

China Policy Study Group

BROADSHEET

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THE SALVOES OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

In the early hours of the morning, on 7th November 1917 (old style), Russian workers and soldiers stormed the Winter Palace in Petrograd, having already seized other key positions. That same day Lenin proclaimed:

The Provisional Government has been overthrown. The power of state has passed into the hands of the organ of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies... The cause for which the people have fought, namely the immediate proposal of a democratic peace, the abolition of landed proprietorship, workers' control over production and the creation of a Soviet government—the success of that cause is guaranteed. Long live the revolution of the soldiers, workers and peasants!

This triumphant proclamation echoed round the world, never to be forgotten. By their forcible seizure of power the workers of Russia had become the founders of the world's first socialist state. They had opened a new era in history and set before the world's proletariat a new perspective.

The October Revolution was the watershed that separated

the period of heroic but frustrated uprisings—countless peasant revolts, the storming of the Bastille, the Paris Commune—from the period of the successful, planned construction of socialism. After 1917 nothing was the same again, although the building of socialism was to suffer reverses even in its birthplace.

In capitalist countries workers welcomed the Revolution with joy and hope. In spite of all the slanders of the ruling class they realised that in Russia their brothers were in power and they enthusiastically supported them. Moreover, as Mao said, 'the salvotes of the October Revolution brought Marxism-Leninism to China'.

In 1921 the Chinese Communist Party was formed and began the 38-year struggle that was to lead, after how many setbacks, to the founding of the People's Republic of China. Since then, for another 28 years, Chinese revolutionaries have kept alive and strengthened the inspiration of 1917, in spite of the Soviet betrayal, demonstrating that the 'wretched of the earth' hold the future in their hands.

VOLUME V IS HERE !

Selected Works of Mao Tsetung, Vol V (English edition), Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1977. Papercover £2, cloth £3. Now available in U.K.

This new volume includes writings and speeches dated between 21 September 1949 and 18 November 1957, throughout which period Mao Tse-tung was leader of the newly established People's Republic, as well as of the Chinese Communist Party. But for the victory over the 'Gang of Four' it might never have appeared. In his article of 1 May 1977 about it, *Continue the Revolution under the Dictatorship of the Proletariat to the End*, Chairman Hua Kuo-feng states:

Chairman Mao... never allowed his *Selected Works* to be compiled until his writings had been tested in practice.

But he goes on to say that Mao had delegated Chou En-lai and Kang Sheng to take charge of the compilation of this volume as early as 1969, and that publication was held up first by Lin Piao and later by the Four.

A marked characteristic of Volume V, even more than of its predecessors, is its homely (and occasionally earthy) language, which suggests that it has been more lightly edited than they were. The English translation goes far to achieving the almost impossible task of conveying the incomparable flavour of the original; minor inaccuracies and stylistic blemishes will doubtless be removed in future editions.

But in this volume, for the first time, we are able to see the development—sometimes gradual, sometimes swift—of basic concepts and policies, as Mao's thinking advanced with events. Like earlier volumes, this one is still only a selection

of his writings during the period covered, and we do not know what is yet to come in the promised *Collected Works*. Enemies or critics of Chairman Hua Kuo-feng and his colleagues will argue that they have chosen only what suits them, but the internal evidence does not support such a suggestion. On the contrary, the frankness of the various writings, and the fact that they are far from forming a smooth and easily assimilable whole, is evidence of Chairman Hua's trust in the political maturity of the Chinese people, for whom this volume is a major object of study.

Although these articles and speeches were written between twenty and twenty-eight years ago, many of the problems they deal with still persist today. It is not easy for even the most revolutionary among 800 million people brought up in a basically feudal society to develop socialist ways of thinking and behaviour in a few years, especially when institutions have not yet been socialised. In the writings dating from 1956 and 1957 there are many references to the problems of grading:

One kind of problem arises among our own ranks. For example, some cadres now scramble for fame and fortune and are interested only in personal gain. In the discussion

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of the grading of the cadres, there were instances where a cadre would not be satisfied with a rise of one grade, even a rise of two grades still left him weeping in bed, and perhaps only a three-grade promotion could get him out of bed. The fuss they kicked up has settled this question. This business of grading cadres, have done with it! Let wages be roughly evened out, with slight differences here and there (*Talks at a Conference of Provincial, Municipal and Autonomous Region Party Committees*, Jan 57).

After all, we are a revolutionary Party, so we make it a principle not to allow anyone to starve to death. As long as one isn't starving to death, one should do revolutionary work and exert oneself... A Communist is supposed to work hard and to serve the people with his whole heart, not with half or two-thirds. Those whose revolutionary will has been waning should have their spirits revived through rectification. (*Persevere in Plain Living and Hard Struggle, Maintain Close Ties with the Masses*, Mar. 57).

Volume V covers the transitional period in which agriculture, handicrafts and capitalist industry and commerce were being socialised, at the same time as systematic industrialisation was proceeding. Innumerable interrelated problems arose—economic, political and social. The different factors had to be kept in balance, and the positive aspects of the relationships between them encouraged. The last piece but one (*A Dialectical Approach to Inner-Party Unity*) is part of a speech at the Moscow meeting of the 12 Communist and Workers' Parties in Power, November 1957:

Some seem to think that, once in the Communist Party, people all become saints with no differences or misunderstandings, and that the Party is not subject to analysis, that is to say, it is monolithic and uniform, hence there is no need for talks. It seems as if people have to be 100 per cent Marxists once they are in the Party. Actually there are Marxists of all degrees, those who are 100 per cent, 90, 80, 60 or 50 per cent Marxist, and some who are only 10 or 20 per cent Marxist...

We have two hands to deal with a comrade who has made mistakes, one hand to struggle with him and the other to unite with him. The aim of struggle is to uphold the principles of Marxism, which means being principled; that is one hand. The other hand is to unite with him. The aim of unity is to provide him with a way out, to compromise with him, which means being flexible. The integration of principle with flexibility is a Marxist-Leninist principle, and it is a unity of opposites.

Any kind of world, and of course class society in particular, teems with contradictions... The point is not that there are contradictions to be found, but that it teems with contradictions... I say dialectics should move from the small circle of philosophers to the broad masses of the people...

Very often acute questions of priorities arose. In a speech *Don't Hit Out in All Directions* delivered in June 1950 (just before the start of the Korean War) Mao said:

At present our relations with the national bourgeoisie are very strained; they are on tenterhooks and are very disgruntled. Unemployed intellectuals and workers are dissatisfied with us and so are a number of small handicraftsmen. The peasants in most rural areas are complaining too because agrarian reform has not yet been carried out there and besides they have to deliver grain to the state.

In the course of a brilliant summing up three years later, in September 1953, entitled *Our Great Victory in the War to Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea and Our Future Tasks*, he said:

War costs money. Yet the war to resist U.S. aggression and aid Korea did not cost us too much. It went on for several years, but the expenses incurred were less than a single year's industrial and commercial taxes. Of course, it would have been better if we had not had to fight the war and spend this money. For construction in the country today calls for money and the peasants still have difficulties. Last year and the year before last, the agricultural tax was a shade on the heavy side, and so this set some friends talking. They demanded a 'policy of benevolence', as if they repres-

ented the interests of the peasants. Did we favour this view? No, we didn't. At that time we had to do our utmost to win victory in the war... For the peasants, for the people of the whole country, which was in their interest? To endure austerity for the time being and strive for victory? Or not to resist U.S. aggression and aid Korea and to save a few coppers? Undoubtedly winning the war was in their interest. By this time the general line had been formulated. As Mao defined it in *Refute Right Deviationist Views that Depart from the General Line*, in June 1953:

The general line or the general task of the Party is basically to accomplish the industrialisation of the country and the socialist transformation of agriculture, handicrafts and capitalist industry and commerce in ten to fifteen years, or a little longer...

In the event, of course, the period was very much shortened. Two months later, in *Combat Bourgeois Ideas in the Party*, he quotes the resolution of the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee (March 1949) as saying 'We must wholeheartedly rely on the working class', and goes on:

The resolution also says that in the rehabilitation and development of production the following must be the rule: the production of state industry comes first, that of private industry second and handicraft production third. The emphasis is on industry, and first of all heavy industry, which is owned by the state. Of the five sectors of our present-day economy, the state-owned economy is the leading sector. Capitalist industry and commerce must be gradually guided towards state capitalism...

As for the cooperative transformation of individual farming and handicrafts, the resolution of the Second Plenary Session puts it clearly:

Such cooperatives are collective economic organisations of the working people, based on private ownership and under the direction of the state power led by the proletariat. The fact that the Chinese people are culturally backward and have no tradition in organising cooperatives makes it quite difficult for us to promote and develop the cooperative movement, but cooperatives can and must be organised and they must be promoted and developed. If we had only a state-owned economy and no cooperative economy, it would be impossible for us to lead the individual economy of the working people step by step towards collectivisation, impossible to develop from the new-democratic state to the socialist state of the future and impossible to consolidate the leadership of the proletariat in the state power.

A month earlier, in *On State Capitalism*, he had given a succinct and thought-provoking description of one section of the economy in 1953:

The present-day capitalist economy in China is a capitalist economy which for the most part is under the control of the People's Government and which is linked with the state-owned socialist economy in various forms and supervised by the workers. It is not an ordinary but a particular kind of capitalist economy, namely a state-capitalist economy of a new type. It exists not chiefly to make profits for the capitalists but to meet the needs of the people and the state. True, a share of the profits produced by the workers goes to the capitalists, but that is only a small part, about one quarter of the total. The remaining three quarters are produced for the workers (in the form of the welfare fund), for the state (in the form of income tax) and for expanding productive capacity (a small part of which produces profits for the capitalists). Therefore, this state-capitalist economy of a new type takes on a socialist character to a very great extent and benefits the workers and the state.

This is a book that is impossible to summarise or 'review'. One can only say 'Read it—read it again and again'. There are lessons to be drawn from it for the present day, not only in China but everywhere in the world.

One of the main effects on the reader of the documents in this volume, particularly those concerned with the socialist transformation of agriculture, is to emphasize the complexities of the process, and the difficulties and opposition faced at every stage by Mao and those who supported him. It is reason-

able to suppose that one of the main aims of the editors is to make clear to any among the Chinese people who may still have any illusions on the subject that building socialism is a long hard struggle. If so, this is additional confirmation of Chairman Hua's faith in the masses, and his belief in their increased political maturity, in striking contrast to the attitude of the 'gang of four' who fed the people with a diet of high-sounding 'advanced' political ideas with little or no foundation in reality. Incidentally, the section of Mao's speech of 31 March 1955 at the Party National Conference which deals with the Kao-Jao anti-Party alliance may help some readers to an understanding of the complexities of the case of the Four, twenty years later.

Many other themes constantly recur, and are developed

CHINA AS REVOLUTIONARY BASE

The Political Report delivered by Hua Kuo-feng at the C.P.C.'s 11th Congress calls for close study. In it the Central Committee not only announces the conclusion of China's first Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution but also formulates the tasks for the coming period. It also includes many of Mao Tse-tung's hitherto unpublished remarks and criticisms.

The Report reviews Mao's contributions to the Chinese revolution and the world revolutionary movement. He led the Party and the people through the great battles—ideological and military—that preceded liberation, then guided the country in its crucial early period of socialist construction. It adds:

In the contemporary international communist movement... Chairman Mao... launched the great struggle against modern revisionism with the Soviet clique as its centre. He thus gave an impetus to the vigorous development of the revolutionary cause of the world proletariat and the cause of the people of all countries in the struggle against imperialism and hegemonism...

In the period of socialism, Chairman Mao's greatest contribution to Marxism was his systematic theory of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Today the struggle against revisionism is mounting, as is that against imperialism and hegemonism—which may even be in its crucial stage. Future revolutions will be immeasurably indebted to the Chinese experience.

The Report deals in detail with the line and policies by which the Gang of Four intended to take power at the end of Mao's life. This account and Mao's comments are of outstanding interest. Chief among the Four's offences was their complete and active negation of the three basic principles set out by Mao in an earlier struggle—*practice Marxism and not revisionism; unite and don't split; be open and aboveboard and don't intrigue and conspire*. There was damage and disruption in every field of the superstructure, but:

Whoever antagonizes the people is bound to be overthrown by the people. If the superstructure protects the old relations of production and undermines the new and if it hinders the growth of the productive forces, the people will rise and pull it down. This is an objective law borne out by the entire history of mankind...

And by the history of the Gang of Four.

The smashing of the Gang of Four, the Report says, saved the Party—

from a major split, our country from a major bloodletting premediated by the gang, our people from a major calamity and our revolution from a major reversal. It has further strengthened and consolidated China as a revolutionary base area for the world.

Dealing with the world situation, the Report asserts The international situation today is very good, it is very good, not just good or fairly good. In the last few years, the revolutionary struggle of the international proletariat,

throughout the period covered by the volume, particularly that of winning the support of the great majority of the people, while isolating the minority of diehard counter-revolutionaries, and of giving those who have erred a chance to reform.

Tailpiece

Now the Communist Parties in a number of countries, the British Communist Party for example, only advance the slogan of peaceful transition. We talked this over with the leader of the British Party but couldn't get anywhere. Naturally they may well feel proud, for as their leader queried, 'How can Khrushchov claim to have introduced peaceful transition? I advanced it long before he did'!

(*Be Activists in Promoting the Revolution*, October 1957).

the liberation struggles of the oppressed people and nations and the revolutionary mass movements in many countries have been forging ahead...The international united front against aggression, interference, subversion, control and bullying by the superpowers is broadening.

The Report points out that eight years after the start of the Cultural Revolution Mao Tse-tung called for the establishment of stability and unity. The overthrow of the Gang of Four three years later meant that this could at last be achieved.

Stability and unity do not mean writing off class struggle. The victorious conclusion of the first Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution has ushered in a new period of development in our country's socialist revolution and socialist construction.

CHINA'S VOICE AT U.N.

China's view of the international situation and her role in it are comprehensively dealt with in a speech made by her Foreign Minister Huang Hua at the plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly in September. Friendly critics—and critical friends—do not always study the documents available to them—which is a pity for, as in this case, they are often extremely interesting both in content and analytical method. Excerpts from Huang Hua's comment on Africa illustrate this.

He remarks that the superpowers have stepped up their efforts to get control of this strategic area. However, the Sudan expelled the Soviet experts and Zaire successfully repelled the Soviet-instigated invasion; the people of Zimbabwe and Namibia are fighting hard for national liberation and the South African people's struggle against apartheid and brutal oppression is mounting. These struggles have the support of people all over the world. He says

In their protracted struggle, the African countries and people have come to appreciate more and more the importance of unity against the enemy. Although there exist differences of one kind or another between African countries, yet confronted with the enemy they have sought common ground on major issues while putting aside their minor differences and directed the main thrust of their attack against imperialism, colonialism and racism, and against superpower hegemonism in particular. This has been and will continue to be an important guarantee for the victories of the African people.

The Afro-Arab Summit Conference held in March and the OAU session in July both stressed

mutual aid and cooperation and the need to oppose foreign interference. They were a significant testimony to the strengthened unity of the 61 African and Arab countries with their more than 400 million people in fighting the common enemy. They were a positive contribution to the struggle of the African and Arab people and the entire Third World...

He goes on to say that because the enemy is putting up a last-ditch fight, the struggle of the African people will continue to be protracted and arduous. He added:

What is more serious, both superpowers have intensified their interference in African affairs. And he explains:

Owing to the importance of Africa's strategic location and rich natural resources, each of them (*the superpowers-ed.*) regards the control of this continent as an important part of its global strategy of gaining sway in Europe and dominating the world. Their rivalry in Africa is becoming fiercer... Many African countries are worried lest what happened in Angola and Zaire yesterday may befall them tomorrow. Facts show that the rivalry between the superpowers is the main source of unrest and turbulence in Africa, and that the superpower which styles itself a 'natural ally' of the African people has become their most sinister and ferocious enemy...

Huang Hua also gives a detailed analysis of the role of the two superpowers at the present time.

The stark reality is that the world situation has not relaxed... The factors for war are visibly growing... both superpowers are intensifying their arms expansion and war preparations. Their rivalry extends to every corner of the world. They are carrying out aggression and expansion far and wide, each cutting ground from under the other's feet and striving to weaken and gain advantage over the other. Because of its political, economic and strategic importance, Europe is strategically the focus of (the) rivalry... The superpowers are the source of a new world war.

Comparing the two superpowers, he says:

There are profound political and economic reasons why social-imperialism has become the most dangerous source of war. Being a latecomer among the imperialist powers, it is more aggressive and adventurous. Owing to its relatively inadequate economic strength it cannot but rely to a greater extent on military strength and threats of war in pursuing expansion. Its highly concentrated state monopoly capitalist economy and its political regime of fascist dictatorship make it easier to militarize its national economy and state apparatus. Besides, it flaunts the banner of 'socialism', which can deceive people to a certain extent, and this also makes it more dangerous.

He points out that Mao Tse-tung's Three Worlds concept

... is diametrically opposed to the superpowers' views on international relations. One superpower (*U.S.A.-ed.*) spreads the view that there is only one world, a so-called 'interdependent' world. But in fact the different parts of the world are mutually contradictory as well as interrelated. The 'interdependence' this superpower emphasizes has nothing in common with the international cooperation on an equal footing demanded by the small and medium-sized countries.

It pretends that there is no difference between exploiter and exploited, oppressor and oppressed, aggressor and victims of aggression. It seeks to preserve the outdated world order the Third World countries are fighting to replace, and wants all countries to be dependent on it.

As for the other superpower (*The Soviet Union-ed.*) it ignores the fact that the socialist camp has ceased to exist and the imperialist camp disintegrated long ago and asserts that the two camps still exist.

Even more than the United States, the Soviet Union wants to cover up its acute contradiction with the people of the world in general and with those of the Third World in particular. There is an essential similarity between the two views advanced by the two superpowers. Both want to prevent us, the people of the world, from distinguishing between our enemies, our friends and ourselves, so as to strengthen their positions in the rivalry for world hegemony and undermine the struggle of the world people against hegemonism.

Huang Hua repeated China's pledge 'never to seek hegemony, never to be a superpower, always to stand by the oppressed people and nations throughout the world'. He said in closing:

The world is advancing amidst turmoil, the people are

awakening in the course of the struggle. We are now in a new historical period—a period of struggle against superpower hegemonism... The people of the world have been tempered in great storms of struggle. They have gained experience, strengthened their unity and grown stronger. It is not the one or two superpowers but the people of the world that decide the destiny of mankind. Victory unquestionably belongs to the people of the world.

TO OUR READERS

In the New Year

The December issue will conclude our 14th volume, BROAD-SHEET having appeared continuously since January 1964. We are taking the opportunity of a new volume to change our shape slightly: from January the paper will be a little taller and a little narrower, with no appreciable difference in the amount of text. At the same time we shall make some changes in the front page.

More important than the form is the content. We are doing our best to explain the situation in China in a way that meets the needs of our readers, but we could do it much better if subscribers sent us more comment and criticism. Please try to do so. The following are the kind of questions to which we need answers: do the articles meet your needs? is our coverage wide enough? what do you think of our style of writing? what changes could we make to attract more readers? We should be happy to get a lot of replies, however critical.

Donations

In the third quarter we received gifts totalling £38. Our warm thanks to the givers.

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We are offering these two years, bound together, with index, at the reduced price of £3.00, including U.K. postage.

New subscription rates

We are sorry to have to increase subscription rates again, owing to increases in printing costs and postal charges. The new rates, which will take effect from the end of the year, are printed below. Any new readers who subscribe before the end of 1977 will of course get their subscription at the old rates.

We have done our utmost to keep the increases as low as possible and it will be noticed for surface mail they are really very small. The big increases have been in air mail rates and there is nothing we can do to reduce them. However, the rates expressed in dollars are unchanged, because of the improved exchange.

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U.K. ISSN 0067-2052.

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