for writing a personal letter. Society hasn't developed to the stage of communism yet. People don't all clearly distinguish between public interest and self-interest. Even under communism there will be various forms of struggle. So it cannot be a question of clean-in-four-ways or unclean-in-four-ways but of which road you are taking.

Mao Tsetung's Twenty-three Points\* repudiated Liu's ten points. But Liu Shao-chi's wife, Wang Guang-mei, had already gone to the Peach Garden Brigade for grassroots experience, had fully carried out Liu's points and had then gone all over the country making speeches without the permission of the Central Committee and the Chairman.

*Hinton: How can one learn more about this?*

Before you go to Long Bow Village you ought to go to some other places in order to make comparisons. Don't you want to go to the Peach Garden Brigade? I haven't been there myself but if I had the opportunity I would like to have a look at this place where Liu Shao-chi and Wang Guang-mei worked.

Based on his wife's experience there, Liu Shao-chi said in a public meeting that Mao Tsetung's theory of investigation can't be used today because it is out of date. Thus he wildly promoted himself.

I chaired that meeting. I personally heard him talk this nonsense. Afterward I went to Peng Chen [mayor of Peking, a Liu supporter removed from office in 1966] and said, "Such words cannot be propagated among the people. They must be cut from his speech." Peng Chen and another

\* Mao's Twenty-three Point Directive challenged Liu Shao-chi's attempt to twist the original Ten Points and clearly stated that the purpose of the movement was to fight against "those Party members in leading posts who take the capitalist road" and not to attack lesser or non-Party cadre for petty misdeeds and poor work-style.


comrade agreed to cut this out, so in the end a revised version was made public.

But Wang Guang-mei's unrevised speeches were disseminated everywhere. They were taped and broadcast all over the country. I never heard the tapes. I don't know the exact words she spoke, but I do know something about them. The Peach Garden experience is now being repudiated. The whole approach was subjective, not based on an examination of the evidence or on investigation.

### Confusing the Target

Liu Shao-chi looked on Communist Party and government cadres as no good, as all rotten. He attacked many, many. When he or his group went to a village to "squat" [to make an intensive investigation and solve problems], they did secret work—"Put down roots and make contact," they called it. After 15 years of state power they still did secret work? How could this come to any good?

"Put down roots, make contact, carry out secret investigations"—all this departs completely from the mass line.

 Liu Shao-chi never implemented the Socialist Education Movement as a two-line struggle. He turned it into a clean-in-four-ways, unclean-in-four-ways contradiction among the cadres. Did they graft or didn't they graft? Or into the intertwining of the contradictions inside the Communist Party and outside the Communist Party [Mao had emphasized capitalist roaders *inside* the Communist Party], or into a struggle between "good" people and "bad" people. Outwardly he applied no class line at all. To treat the Socialist Education Movement in this way was completely out of step with the theory of class struggle—of two roads, two lines.

With this method of Liu's one removes great groups of cadres and brings new groups into power. One turns the Socialist Education Movement into an unprincipled struggle over who is to be in power. This opens the road to capitalist restoration. It is very dangerous.

*An American resident in China: Working under Liu's line everything was done according to whether one liked or disliked others. As soon as one person got into power the other person sent gifts and invited him to a feast!*



Originally when Mao Tsetung started the Socialist Education Movement it was in order to carry on the class struggle in depth, to develop the socialist revolution, and to prepare the way for the Cultural Revolution. But Liu Shao-chi put his hand in, changed the form of the movement, and thus opened the road for capitalist restoration.

If you go to Peach Garden to investigate you should stay there for a period and get it all clear. Tachai, Long Bow, and Peach Garden—these three villages are three points for concentration. Tachai is taking the socialist road pointed out by Mao Tsetung. Under Liu Shao-chi and Wang Guang-mei, Peach Garden took the capitalist road. What the condition is in Long Bow today I do not know. Long Bow went down a zig-zag road. In your book *Fanshen* you reflected some setbacks there. I know Long Bow still has problems but the main direction is correct. You can make a comparison.

#### Brigade Leader's Story

*Hinton: In the Cultural Revolution, the main direction was to expose the capitalist road?*

Yes. The village of Sandstone Hollow [Shashi Yu] may serve as an example. Originally it was a wasteland, nothing but rock. All the soil they work there now was carried in from other places. I have been there myself two or three times. During the six years of the Cultural Revolution Sandstone Hollow has changed a great deal. The former Secretary of the Communist Party there is of peasant origin, a former beggar who came to the hollow as a refugee. He led people into the hills to reclaim and create land. From the period of the land reform, through socialist cooperation, to the construction of communes, he led each stage of the struggle, and production in Sandstone Hollow developed greatly.

Although this man was in the leadership of the brigade from the beginning, as success came his ideology changed and his thinking was corrupted to a certain extent. Prior to the Cultural Revolution in 1966, in the whole history of Sandstone Hollow only two children had ever been chosen to go to college. They were his children. This was special treatment and these children acted as if they were special. When the Cultural Revolution began, one of them was about

to graduate. She joined a Red Guard unit and came home to defend her father, the man in power. This made the people very unhappy. The rank-and-file members of the brigade rebelled against his leadership, and we supported this revolutionary action of theirs.

They had another grievance. When it came time to build houses in the village, two sections were built for each family. But the brigade leader, who already owned two sections, added two more to his house. In May 1966 when I went there with Shehu of Albania [Mehmet Shehu, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers], I discovered this. I wondered how it was that the brigade leader had twice as big a house as anyone else. During the upheaval that followed the people exposed this and charged that their brigade leader had cut village trees to add rooms to his house.

These two charges were quite serious. The people removed him from office and they removed him as Party Secretary. This was right. The people went further and wanted to expel him from the Communist Party, but this had to go to the Zonghua County Party Committee. In the winter of 66-67 I went to Zonghua County for a second visit and was told that they had not decided on his Party membership. All the time that his case was under consideration he worked as a rank-and-file member of the brigade, doing whatever labor was needed. Then during the Struggle-Criticism-Transformation Movement\* and during the Party Rectification Movement† they decided to keep him in the Communist Party. Recently I heard that the people decided he should also recover his position as Secretary of their Party branch.

Because he had cut village trees to build houses for his family—that is, he had misused public property for private gain—those four sections of housing had been turned over to the community for public use. I don't know whether this problem has been resolved or not.

\* After revolutionary committees took control of an organization or an institution in the Cultural Revolution, they led the people to criticize and transform everything that was not in accord with socialist values and procedures.

† After Party members were overthrown, they were examined by their peers and delegates of the people. A few were expelled, some resigned, while the vast majority were reinstated as active members of the Party once they had corrected their mistakes.

If you go to such a place you should stay for several days and try to understand the whole process. In the Cultural Revolution events like this were commonplace. Even in places where the land revolution and the socialist revolution had originally been well led and much work had been well done, the leadership still sometimes went wrong. From this we can see that at a certain point and under certain circumstances, if democratic centralism\* is not handled well, if the people do not adequately supervise their leaders, if there is no real mass line, special privileges can arise and a Communist Party Secretary may become a king or a despot. He may cheat the public out of self-interest. He may become a bureaucrat and at the very least become a capitalist-road "sprout." Thus the Cultural Revolution was entirely necessary, it had to be carried through. Furthermore, it can't be carried through only once. Perhaps our generation will see this only once, but these young people here [he indicated young Carma Hinton and Fred Engst] will probably see it again. And they will have the right to join in.

### Leaders Tested

In the period of capitalist encirclement, with China so large, such problems cannot be solved in one movement. Recently Albanian comrades recognized this. They said, "Albania is surrounded by capitalist states and is in danger of capitalist restoration." They recognize that class struggle continues throughout the socialist period. People who accept this idea are growing in number. In China several hundred million people understand this thesis. But time is needed. Education is needed, and practice.

*Hinton: People have to be tested in practice?*

Yes, everyone must be tested.

Take the case of Lu Yu-lan of the Ting Lou Ravine Brigade in South Hopei. At 15 she became secretary of the Brigade Youth Corps. At 18 she joined the Communist Party and became Party Secretary of her brigade. At 20 she was chosen

\* Democratic Centralism is the organizational method by which the Communist Party and organs of state are run. The people and lower organizational levels must elect, supervise, and follow higher levels, and higher levels must both consult and lead lower levels and the people.

as a labor hero. But in the Cultural Revolution there were Red Guard units who didn't believe in labor heroes and thought that for the most part they were fraudulent. With their schools closed temporarily, a lot of Red Guards went to her brigade to stir things up. They put up posters: "Down with Yu-lan."

At that time we let them move freely. They messed around to their hearts' content and it had its good side. It was good because it exposed people with bad motives. It exposed May 16th elements.\* Of course, at that time we didn't know that there was a May 16th counter-revolutionary conspiracy.

Hard-core May 16th elements were not numerous, but they did become leaders—bad elements became bad leaders. The young people didn't know whom they were following. So students from the city and local youths staged many repudiation meetings against Lu Yu-lan. She went through everything. But she stood firm and later the people chose her once again as their Party Secretary. She went to the Ninth Party Congress as a representative and was chosen to join the Central Committee. Now the Hopei Provincial Communist Party Congress has chosen her as Vice-Secretary. She is only 28 years old.

Another member of our Central Committee, alternate member Chi Teng-kuei, was Party Secretary of Honan Province. In the Cultural Revolution the rebels struggled against him more than 100 times. They beat him and made him do the "aeroplane" [bend over at the waist, bow his head, and raise his arms over his back in a gesture of submission]. But he withstood it. He was not a capitalist roader. He was a supporter of Mao Tsetung's revolutionary line. So at the Party Congress he was chosen as an alternate member of the Central Committee. He is one of the younger members. Younger still is Yao Wen-yuan who wrote the critical article on the play *Hai Jui Dismissed from Office*.

No, it would never do for a leading cadre *not* to go through such attacks and such tests.

Take Chiao Kuan-hua [later China's Foreign Minister].

\* The May 16th Group was a secret counter-revolutionary conspiracy linked at the top to Chen Po-ta and presumably Lin Piao. Those involved tried to wreck the Cultural Revolution from the "left" by the use of extreme slogans and sectarian policies.



Wasn't he seized by the June 16th Group\* and taken to the Foreign Language School as their captive? And Tang Mingchao [Chinese member of the UN Secretariat], wasn't he set aside? And Chang Wen-ching, former ambassador to Pakistan [now ambassador to Canada], wasn't he immersed in struggle as soon as he stepped down from the plane that brought him home? His wife, Chang Ying, of the Association of Playwrights, was also attacked by ultra-left forces. Only Huang Hua [the present Foreign Minister of China] returned home too late to be overthrown. He alone did not go through the wind and the waves. But he was tested abroad!

Our translator Chi Tsao-chu worked in the Foreign Ministry. He organized a revolutionary unit called "Climb the Dangerous Peak," after a phrase in Mao Tsetung's poem "Lushan Mountain." This group opposed the ultra-left. Other people rose up in turn and "Climb the Dangerous Peak" was itself dispersed.

*An American: Why did the ultra-left pay so much attention to foreign affairs? Was it to get at you?*

My overthrow was also demanded. The counter-revolutionary May 16th Group was set up to oppose Mao and wreck the Cultural Revolution. Mao Tsetung added a phrase to Yao Wen-yuan's thesis on Tao Chu.† "May 16th is a counter-revolutionary plotting clique." Those words are Mao's own.

But on the surface May 16th was to oppose me and several other Central Government leaders. I was their target number one. "Strike down target number one!" They wrote great quantities of material against me.

Truly, in the Cultural Revolution, it would never do for one to remain untested.

## In the Great Hall

*Hinton: How were you attacked?*

\* The June 16th Group was an open ultra-left faction of the First Foreign Language School's Rebel Regiment, not to be confused with May 16th, which was secret.

† Tao Chu was a Party leader from South China who rose to national prominence in the Cultural Revolution. He attempted to confuse the issues by calling for the overthrow of everyone except Mao Tsetung and Lin Piao and was exposed as an ally of Liu Shao-chi.

One of the few buildings the Red Guards never entered was the Great Hall of the People. Of course we often invited them to come in and take part in meetings here. What I mean is they never forced their way in.

On August 11, 1967, we held a meeting to repudiate Chen Yi [then Foreign Minister]. I was at the meeting. It is said that some people meant to seize me that day. I don't really believe that.

Song Yuan-li, head of the First Foreign Language School's Rebel Regiment, chaired the meeting. It has now been proven that he was a May 16th element. I sat to his right. To his left sat Vice-Premier Hsieh Fu-chih. Separated from me by one place was Liu Ling-kai, head of the June 16th Group. He had called for Chen's overthrow. I had agreed to be present at this meeting [thus lending it legitimacy] with the understanding that there would be only criticism of Chen Yi, not calls for his overthrow. Since Liu Ling-kai was publicly committed to overthrowing Chen he was not supposed to have an opportunity to speak or even to attend the meeting.

So when I saw Ling-kai there I asked Song who let him in and why he was on the platform.

"It's better to have him here on the platform," Song said. "That way he won't dare make any trouble."

But these students broke their word. No sooner had the meeting begun than a huge banner unrolled from the second balcony with the words "Overthrow Chen Yi." To challenge this act in front of that huge crowd would have put a damper on the whole proceedings, so I chose not to say anything.

Just then they informed me that Liu Ling-kai wanted to speak. I said to Song, "If you let him speak I'll have to leave the meeting." Hearing that, he promised that Liu would not speak. But he broke his word on this too. At a certain point I went out for a rest. Then Liu took the platform and spoke anyway.

Vice-Chairman Hsieh Fu-chih, who was still on the platform, got upset. He came to find me. With both of us out of the hall certain militants immediately jumped onto the stage to attack Chen Yi. But the members of our service staff all have a high level of political consciousness. As soon as the students jumped on the stage to beat Chen Yi, the service personnel closed ranks to protect him. The students cursed

but Chen's defenders said, "You can't take Chen Yi away. Mao Tsetung has called for his protection."

No one dared seize him.

*Hinton: Was Chen Yi's case ever settled?*

This year [1971] on May 1 when Chen Yi came to the top of Tien An Men the CIA and other American intelligence sources were greatly surprised. Chen Yi was sick. He came to Tien An Men straight from the hospital. He was a newly elected Central Committee member and Vice-Chairman of the Military Commission. Not only was the CIA not up to date, but Chiang Kai-shek's intelligence service was not up to date either. They had not been clicking so well. When Chiang Kai-shek learned that Chen Yi had been on the gate he cursed his intelligence service for their stupidity.

*Hinton: What happened to you that day in the Great Hall of the People?*

It is said that the Rebel Regiment militants wanted to seize me—but I didn't really believe it. If they didn't dare grab Chen Yi, how could they dare grab me? It could have been a lot of boasting and random talk. In such a public place at such a time they would not dare to show their hand. After dark, when nobody was around, that's the kind of time they chose for their evil schemes. In the Foreign Languages Press publishing house such bad incidents occurred. Several good comrades were murdered. All this was only discovered and exposed last year.

### Study History

In those days many of our good comrades were misled. They couldn't distinguish good from bad. Bad people used the most revolutionary slogans. Since they wanted to overthrow me they couldn't say that I followed Mao Tsetung's ideas. They had to say that I opposed Mao Tsetung. They edited my remarks and speeches at random and chose sentences and paragraphs that proved their point. For example, they seized on what I once said about Chiang Kai-shek when he was head of Whampoa Military Academy\*

\* The military training school set up by the Kuomintang and the Communists during their first united front to train officers for the Northern Expedition of 1924.

in 1924 and I was head of its Political Department. How could I avoid saying some good words about him in that situation? But they wanted me to have cursed him to his face! We had a united front with Chiang Kai-shek at that time.

Another example: During the Resistance War against Japan we were in Chungking editing our paper, the *New China Daily*. Chiao Kuan-hua wrote: "We support Chiang Kai-shek in carrying the Resistance War through to the end."

Take that one sentence today and it looks terrible to the young Red Guards. "How could it be right to support Chiang Kai-shek?" they ask.

From 1945 until now—26 short years. But our youth, because they don't understand history, can sometimes be fooled and misled. So we must use history, the history of the Communist Party, the history of two-line struggle, and struggle over policy to educate people. As Mao Tsetung says: "Historical experience merits attention. A line or a viewpoint must be explained repeatedly. We must talk about it each year, each month, each day. It won't do to explain these things to a few people only. They must be made known to the broad revolutionary masses."

## China and the U.S.: Toward War or Peace?

*A few days after China's National Day celebration on October 1, 1971, Chou En-lai met with 73 Americans then in Peking. Some of them were long-term residents of the city, some were old friends of China returning for their first visit in years, and some were young people who had never been to China before. The important international development at the time was, of course, the impending Nixon visit. Many foreign friends of China had been shocked by the news that the American President was coming in the spring. They had expressed their doubts and reservations to the Premier in no uncertain terms. After briefly reviewing some earlier phases of U.S.-China relations and describing how the Nixon request to visit had been accepted on Mao Tsetung's prompting, Chou En-lai took up the question that was upsetting many people of good will in America and all over the world.*

Isn't American imperialism the arch enemy of the people of the world? Why then let Nixon come?

Holding talks is struggle. Not holding talks is also struggle. We talked with Chiang Kai-shek, the arch enemy of the Chinese people. We negotiated with Chiang for ten years, from the time of the Sian incident\* in 1936 through the continuation of the Chungking negotiations† in 1946—ten

\* In 1936 Chiang Kai-shek was seized and held captive by his own commanders in the northwest—Chang Hsueh-liang and Yang Hu-cheng, who wanted to fight Japan instead of the Communist forces facing them on the Yenan front. In negotiations joined by the Communists, Chiang agreed to lead a united front against Japan and was released.

† In 1945, after the Japanese surrendered, Mao Tsetung flew to Chungking, the Kuomintang capital, to try and work out a peaceful post-war settlement of China's internal conflict. The negotiations were not successful, but a fitful truce was later arranged that maintained some semblance of peace until March 1947, when Chiang Kai-shek launched an all-out offensive.

long years. And most important—Mao Tsetung went to Chungking in 1945 because the Chinese people wanted peace. In response to popular demand Mao Tsetung went to Chungking himself. He went even though the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army didn't agree to the trip. We had to persuade them that it was necessary.

A number of agreements were reached. For a whole year [1946-1947] we made various efforts to apply these agreements. Thus by the spring of 1947 we had withdrawn troops and cadres from many areas.\* It was Chiang Kai-shek who suspended the talks, not us. He had already launched war. The final disruption of negotiations coincided with Chiang Kai-shek's attack on Yen-an.

[After the fall of Yen-an in March 1947, Communist-led troops, after some initial retreats, launched a counter-offensive. In two years of fighting they liberated most of China north of the Yangtze River and east of Sichuan. Having lost most of his best troops north of the river, Chiang Kai-shek was in no position to stem a Communist advance into South China. He retired temporarily from the presidency of the Republic of China in favor of General Li Tsung-jen, a famous Guangxi warlord with whom Chiang had both collaborated and contended over the years.]

Two years later talks began again. In 1949 Li Tsung-jen started negotiations with us. There was pressure for agreement on both sides, but Chiang Kai-shek wouldn't let Li make any agreement. The policy of the United States at that time was to divide China into two. But who can stop an army from crossing a river? Even in ancient times armies crossed rivers. Mao Tsetung issued an order. On April 20, 1949, one million People's Liberation Army soldiers crossed the Yangtze.

These events show that negotiations are necessary sometimes. Our policy is to continue to struggle and to negotiate at the same time.

In Korea talks began one year after the war broke out [1951]. The fighting continued and we talked. The talks

\* In the interest of peaceful settlement Mao Tsetung offered and later unilaterally carried out withdrawals from eight Liberated Areas in Central and South China, including Guangdong, Zhejiang, southern Jiangsu, southern Anhui, central Anhui, Hunan, Hubei, and Henan (not including northern Henan).

moved to Panmunjon. In 1953 there was an armistice but no peace treaty and the negotiations continue to this day. These negotiations have been going on for 20 years!

### China's Northern Frontier

On the other side of our northern frontier there are one million troops—Soviet army, air force, and navy units armed with missiles—and the Soviet Union has stationed 100,000 troops in Mongolia. These troops have been sent to oppose China, to create tension along the border. In this situation our policy has been to negotiate the boundary question, in order to bring about a relaxation of tension and to create a neighborly situation vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. Even though Soviet troops were massed on our borders we still received Kosygin two years ago in Peking.

We said then, "In order to relax tensions both countries should agree to boundary negotiations free from threat."

Kosygin agreed to this.

We proposed that the status quo on the border be maintained and that the armed forces of both sides should disengage to prevent clashes. Under such conditions the negotiations could proceed.

What is our position on the northern boundary? One can learn this from the document issued by the Foreign Ministry in October 1969. We pointed out then that the Sino-Russian treaties of the past were unequal. They were imposed by the Tsars. The Russian people did not hold power in the nineteenth century so they were not responsible. After the October Revolution Lenin announced the annulment of all the unequal treaties. But warlords held power in China at the time and no agreement was reached. So this question dragged on to this day.

We say that the basis for a settlement is the old Sino-Russian treaties—there is no other basis. But when we look at the status-quo and compare it with the treaty maps we find discrepancies, and these give rise to disputes. There are areas where the present alignment differs from the agreements made in the treaties. So we propose talks based on the old treaties and on the status quo—where Soviet people reside and where Chinese people reside—and hope to make adjustments in a friendly way. With this spirit we

would like to make a new agreement and draw up a new treaty. Our position "in a nutshell" [said in English with a delighted laugh] is: take the old treaties as a basis and make some adjustments in the spirit of mutual compromise.

So where is the territorial demand? [The Soviet Union has accused China of making unreasonable territorial demands and these accusations were widely echoed in the world press.]

We are taking the old treaties as the basis for talks. Proceeding from such a principle we have solved all but the Soviet and the Indian border problems. Now a new Soviet-Indian treaty has been signed.\* It is clear at whom this treaty is directed. They say there is no target. We hope so, but our hopes are clearly in vain. Yet we still propose talks and wish to arrive at an understanding on the basis of the old treaties.

On October 20, 1969, Sino-Soviet talks began. They have been going on for two years already and this is not a long time to negotiate when it is compared with some other negotiations.

The Soviet Union will condemn me [for Nixon's visit]. "You are talking to Americans." Why not? The Soviet Union has talked to Americans many times. For us this will be the first formal talk with Americans.

### Three Examples

I have cited three examples [three precedents]: 1) ten years of negotiations with Chiang Kai-shek, an interlude of fighting, and then renewed talks; 2) negotiations while fighting in Korea and then, after an armistice, 20 years of talks; 3) two years of talks with the Soviet Union in spite of one million troops on our borders, troops in Mongolia, and constant threatening maneuvers.

What do these examples mean for Sino-U.S. relations? There is no war in Taiwan Strait. We have been talking for 16 years already [counting from the start of the ambassadorial

\* In August 1971, the two countries signed a treaty of "peace, friendship, and cooperation." Article 9 of the treaty essentially pledges each of the signers to aid the other if it is involved in a war. In December 1971, after having received large shipments of Soviet war materiel as a result of the treaty, India intervened in the civil strife in Pakistan, broke apart China's main ally in the region, and contributed to the intensified encirclement of China by hostile forces.



talks in Geneva, Switzerland, on August 1, 1955, that were continued in Warsaw, Poland]. Now we wish to raise the level of the negotiations. Nixon himself is coming. Why isn't that permissible? From our point of view there is no reason not to proceed. Even when Sino-U.S. talks reach the level of heads of state we will never bargain away principles, sell out our friends, or sell out the people of the world. We will not deceive you in this matter. If our friends do not understand this it is because they don't know our history and they don't understand Mao Tsetung's policy.

As to the specific details of the coming talks, I cannot discuss them. On this question I have gone far enough.

[Having made clear that negotiations are an aspect of struggle, Chou En-lai went on to demonstrate that China was prepared to defend itself and was thus in a position to negotiate as an equal with the United States, the Soviet Union, or any other country.]

Chiang Kai-shek launched war while talking. During the Korean War we fought the United States and talked at the same time. The People's Republic of China has grown up amid war and negotiations. Nixon says that this is an era of negotiations. We add that armed struggle also continues. We do not like these armed struggles any more than anyone else. We will not provoke such struggles. After all, our soldiers have not been seen on Long Island, nor have we landed troops in Honolulu.

We are for negotiations even though the U.S. Navy plies the Taiwan Strait. But if we did not at the same time prepare for war we would not be wise. While talking with Chiang Kai-shek we prepared to fight. While giving aid to Vietnam we must be prepared for the war to come to China. Now, as always, we must be prepared.

In 1965 I told Ayub Kahn [then President of Pakistan] that (1) we will never create provocations abroad; (2) should anyone impose war on us we will fight until final victory; (3) what we say here in China we mean—we are serious; (4) if war should break out there will be no limitations.

### Prepare for All Eventualities

On behalf of the Chinese people I said this year, "If the

Indo-China War expands to China our people are prepared for the maximum sacrifice."

The possibility exists. If war is launched against us without any provocation on our part, should we not be prepared?

How are we prepared? To what extent?

Our friends may think our preparations exceed the events that are possible. But suppose, just suppose, that the Soviet Union drives to the Yellow River and that the U.S. troops drive to the Yangtze; that Japanese militarists occupy the coast from Tsingtao to Shanghai, while the Indians do their part in Tibet. What would we do then? We are ready to undertake a fight until final victory. To prepare for any eventuality we are now digging underground tunnels. If you haven't seen them already you may go and see them. This evening is still available to you.

Think! Can we launch an attack with tunnels?

All cities have mobilized their people to dig such tunnels. Rural people can disperse. We are preparing for those who would invade. It is on this basis that we negotiate and welcome those who come to talk. Sino-Soviet talks are proceeding in Peking. The United States wants talks in Peking. OK. We welcome them. It is simple. When one dares to fight, one can talk. If one wants peace talks, one must be prepared for war.

Isn't this a "position of strength?" No, we have no thought of attacking others. We have no ambitions, no navy on the open sea, not in the Sea of Japan, the Pacific, the Atlantic, the Indian Ocean, the Arctic, or the Antarctic. No, we carry out only defensive measures, but we are well prepared.

You may ask if China and the United States can have diplomatic relations. This all depends on the solution to the Taiwan question.

We cannot accept two Chinas.

We cannot accept two governments.

No "one China and one Taiwan."

No "independent Taiwan."

No "self-determination for Taiwan."

In the Sino-Japanese Communique we said, "The U.S.-Chiang Treaty [December 1954] was concluded after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. It is void."

Conditions for diplomatic relations with the United States are the same as for Japan. [To follow this approach the United States would have to terminate the defense treaty with Taiwan, withdraw all U.S. troops from Taiwan, and sever diplomatic relations with the Chiang regime.]

We are not in a hurry. We have waited 22 years. Japan recognized Chiang Kai-shek but is still legally at war with China after 22 years. For 22 years the U.S. government has surrounded us with hostile encirclement. But haven't we lived well during this time? We have made no provocative moves. Ask John Service [former U.S. Foreign Service Officer in China]. Do my words have a provocative tone?

*John Service: Your words are very persuasive. I am convinced.*

Our attitude hasn't changed in 22 years.

*John Service: Right.*

Each year more U.S. friends visit us. Up to now the biggest number of visitors has come from Japan, but in the seventies visitors from the United States should catch up. In the future we will meet again, if Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin don't greet me first.

### China's UN Seat

[Between the first week in October when Chou En-lai met with the 73 Americans and November 14 when I and several other family members met with him again, the People's Republic of China was seated in the United Nations, replacing the Taiwan regime of Chiang Kai-shek. As dawn broke over Peking, Premier Chou spoke of this historic turnabout in the UN.]

The United Nations vote showed that we do not sell out our principles. The American proposal was to set up "two Chinas" or "one China and two governments." In our August 20th statement we firmly opposed this. [Meanwhile the old alignments in the UN began to shift.] If the President of the United States wants to go to China, why shouldn't other countries have some relations also? Many Asian, African, and European countries began reconsidering. After Canada established relations many other countries followed suit. When it came to a UN vote on the American resolution [to make the issue of China's representation an important question re-

quiring a two-thirds majority to carry] only 55 were in favor while 59 opposed. Ten of the 59 were countries which had not yet set up diplomatic relations with China. This had never happened before. Why? The United States thought that since these countries didn't have relations with China it was not necessary to put a lot of pressure on them. Also they had all sent telegrams [to the United States] saying that they would consult back on the issue, so the United States was at ease.

But at the same time there were eight countries that had diplomatic relations with us that abstained from voting on the U.S. resolution. Why did they refuse to support China even though they had diplomatic relations with us? It was because the United States put great pressure on them--countries like Italy, Turkey, and Iran. Altogether there were 15 countries that abstained. But abstaining was also good because that decreased the total number of affirmative votes.

The outcome had not been dreamed of by the United States or by China. To tell the truth we did not expect this. Everything started at once. The U.S. resolution failed. The whole UN boiled up. The delegates from Asia, Africa, and Latin America especially were happy. Above all the Africans. [Joanne [Joanne Hinton, a Black American], your African brothers were most enthusiastic. There were no drums in the hall but they danced anyway. The whole place was full of joy. Seeing this on television, Nixon was very unhappy. [Nixon publicly criticized the proceedings.]

Once the shift started there was no stopping it. With the vote on the Albanian resolution [a proposal to seat the People's Republic of China and expel the Chiang Kai-shek regime sponsored by Albania, Algeria, and 20 other countries) the whole situation changed. This won, 76 to 35. It was an overwhelming majority--over two-thirds. The 59 who opposed the original U.S. resolution never changed, while 17 new votes were added, making a total of 76. Twelve of these came from those who had previously abstained. Five switched their vote. Among them were Israel and Portugal. We hadn't paid much attention to these countries but they came out and voted for us. This is what we call the "main trend." You can't resist the "main trend."

Grandmother Hinton, when you left the United States did you expect China to be admitted to the UN so soon?

*Mrs. Hinton: We were hoping China would come in.*

Now that hope is realized. And it is due to the support of the medium-sized and small countries. With the support of all these Third World countries we couldn't refuse to take our seat at this session. We got together a delegation in a rush and went there. Some friends advised us not to go this year. This was such a new problem. But all the medium-sized and small countries voted for us. They were waiting for us to come. If we hadn't gone it would have been a big disappointment to them. Of course, when we go what we give is moral support. Our actual contribution can't help but be small. But we state again that we will absolutely not be a superpower. We are going to stand and speak on the side of the Third World.\*

### The Case of Lin Piao

[Earlier on that same morning, November 14, 1971, I asked Chou En-lai for clarification on the question of Lin Piao. Two months earlier Lin Piao, Vice-Chairman of the Communist Party and Minister of Defense, had fled toward the Soviet Union in a jet plane with his wife and son and had crashed in Mongolia. Rumors were already circulating in the world press about his flight and his death, but there had been no official comment from China. Internally the whole episode had been reported to the people through unit meetings that reached all the way down to the primary schools, but a decision had apparently been made at the highest level that nothing should be revealed to the world for the time being.

[That morning Chou En-lai, somewhat taken aback by the bluntness of my question, answered calmly but indirectly. He discussed the essence of the case by analogy, comparing it on

\* The Third World countries, which include China, are the colonial, former colonial, and semi-colonial countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America that are now struggling to stand up. Chinese leaders also see a First World composed of the two contending and collaborating superpowers, the United States and Soviet Union; and a Second World composed of the lesser industrialized states such as England, France, Canada, and Japan.

the one hand to the case of Wang Ming\* who lost all support in China in spite of political backing in the Soviet Union, and on the other hand to that of Chang Kuo-tao,† who commanded a large Red Army in 1936 but lost most of it on a trek through the wilderness in a vain effort to find safety near the Soviet border. In the end Chang defected to Chiang Kai-shek.

[By making clear that both these men broke with Mao Tsetung over political line, Chou established the fact that Lin Piao, who held more political and military power than either of them, came into conflict with Mao Tsetung not simply over personal power, but over the future course of the Chinese Revolution.

[It has since been revealed that Lin Piao took the position that the Cultural Revolution had completed the transformation of China; henceforth the main problem was to develop production. Such a position, by freezing existing inequalities, would lead inevitably to capitalist restoration. And, in accord with this logic, Lin Piao began to quote China's most famous restorationist, Confucius. Mao took the position that the transformation of China had just begun. The main problem was still the conflict between the working class and a capitalist class that was constantly recreated by the still unchanged social relations, such as commodity production and the use of money in buying and selling. He was for continuing revolution.

\* The leader of the student "bolsheviks," Wang Ming, returned to China in 1927 after studying at Sun Yat-sen University in Moscow. Wang Ming led in overthrowing Li Li-san as Party Secretary in 1930 and served in that post himself from 1930 to 1932, when he returned to Moscow to represent the Chinese Party there. He advocated an adventurist "decisive battle, liberate big cities, general strike" line in the thirties but on his return to China during the Anti-Japanese War favored a policy of capitulation to Chiang Kai-shek. Wang Ming died in the Soviet Union only a year or two ago.

† Another returned student from Moscow, Chang Kuo-tao, became chairman of the Oyuwan (Hubei, Anhui, Henan) Soviet, an area the size of Ireland with a Fourth Front Red Army that eventually numbered 100,000 men. Forced into strategic retreat in 1934, Chang Kuo-tao's forces joined the Long March in Sichuan Province, where Chang tried to persuade the whole Red Army to head for the Soviet border in Xinjiang. He struck out in that direction with part of his own troops, only to lose them through hardship and battle in the semi-desert area west of the Yellow River. Chang Kuo-tao broke with Mao, left the Liberated Area, and finally left China for Hongkong and then Canada.

[Here are the main points made by Chou En-lai in response to my question.]

This question has been raised very suddenly. I'll have to discuss it a little. What I have agreed to do is explain the problem of political line clearly.

Line is the lifeblood of our Party. Fifty years of experience prove that as long as we persist in struggle for the correct line we will win. If our line is correct, even if we have only a few Party members our Party will grow, as when our Communist Party was organized in 1921. We had only a few people then, no army, nothing. But as long as our political line is correct we can recruit Party members, we can build an army and we can win victory. But if our political line is not correct the Communist Party will collapse. Under the line set by Wang Ming all the Party organizations in the enemy areas collapsed.

And no matter how big an army you have, if your line is wrong, that army will be lost. Before the Long March we had 300,000 troops but when we got to North Shensi there were only 30,000 left. [Only months after the Long March began was Mao Tsetung elected Party Chairman at the Tsunyi Conference. He turned a near debacle into a victorious advance into the northwest for a future confrontation with Japan, but large segments of the old Red Army had already been lost due to Wang Ming's line, which made the retreat from Central and South China necessary to start with and almost turned this retreat into a rout.] In addition to the Wang Ming line there was the Chang Kuo-tao line\* that split what remained of the Red Army. At that time Chang Kuo-tao commanded over 100,000 men, the biggest single force under our leadership. But he split this army and led part of it off to the west of the Yellow River. He failed and the army was lost. If your political line is wrong, even if you are the head of an army, you yourself will collapse.

### The Example of Peng Te-huai

Take the case of Peng Te-huai [former Defense Minister who was replaced in 1959 by Lin Piao]. Wasn't Peng Te-huai a hero of the Korean War? Actually all the basic decisions were made by Chairman Mao. That's how we won our victory. There were times when Peng Te-huai didn't carry out

Mao's directives. Then he made mistakes. But because, in the main, he carried out Mao's orders we supported him. When he came back from Korea he became Minister of National Defense. Then he began to oppose Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, the general line for socialist construction. He made serious line mistakes. People no longer followed him. In 1959 he became a rightist. No one in the army followed him. But we still went according to the principle of Mao Tsetung, a part of our Party-building policy - cure the disease and save the patient. One should criticize one's past mistakes and make corrections. If Peng had done that he could still have done responsible work for the Party.

We don't try to conceal the struggle in our country. But as for when to make known the facts about this or that person, that has to be decided by the interests of the whole Party and the whole people. You can trust our Party under Mao Tsetung's leadership. The correct line has always been the main current. There are mistakes and failures but these are side currents. Our Party won't split.

As long as we explain everything to the masses of the people the great majority of them will stand with the revolutionary line. The people understand that we want Marxism and not revisionism, that we want unity and not a split.

The biggest splitter in our history was Chang Kuo-tao, who once led 100,000 men but in the end found himself alone. When he departed from the Border Region [Chang left in 1937, isolated after a long dispute with Mao Tsetung] not even his bodyguard would follow him. The whole army accepted Chairman Mao's leadership and Chang Kuo-tao left by himself. Later we sent his wife and children to join him. If you are interested in his story you can go to Canada and ask him. He used to live in Hongkong receiving American money for his autobiography. But he was only in the Communist Party for 17 years. There are 50 years of Party history. Once the United States bought his memoirs his usefulness to them was over. His role as a reference file has long since lost its value.



## Schemers Can Never Win

The other case in point is Wang Ming. After Liberation he left Peking and went to Moscow. Wang Ming came to the Communist Party somewhat late [1925]. He was a member for 20 years but spent much of that time in Moscow. Now his only role is to sell out his country. Even the revisionists are embarrassed to spread his wares, so much so that he is often forced to write under another name.

So we have the two of them—Chang Kuo-tao and Wang Ming.

One had foreign support.

The other had an army of 100,000 men.

Both took a wrong line and lost everything.

I hope our American friends will believe us. In this field of line struggle we have rich experience. We will always adhere to the correct line. We will always adhere to Marxism and will march from victory to victory. Whoever violates this line, whoever departs from this line, will fail.

The special character of our Party's 50-year struggle is this: the wrong line always fails. Lines that split the Party have always failed. In the end we have always united. The desire of the Chinese people for liberation, oppressed by imperialism as they were for 100 years, is reflected inside the Party. Our people need a Party to lead, and a leader. Even though our struggle is by no means ended, we can see that the victories grow greater day by day and that we will continue to win. Our line is out in the open, clear and open. Schemers can never win.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

William Hinton is former Chairman of the USCPFPA, and author of *Fanshen*, *100 Days War*, and many other books about China. His many visits to China included a six-year stay in 1947-1953.

Debbie Davison is a member of the USCPFPA National Publications Committee and a graduate student at the University of California at Berkeley. She visited China in 1973 with the USCPFPA.

Mark Selden is a member of the USCPFPA National Publications Committee and Professor of Modern Chinese History at Washington University. He is the author of *Yenan Way* and *Remaking Asia: Essays on the American Uses of Power*. He was a member of the second CCAS delegation to China in 1972.

# from Conversations with Americans

*Interviews by William Hinton*

---

*on US-China relations:*

"You may ask if China and the United States can have diplomatic relations. This all depends on the solution to the Taiwan question. We cannot accept two Chinas, we cannot accept two governments, no 'one China and one Taiwan,' no 'independent Taiwan,' no 'self-determination for Taiwan.'"

*on social classes:*

"My basic point is this: in China's socialist society there are still classes. Classes still exist. On this point there are those who disagree, but once you point out the objective facts, how can they refute you?"

*on leaders:*

"The first question one must ask of a leader is: do you deserve respect or not? The second question is: are you recognized by the masses as a leader or has your image been artificially created?"

*on struggle:*

"Why then let Nixon come? Holding talks is struggle. Not holding talks is also struggle. . . ."

---

Published by

the US-China Peoples Friendship Association

ISBN 77-802-63