

# **China : Evolution of a Revolution 1959-66**

**J. D. Simmonds**

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CHINA: THE EVOLUTION OF A REVOLUTION,

1959-66

by

J.D. Simmonds

Department of International Relations  
Research School of Pacific Studies  
Institute of Advanced Studies  
The Australian National University  
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## I N T R O D U C T I O N

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution<sup>1</sup> may well be the last major revolutionary effort of Mao Tse-tung. For this reason, if for no other, it compels earnest and insistent examination by all students of contemporary China. Without some knowledge of the underlying causes of this revolution it will certainly be impossible to prepare the mind for the future, and it seems likely that there will be much for which to prepare.<sup>2</sup> Though a number of articles on the subject have recently been published, and there are already signs of contention between extremes of sinological pedantry and abstract interpretation, it is certain that the beginning has only just been made. It is equally certain that this increased effort will lead to a degree of overlap and reiteration, and collectively perhaps to raising more questions than are answerable. One can only hope however that in the long run this collective effort will have been found to be worthwhile.

The aim of the present study is primarily that of analysing what might be described as the organisational prelude to the Cultural Revolution. The period covered runs from the 8th to the 11th plenums of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, and is divided into three sections. The first is entitled The Defensive Period, and closes with the 10th Plenum. The second, entitled The Offensive Period, concludes with the demotion of Liu Shao-ch'i at the 11th Plenum. In the final section some general observations are made on such matters as source material, the nature of Chinese society, the inter-relationship of domestic and foreign affairs, primary motivations for conducting the Cultural Revolution, the function of purges and the successor leadership.

The inherent weaknesses in this type of study are too obvious to require description, but some explanation is called for on the general approach. This emphasises the analysis of organisational developments concerning a revolution that is in

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<sup>1</sup> Shortened in the text to Cultural Revolution.

<sup>2</sup> This subject is touched on in the concluding section of this study.

large part motivated by ideological considerations. This has been done for two reasons. Firstly, such an approach offers a more tangible or less controvertible vehicle for research than any other at this time. Secondly, in communist China state policy and organisation are integral: change in the former is invariably sooner or later reflected in the latter; not infrequently indeed the outside observer only senses the hidden policy change after observing the structural modifications. One final point must be made. There is today no possibility at all of arriving at anything more than an approximation of the truth regarding the Cultural Revolution or its origins. In this respect, needless to say, the present study is no exception.



## THE DEFENSIVE PERIOD

The 8th Plenum held in Lushan in August 1959, made clear to all who wished to know that the great leap, if not a great flop, was at least in serious trouble.<sup>3</sup> Major economic targets were scaled down, a campaign was conducted to conserve economic resources and increase production, and an anti-rightist rectification movement was launched. Implementing decisions probably taken in April that year, considerable numbers of officials were openly appointed or re-appointed, in August and September, to positions in the government structure; some, too, were dismissed. This great reshuffling of officialdom, as has been stated above, probably was decided upon in April and May, following Chinese practice, have been effected by and large before the September announcement.<sup>4</sup> Exactly what these moves were designed to accomplish has never been clear, for a large proportion of the officials so affected were merely re-confirmed in their old or similar positions. In addition, certain selected officials were released from duties in Peking to take up appointments in various parts of the country. One method adopted to effect this and have it covertly advertised without drawing outside attention to the fact was the appointment of an existing vice-chairman of, say, the State Planning Commission, (SPC) to the concurrent position of member of the same commission.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See the Communiqué, and Resolution on Production Increase and Economy Campaign of the 8th Plenum. Current Background (CB) 589, 1 September 1959, pp.1-4, 4-10.

<sup>4</sup> See my article on P'eng Te-huai in China Quarterly, issue 37, January-March 1969. Many of these appointments had been effected by the time of the National People's Congress, end April; these included military appointments. There is evidence to suggest that the new Military Affairs Committee may have been established in July or early August (see footnote 14).

<sup>5</sup> This method seems to have been generally applied to any official who had to fulfil more than one task in any particular organisation or field, for example: Li Fu-ch'un, chairman of the State Planning Commission but also holding important positions in the central Party organs and in the State Council, was concurrently appointed member of the SPC; Po I-po similarly became a member of the State Economic Commission, and Nieh Jung-chen became a member of the Scientific and Technological Commission.

Included in this category were six vice-chairmen of the State Planning Commission (SPC) and State Economic Commission (SEC), five of whom were later identified as members of the six Regional Bureaux of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).<sup>6</sup> Another who also turned up eventually in a Regional Bureau was dismissed from his post and not apparently appointed to another.<sup>7</sup>

Although it is not possible to prove conclusively that these men were transferred to their regional posts before the announcements of August and September it seems probable that this was in fact the case. Indeed, one Cultural Revolution source that appears to be authentic on such matters alleges that a certain official was appointed to the Central-South Economic Committee in 1959; it also states that the 'Central-South Bureau was formed as a result of the merger of the South China and Central China cooperative zones'.<sup>8</sup> Whether or not the source was employing later terms to describe earlier and dissimilar organisations is open to question. It is possible that the regime had not at such an early date fully appreciated the seriousness of the general dislocation and had therefore seen fit only to strengthen regional economic administration. In such an event it would presumably have utilised an existing organ by which to assert tighter control. Such an organ was the Economic Cooperative Region. Seven of these bodies had appeared at the time of the Great Leap Forward (GLF) during which they had been vested with certain authorities, principal among which were the responsibility for planning regional industrial systems, coordinating regional material or financial resources, arranging for inter-provincial education and supervising agricultural policies. Mainly, however,

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<sup>6</sup> Chia T'o-fu; Chu Li-chih, Han Che-yi, Ku Cho-hsin and Sung P'ing. Ku, however, remained fairly active in the Peking area for a long time. An Chih-wen was also appointed member of the SPC when already a vice-chairman; he has not been heard of since and may thus have been surreptitiously removed as part of the P'eng Te-huai group.

<sup>7</sup> Chou Kuang-ch'un was dismissed as deputy-director of the State Council's 4th General Office, and not re-appointed. He became chairman of the CS Bureau Economic Committee.

<sup>8</sup> This was Min I-fan. Canton Chung-ta Chan-pao, No.39, 11 January 1968. Survey of China Mainland Press (SCMP) 4130, 4 March 1968, pp.12 and 15.



the regional committees seem to have acted in an advisory capacity; acting for the central government in the coordination regions, advising the government and overseeing on its behalf selected provincial activities.<sup>9</sup> As has been noted a Cultural Revolution document states that the Central-South Bureau had evolved out of the combination of the Central China and South China cooperative regions in 1959. This may well be correct as we know that the regime was openly referring to six instead of the original seven cooperative regions in June 1962.<sup>10</sup> As six of the seven officials earlier mentioned were appointed to the Bureaux from economic control organs, and one of them became the chairman of one Bureau Economic Committee, it is not impossible that they had been selected in the summer of 1959 to strengthen the Economic Cooperative Region committees. On the other hand, four of the Regional Bureaux first secretaries had long been in their respective regions.<sup>11</sup> Sung Jen-ch'ung, who was to head the North-east Bureau, was not reported in news media from May to September 1959; at the end of September he dropped completely out of the news.<sup>12</sup> Liu-Lan-t'ao, who became the North-west Bureau first secretary, relinquished his National People's Congress (NPC) post in April 1959, but he

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<sup>9</sup> See Central Committee and State Council ruling on the streamlining of planning and control systems, 24 September 1958; regulations by the same bodies on screening and approval of planning tasks, 24 September 1958; Ministry of Finance circular, 13 October 1958; Ministry of Education regulation, 1 July 1958; Central Committee and State Council regulation on control of education, 4 August 1958; Central Committee directive on deep plowing and soil improvement, 29 August 1958; State Council Measures on the control of agricultural products, 19 November 1958. Compendium of Laws and Regulations of the People's Republic of China, Peking, March 1959 (JPRS 14,335), pp.208-17; 222-28; 299-309; 513-24; 525-31; 26-32; 367-73.

<sup>10</sup> Ouyang Ch'eng, Peking Ta Kung Pao, 27 June 1962; SCMP 2781, 19 July 1962, p.12.

<sup>11</sup> Li Hsueh-feng in Peking, K'o Ch'ing-shih in Shanghai, Li Ching-ch'uan in Chengtu, T'ao Chu in Canton.

<sup>12</sup> Sung had headed the 2nd Ministry of Machine Building. He was not officially removed until September 1960.

was fairly active in the Peking area until October, and then again at odd times in the spring and summer of 1960. As he faded right out of the news only in November he may have taken up his new post later than the others. In sum it is possible that comprehensive political and economic regional control structures were created in the summer of 1959 and that these could be properly termed Regional Bureaux of the CCP. Whatever the case it is virtually certain that the earlier regional organisations, however termed, were comparatively small, as many of the officials who were later identified as belonging to them do not seem to have been released from their posts in Peking till the summer or autumn of 1960.

That the regime was at least aware of a degree of economic deterioration is evident from the substantial outpourings of propaganda on economic matters at that time. Considerable stress was laid on the need to conserve and produce food supplies, on the over-all campaign to aid agriculture, on short-distance transportation, on rural fairs, and on communal reorganisation.<sup>13</sup> There was, too, a spate of articles published in defence of GLF creations such as the communes, mess-halls and mass steel-making. Further evidence of general concern and, indeed, of insecurity is apparent from articles on rightism, pessimism, methods of work, and lower-level leadership. The regime was also apparently worried about potential external threats, particularly from India, and the lack of convincing Soviet support on this issue.

In the meantime the leadership was concerning itself very seriously with the problem of ensuring both the efficiency and reliability of the armed forces. P'eng Te-huai and his colleagues having been dismissed, Lin Piao commenced the long and arduous task of revamping the People's Liberation Army (PLA). An enlarged session of the Military Affairs Commission (MAC) was held in September at which the P'eng case was undoubtedly fully discussed and the initial moves taken to strengthen indoctrination and control of the troops, particularly at the

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<sup>13</sup> For a selection of articles on all the topics mentioned in this paragraph see SCMP, etc., and the Summary of World Broadcasts (SWB), for this period.



lowest levels where they were in the closest contact with the hard-hit masses.<sup>14</sup>

The theme of practical economics continued into the spring of 1960, and was obviously intended to provide the curtain-raiser to a new and successful agricultural year. It is possible that there was a Politburo meeting early in the year to map out a programme of measures to cope with the mounting economic strains.<sup>15</sup> Though no such meeting has been revealed we know that the leaders were touring the country, as they often do before major decision-making conferences, and that Mao himself was at his favourite contemplative spot, Hangchow, on 18 March.<sup>16</sup> Further weight is given to this supposition by the fact that a

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<sup>14</sup> Evidence for the strengthening of indoctrination and control is amply provided by the regime's normal overt news media and, particularly as it unfolded, by the Work Bulletin. The source for this latter is The Politics of the Chinese Red Army edited by J. Chester Cheng, Hoover Institution Publications, 1966 (referred to as Work Bulletin).

It is possible that the first MAC reorganisation took place immediately after the July Politburo session that criticised P'eng (see footnote 4). If the administrative meetings of the MAC were held on a weekly basis, for which there is some slight evidence in the Work Bulletin, then the first administrative council meeting of the new MAC could have been either 30 July or 6 August 1959.

<sup>15</sup> Differences between meetings of the Politburo, of the enlarged Politburo, of the Politburo standing committee, or of the 'central committee', are virtually impossible to distinguish. As all of them are attended by at least some members of the Politburo and are normally concerned with the highest policy decisions the difference between them may often be more apparent than real. In this article, therefore, I have not always differentiated between the three types of Politburo meeting; in some cases a term such as 'high-level meeting' has been used as a matter of convenience.

<sup>16</sup> It was in March that Mao supposedly drew up a 'constitution' for what must have been a considerably disrupted Anshan Iron and Steel works. Chengtu radio, 15 October 1967, quoting Ssuch'uan Daily of the same date. SWB FE/2599/B/16.



Politburo meeting always seems to precede by a short time a session of the NPC: this opened on 30 March. Moreover, the mass launching of the urban commune movement, a measure of significance sufficient to warrant discussion by the Politburo, was announced by the NPC. The decision to publish the polemical Lenin anniversary articles, which in late April so antagonised the leadership of the Soviet Communist Party, would also probably have required Politburo consideration.

Whatever debate there was at that time over the correct course to follow in preventing an economic collapse, and who advocated what course, we may never know. Cultural Revolution sources throw little light on this period. It is more than probable nevertheless that there was rigorous debate and that not all the leaders, in every instance, could have agreed entirely on the policy to follow. Superficially, therefore, it is puzzling that at precisely the moment when the regime began to realise how disorganised were the rural communes the old urban commune idea was once more made respectable and transformed into a mass movement. It does not seem to be entirely satisfactory to attribute this solely to the need to prove that faith in communal organisation had been sustained despite the rural failures, although such tactics are not without precedent. Perhaps this was partly the reason for the new movement. Certainly if one believed, regardless of any contrary evidence, that such methods were fundamentally correct, then it would also be correct to employ them in solving other problems. At that time such a problem would seem to have been urban economic dislocation, unemployment, and questionable ability to ensure continuing supplies of vital daily necessities to these areas.<sup>17</sup> In other words, rural problems were beginning to have a serious impact on the cities and towns. In such an event the first measure to adopt would be that of controlling both population and organisation. It is probable that the best means of guaranteeing the allocation and utilisation of scarce resources and urban industrial self-reliance, and of facilitating the subsequent efforts to reduce surplus urban populations, would have

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<sup>17</sup> The propaganda campaign on the need for community workshops and service depots in the cities which commenced in earnest in January 1960, points to urban industrial dislocation at this time. However, the decline had been progressive and had started before 1960.

been the institution of rigid communal controls.<sup>18</sup>

Under such conditions it would by no means have been illogical to resume the argument with the CPSU, only in a more open and critical manner, both by way of defence against possible Soviet charges of political and economic mismanagement and as a means of shifting the Party's attention from more sensitive domestic issues. Be that as it may, Mao and other leaders went touring again in May. In late June they seem to have come together for another high-level meeting in Shanghai; in July they had a further conference.<sup>19</sup> The purpose of the former, one assumes, must have been primarily to discuss the domestic political and economic situation, but it was perhaps not fortuitous that the leaders were so assembled at the precise moment that their instructions were needed on how to reply to Khrushchev's latest anti-China campaign.<sup>20</sup> This campaign was launched initially on 21 June, and was intensified at Bucharest on the 25th and 26th.<sup>21</sup> The aggravation of the dispute between the two parties must have been intimately connected with the withdrawal of Soviet experts which followed so shortly. The coincidence in timing cannot allow of any other conclusion. We do not know whether Moscow gave Peking any warning of the impending withdrawal, but whatever notice the Chinese had was probably limited. In any event, Peking rushed out powerful ministerial teams to a

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<sup>18</sup> Support Agriculture Red Flag No.3, 1 November 1967, says that 'the idea of reducing city population was put forward during a period of economic difficulty', translations on Communist China, Political and Sociological No.436, JPRS 44052, p.4. Li Fu-ch'un writing in Red Flag 16 August 1960 claimed that by the end of June (i.e. just before the Soviet withdrawal of experts) 1,027 urban communes had been set up comprising over 52 million people. Work Bulletin, p.459, speaks of more than 10 million urban inhabitants having been sent to the rural areas 'during most of' 1960.

<sup>19</sup> Some of the leaders were in Shanghai during the last few days of June. Work Bulletin, p.232, refers to the July conference. Mao, Liu, Chou and Teng were back in Peking by 23 July.

<sup>20</sup> The Origin and Development of the Differences between the leadership of the CPSU and ourselves. NCNA English 6 September 1963. Current Background 714, 12 September 1963, p.13.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.



variety of places in the regions in early July.<sup>22</sup> Undoubtedly their purpose was to improve industrial efficiency during a crisis period.<sup>23</sup> Whether the crisis had arrived in recognisable form before the Soviet withdrawal or after it cannot yet be established. It is noteworthy however that the Russians claim that the Chinese had been interfering with or trying to influence their experts from the spring of 1960. This may well be the case, as Peking had just then published its polemical Lenin anniversary articles. Moreover, we have seen that by April too the urban commune movement, designed probably to control urban economic deterioration, was in full swing. It is just possible therefore that Peking, seeing the inevitability of serious industrial dislocation due to its own erroneous GLF policies, thereupon deliberately made it virtually impossible for the Soviet experts to remain. This point has indeed been made by Suslov in his report to the February 1964 plenum of the CPSU, where he said 'the Chinese leadership needed not so much the experts themselves but the problem which arose because of them'.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless this does not exclude the possibility of the Russians taking full advantage of the excuses to hurt the Chinese at a critical time. All the same, the point must be made that Soviet actions merely aggravated the situation, they did not cause it. Furthermore it is certain that every opportunity has henceforth been utilised to attribute China's economic difficulties partly to this withdrawal, and never to policy errors.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> People's Daily, 6 August 1960. The authorities sent almost 100 work teams, totalling some 2,000 personnel including ministers and vice-ministers, from approximately 12 industrial and communications ministries 'in early July'. The decision to send these teams may have been taken at the Shanghai conference at the end of June. Klochko puts the date for the beginning of the withdrawal around about 15 July (Soviet Scientist in China, translated by McAndrew, Hollis and Carter, London 1964, pp.151, 162).

<sup>23</sup> People's Daily, 6 August 1960. Their task was said to be to strengthen assistance to agriculture (by improving industrial and communications efficiency).

<sup>24</sup> SWB, SU/1520/C/1.

<sup>25</sup> For example: 'Everybody knows that the temporary difficulties in 1961 were principally caused by the 3 years of serious natural calamities coupled with the betrayal of the Soviet revisionists ...'. The Canton Liaison Centre of the Wuhan Revolutionary Rebel HQ of the Red Guards for the Thoughts of Mao Tse-tung, 14 January 1967. CB 824, 27 April 1967, p.5.

These events in the spring and summer of the year must have had serious repercussions on the whole political and economic fabric of the nation by the autumn and winter.<sup>26</sup> From this time on there was a definite and purposeful relocation of key officials to what were eventually disclosed as being positions in the Regional Bureaux of the Central Committee.<sup>27</sup> There is also a suggestion of an extensive shake-up of the central economic administration in the last quarter of the year. There were at that time, or a little later, a number of changes in personnel in the State Planning Commission and State Economic Commission; the State Capital Construction Commission was abolished; and there were a number of ministerial changes.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> The theme of taking the 'whole country as one coordinated chess game' was re-stressed by Red Flag on 16 August and again on 31 December 1960. This theme has been criticised by many Cultural Revolution sources; and yet one source says it was advanced by Mao (Chengtu Radio, 28 October 1967. SWB FE/2623/B/12.

<sup>27</sup> For example: Wang Feng, Mao K'o-lin, Ma Ming-fang, Liu Jui-lung, Li Pao-hua, Chin Ming, Yang Ching-jen, Li Teng-ying, Jung Tzu-ho, and Yung Wen-t'ao, all seem to have disappeared from Peking in the summer or autumn.

<sup>28</sup> Selected changes:

SPC (see also note 6) - Ku Cho-hsin may have been transferred in 1960. Hsueh Mu-ch'iao, Kao Yun-ping and Fan Mu-han were officially appointed, presumably as replacements, in December 1960. They may however have actually been in their new positions for some time. By January 1961 Ch'eng Tzu-hua, Liu Tai-feng, Ch'ai Shu-fan, Yang Tso-ts'ai and Lu K'e-pai had been transferred from the SCCC (see below).

SEC - Hsueh Mu-ch'iao went into the SPC; Tu Hsing-yuan, Yuan, Pao-hua and Chao Erh-lu had been appointed vice-chairmen by September 1960. Sun Chih-yuan was transferred to the newly-created 3rd Ministry of Machine Building by October 1960.

SCCC - Officially abolished in January 1961. However, it is likely that the industrial depression that had occurred early in 1960 and which had been aggravated by the Soviet withdrawal had made this organisation redundant long before January 1961. Ministries - Finance: Li Shu-te, Tseng Chih, Ch'en Ju-lung appointed by November 1960, possibly replacing Chin Ming, Jung Tzu-ho and Wu Po. Machine Building: The first ministry was split to form the 3rd. Latter officially established September 1960, when Chao Erh-lu went into the SEC probably to coordinate the military (conventional) armament programme. The 2nd lost its minister, Sung Jen-ch'iung, by September 1960.



It is possible too that during the same time there was an expansion or reorganisation of the Party's Control Commission; it is a notable fact that, in its overt forms, the political and legal apparatus was de-emphasised during the crisis years.<sup>29</sup> The Military Affairs Committee also held its third meeting in 1960 from mid-September to late October.<sup>30</sup> It is clear from subsequent overt propaganda that this meeting has been held to be of the utmost importance; the whole of an issue of the Work Bulletin has been devoted to its resolution on strengthening political and ideological work in the PLA, and it has been frequently referred to in later issues.<sup>31</sup> The document is far too long to be quoted fully in this short study, but no understanding of the problems existing at that time in China can be achieved without close examination of its contents. In brief, the resolution called for a sustained and massive campaign to study and apply the thought of Mao, to overcome defeatism, to combat revisionism, and to build the armed forces into a thoroughly dependable 'red and expert' tool of the proletarian dictatorship. The central authorities even went so far as to advocate study of the resolution by civilian agencies.<sup>32</sup> The

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<sup>29</sup> A standing committee of the Control Commission was listed in the 1961 edition of the People's Handbook, which would indicate that a change had occurred in the functions of that body between late 1960 and late 1961, and that it had also probably expanded. The Ministry of Supervision had been abolished by September 1959. Its minister, Ch'ien Ying (also on the Control Commission), being appointed Minister of Interior. She remained in this position till November 1960, when replaced by Tseng Shan. The State Council Office for Political and Legal Affairs, which was probably in charge of these ministries, was dropped from the 1961 People's Handbook. Its director and deputy director, Hsieh Fu-chih and Wu Te-feng, presumably retained control over these functions from their positions in the Ministry of Public Security and Control Commission respectively. The Political and Legal Office (as Office of Internal Affairs) was 'Re-created' by May 1963, when Hsieh Fu-chih was appointed to head it.

<sup>30</sup> Work Bulletin, p.263, mentions 3 meetings in 1960. WB, p.66, gives the date of the third meeting as 14 September to 20 October; it was held in Peking.

<sup>31</sup> Work Bulletin, pp.66-94.

<sup>32</sup> Work Bulletin, p.65.

document is the more interesting when read in conjunction with the issues of the Work Bulletin which both precede and follow it; containing as they do ample evidence of practical policies of retreat being followed in the PLA, and of criticism of the 'central authorities' and the GLF both within the armed forces and civilian society.

Cultural Revolution sources claim that there was, at this time, considerable opposition to Mao from two quarters: the leadership group of Liu, Teng, and others, and the intellectual group comprising people such as Wu Han. It is not improbable that, as in most societies, the intelligentsia was doing verbal battle against injustice and evil as it saw it. But there is little evidence to support the Cultural Revolution allegations of serious disunity in the Politburo. It is more than likely, in any case, that at that time there was at the highest levels a concerted effort to overcome the difficulties if for no other reason than to survive. Nevertheless it is distinctly possible that as the crisis was at least in part due to the GLF, and hence attributable to the chairman of the Party responsible for such a policy, Mao's reputation probably had also been adversely affected. All we can be sure of is that the regime's propaganda was on the whole defensive; only in the PLA was any convincing attempt made to move forward. Otherwise, economic practicality was the central theme. Production, by whatever means, was the keynote.<sup>33</sup> Well motivated but unenlightened political efforts, said by the authorities to have been responsible for the economic debacle, were roundly criticised.<sup>34</sup>

This concern, or general sense of insecurity, found its reflection in foreign policy. 1960 saw a major effort on the part of Peking to regularise its relations with its neighbouring states: negotiations were started or treaties concluded on border issues, aid and friendship, with Burma, Nepal, Mongolia, Afghanistan and Cambodia. Even India was treated to a short spell of apparent reasonableness while border discussions were

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<sup>33</sup> This too was an important theme in military work, as is evident from the Work Bulletin.

<sup>34</sup> Work Bulletin, p.456, refers to the urgent directive issued in November on the 'Twelve Articles', which criticised 'communist style' cadre errors. See also WB, p.526.



conducted between the two sides. The year concluded with what was, by all accounts, a most acrimonious and hard fought ideological battle waged by the Chinese delegation to the world conference of Communist parties in Moscow. It is not possible to tell for certain if the hard-line taken by this delegation was that of Mao personally; Cultural Revolution sources have revealed little or nothing on this score. The fact that, with the exception of K'ang Sheng, every important member of the delegation has since fallen from favour is evidence of nothing but their standing in the leadership which alone was sufficient to necessitate their fall.<sup>35</sup> Although it is possible that the delegates might have pursued a line antagonistic to Mao's, they may equally well and more plausibly have merely acted in accordance with his views. Whatever the case it seems almost certain that coming as it did from a country which must have appeared to be in an extremely parlous condition and in some respects revisionist, the delegation's hostility and inflexibility was probably proportional to its feeling of insecurity on domestic matters.

If China was in a mess in 1960, it was to be in a worse condition the next year. The tone of the communique of the 9th Plenum, held from 14-18 January, was consequently understandably sombre. It took note of the few achievements it could muster but then went into considerable detail in describing the weaknesses and failures, analysing the roots of opposition, calling for further consolidation or limitation of the communes, and for a reduction in capital construction and a strengthening of the agricultural effort. The most important specific organisational measure announced was the intention to establish six Regional Bureaux to act for the Central Committee in the provinces.<sup>36</sup>

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A few Cultural Revolution sources point out that these people worked closely with Khrushchev at the conference, and therefore intrigued with him. This would seem to be a typical example of the type of tendentious reasoning found in such material. The leading delegates could hardly have avoided working closely with (or fighting) Khrushchev at such a meeting. See, for example, Peking Ching Kang Shan, 18 April 1967. SCMP 3946, 25 May 1967, p.3.

<sup>36</sup>

Communique of the 9th Plenum, C.B. 644, 27 January 1961, pp. 1-4.

We have seen that these bureaux had in fact been set up a long time before and had meanwhile probably been evolving according to the requirements of the day into larger and more complex organs. They had grown by the time of the Cultural Revolution into very large bodies; the Central-South Bureau, according to one seemingly reliable source, comprised nearly 800 cadres divided into eight large functional groups.<sup>37</sup> They were headed by senior officials who were either members of the Politburo or men of nearly equal importance.<sup>38</sup> Acting as they did for the Central Committee, the bureaux quite clearly must have exercised considerable powers. Although the evidence is inconclusive on this point it would seem that their organs were, as they were said to be, primarily Party ones charged with overseeing all aspects of the Party's work at the lower levels. Their main role would thus have been the supervision of the execution of central directives emanating from both Party and government sources; a subsidiary role would probably have been advising the centre on suitable programmes for the respective regions and their subordinate provinces and municipalities. When it is recalled that the bureaux were established to prevent the development of a crisis it follows that it would have been pointless to establish them without at the same time vesting them with real authority. It is clear from considerable data accumulated over the years that there was little they did not concern themselves with in their regions. For this reason, and conceivably because they have been a principal target in the Cultural Revolution, there is good reason to suppose that in a period when there was policy debate and

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<sup>37</sup> Such as Finance and Trade, Industry and Communications, Planning, and Agriculture, Chung-ta Chan-pao No.39, 11 January 1968, Canton, SCMP 4130, 4 March 1968, p.15.

<sup>38</sup> K'o Ch'ing-shih (East China Bureau) and Li Ching-ch'uan (South-west Bureau) were members of the Politburo. T'ao Chu was to become one early in the Cultural Revolution, and was clearly of that stature much earlier. Li Hsueh-feng (North China Bureau) was a member of the Secretariat. Sung Jen-ch'ung (North-east Bureau) had headed the 2nd Ministry of Machine building which was related to the nuclear development programme. Liu Lan-t'ao (North-west Bureau) was the Senior deputy and probably de facto head of the Control Commission.



unsureness, the bureaux leaders occupied key positions.<sup>39</sup> They probably were able to implement central directives or manipulate them more or less as they saw fit, within the meaning of the law of 'accordance with local conditions'. This is not to say, necessarily, that they needed to take no notice at all of Peking's edicts, but that they would have been able at certain times and within limits to choose between differing ideas or directives emanating either from the collective leadership or from certain individuals within it. They would also, presumably, have been able to originate a number of their own regionally devised and orientated policies. Thus one need not so much see in this a conscious or direct plot against Mao as a taking advantage of a serious and changing situation in which 'any cat, black or white, can catch mice'. Nevertheless, the background to such a situation was such that, directly or indirectly, consciously or otherwise, the GLF was being re-examined and the wisdom of Mao being in effect called into question.<sup>40</sup> At least Mao could not have been thought, by everyone, to be infallible, and that to Mao apparently is as good as a plot.

The communique of the 9th Plenum did little more than allude to this undercurrent of doubt and insecurity.<sup>41</sup> The plenum was followed, in March and in May, by two high-level Party Conferences. Of the second we know practically nothing; but the earlier conference seems to have been held in Canton.<sup>42</sup> It dis-

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<sup>39</sup> Whether key bureaux personnel were purged specifically because of their activities in and membership of the bureaux, or whether they were purged because they were part of the general system of Party control is however a moot point.

<sup>40</sup> There is clear evidence of this in the earlier editions of the Work Bulletin, even within the tightly disciplined ranks of the PLA (see, for example, p.407, and note 45). Cultural Revolution sources, although arguing for the most part tendentiously, also consistently allege this to have been the case.

<sup>41</sup> CB 644, 27 January 1961, pp.1-4.

<sup>42</sup> Work Bulletin, p.456, refers to a March conference which formulated the 60 articles. A Cultural Revolution source states that the 60 articles were discussed at a Canton conference in 'spring'. Tung Fang Hung, No.20, 18 February, SCMP, 3903, 21 March 1967, p.2.

The second conference is said to have been in session 31 May 1961. Red Flag No.13, 17 August 1967, JPRS 42866, Translations from Hung Ch'i, p.20.

cussed a 60 article programme on the rural communes which was in essence designed to induce the peasantry by material and other means to produce more, in the first place for themselves, with as little ideological and organisational interference from the regime as possible.<sup>43</sup> Cultural Revolution sources criticise Teng Hsiao-p'ing for adopting at this meeting certain policies without consulting Mao; suggesting thereby, if only by innuendo, that this act had some sinister connection with the central issue of the whole agricultural programme.<sup>44</sup> But it seems that

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<sup>43</sup> This is clear from several issues of the Work Bulletin; see, for example, pp.455-61 - 'such staples as grain were not sold at high prices but were bought at rates from 10-20% higher than usual' (p.457). 1961 planning methods 'guarantee that commune members after receiving their harvest will find they have produced more than they expected and may even receive encouraging rewards' (p.461). On the question of stability and change it was said that if a change was disadvantageous to the peasantry in general and to production they would not like it, but the envisaged changes would benefit the peasants (p.527). Even in the PLA, concerning subsidiary food production, such principles as 'all products belong to the producing units' were being advocated as late as July 1961 (p.738). See also 'Further Consolidate the Collective Economy and Develop Agricultural Production' by Wang Hung-chih in the Lienchiang documents, a translated copy of which was kindly provided by Mr I.F.H. Wilson.

<sup>44</sup> Mao criticised Teng 'for having arbitrarily decided important questions of the conference', Tung Fang Hung, No.20, 18 February 1967; SCMP 3903, 21 March 1967, p.2. Also Pa-erh-wu Chan Pao, 14 February 1967; SCMM no.574, 1 May 1967. Teng seems to have advocated applying the 60 articles differently to the northern parts of China (under the NE, N and NW Bureaux) and to the southern parts (under the EC, C-S and SW Bureaux). Peking Ching Kang Shan, 15 February 1967; SCMP 3908, 30 March 1967, p.2. What probably occurred was that Teng had been delegated the task of drawing up the first draft and that this had been amended by the Politburo, in the light of practical experience, at a meeting in May 1961. The amended programme was then referred to as the 'first revised draft' and was promulgated in the latter half of the year. 'Some Concrete Policy Formulations of the CC of the CCP in the Rural Socialist Education Movement', September 1963, Ssu-Ch'ing, Baum and Teiwes, China Research Monographs No. 2, University of California, Berkeley, 1968, p.86 (referred to as Baum and Teiwes).



this was not so. Clearly, in a land such as China, the principal danger arises when there is widespread peasant disaffection due to insufficiency of food, fuel and clothing. Equally clearly this state of affairs had by then been reached, and was even having considerable effect on PLA morale.<sup>45</sup> It is therefore inconceivable that Mao would have opposed any programme that promised a reasonable chance of overcoming the danger. The 60 articles, if not every one of which approved wholeheartedly by every member of the Politburo, must in the great majority of cases have met with the approval of the general body of leaders, including Mao.

This rural programme was not the only policy put forward during the year. Recent sources discuss at some length the sins of Liu Shao-ch'i, of Teng Hsiao-p'ing, Ch'en Yun and others, in advocating a whole series of practical policies. These allegations are difficult to classify. In some cases they are patent fabrications; in others, the charges levelled seem to be based partly on fact, but the cases presented are contrived and the verdicts arrived at doubtful. One reads of the black revisionism of the 70 article industrial programme drawn up in September, which overt press material at that time describes as being centred on technical and practical training as opposed to political or ideological indoctrination. The authority of the manager, engineer and accountant was brought on a par with that of the party committee; the latter's role being confined to advice. Material incentives and foreign methods were stressed. Production was the only real criterion of success. People's Daily on 22 February 1961 discussing such problems put its views in acceptable ideological terms, yet even so said that 'the collective leadership of the CCP committee cannot replace the day-to-day administrative management of an enterprise, nor is it necessary for the Party committee to manage the routine daily affairs of the enterprise'. Similar themes were also expounded upon by Red Flag on 30 September and by People's Daily on 17 November.<sup>46</sup> One reads too of

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<sup>45</sup> This is a historical Chinese problem, but even at that time the army was basically peasant. The regime was well aware of the potential dangers: see, for example Work Bulletin, pp.407, 408, 412, 418, 419, 466, 467, 472.

<sup>46</sup> The industrial programme is referred to in the following sources: Canton Radio No.1 Service, 1 December 1967; SWB FE/2638/B/11; Shanghai Radio, 4 June 1967 and 13 June 1967; SWB FE/2486/B/5-8 and 2492/B/1-2.

the equally nefarious 60 articles on education, whose purpose was largely to de-emphasise politics and ideology.<sup>47</sup> In any event the purpose of these programmes was that of stimulating industry and education. Furthermore all the regime's mass media, not to mention the Work Bulletin, were replete with cautionary practicableness. Production is the key word: bad or useless cadres must be purged, labour should be protected, technical study and expertise is commended, students and teachers should be given more leisure, light industry and handicrafts are stressed, piecework advocated, communal accounting must be improved and side-line production encouraged. And beneath it all appear to have been strong undertones of indirect, perhaps even direct, dissent from the intellectual or literary wing of the Party. This wracking bewilderment, for it could have been no less, was evidenced also in the regime's policies towards important religious or philosophical groups: the much-oppressed Taoists were convoked, and Confucius, after considerable debate, pronounced a slightly-left reformist.

In foreign affairs the 1960 trend was further emphasised. Peking seems to have been genuinely concerned to regularise its relationships with its neighbours. In January 1961 Chou En-lai visited Burma, and in March Ch'en Yi went to Indonesia. Two months later Sukarno, in Peking, ratified the Sin-Indonesian friendship treaty. In the meantime China seems to have exerted considerable effort at Geneva in striving for some sort of settlement in Laos.<sup>48</sup> Concern over the new military regime in South Korea probably lay behind the exchange of Chinese and North Korean delegations in July and September.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> People's Daily, 18 July 1967; CB 836, 25 September 1967, pp. 11-19; NCNA, 13 December 1967, SWB FE/2648/B/1-3; Peking Ching Kang Shan, SCMP 3933, 5 May 1967, pp.14-5; Pa-erh-wu Chan Pao, 14 February 1967; SCMM 574, 1 May 1967, p.16; Peking Ching Kang Shan No.47, 14 June 1967; Translations on Communist China: Political and Sociological No.424, JPRS 42887, 9 October 1967, pp.20-5.

<sup>48</sup> These efforts are clearly documented in the overt press of the period. An interesting insight into the regime's attitude to one problem is provided by the Work Bulletin briefing material on Laos in March and May - see pp. 385, 585.

<sup>49</sup> The initial military coup took place on 16 May, and Pak came to power on 3 July.



A boundary treaty was concluded with Nepal shortly after. At the end of the year a high-level military mission visited Hanoi. Only India, among China's Asian neighbours, was not made aware of this new desire to be friends. Sino-Soviet relations had not for their part improved in the meantime, and were further strained during the course of the CPSU's 22nd Congress. In general China's attitude to the outside world, particularly to that part of it lying nearby, was typified by her reaction to what was seen as a new threat coming from the USA and Japan in the form of an embryonic North East Asian Treaty Organisation.<sup>50</sup>

Much of the data concerning 1962 comes from Cultural Revolution sources. Whether it is acceptable to use such evidence is, of course, debatable. The author's belief is that with care (and luck) this material can be used with advantage. If the Cultural Revolution allegations make anything clear at all it is that 1962 was a crucial year. Their general and reiterated theme is that the 'top capitalist-roaders' were most active in 1962. The specific charges levelled seem in most cases to be false, in that they attest to what is tantamount to an organised conspiracy which has been back-dated into the distant past. One cannot prove that this was not the case; but it seems most improbable. Nor is there evidence from any source of a long-standing conspiracy against Mao. However from at least the spring of 1959 onwards all sources point at least indirectly to leadership tension or lack of coherence in central policy making. The regime had been slow to respond to the first intimation of crisis, being initially probably unaware of the gravity of the situation. It merely carried out organisational measures designed to control developments largely in a negative manner; one of its first concerns was the revitalisation of the armed forces. Then, bit by bit, it added to these measures, trying to stimulate the economy by means of material incentives and the removal of many unpalatable ideological impedimenta, without appearing to admit that it was so doing. At the time when the regime was pre-occupied with its holding action, what little evidence there is suggests that by and large the leaders worked in an apparently unified manner. They were, after all, with very few if any exceptions, collectively implicated and together would have fallen if they had not been able to

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The overt press view is reflected in the Work Bulletin in August - see p.738.

hold the situation. Nevertheless, we can probably accept as fact that not all the leaders agreed on every specific policy issue that arose, and that the relatively decentralised system of regional Party control that had been instituted could have led to an exacerbation of the differences or have made them more real. It is probable too that policy debate intensified when future, more positive, courses of action were being investigated and experimented upon.

The Central Committee held two work conferences in January and February 1962 at which it appears there was considerable discussion of the parlous state of the economy, the causes of this, and the time and methods required to overcome the difficulties.<sup>51</sup> According to Cultural Revolution sources, men such as Liu, Teng and Ch'en Yun advocated that any method which would steer the nation away from the brink of disaster, almost regardless of ideological correctness or political consequences, should be followed.<sup>52</sup> We do not know if these allegations are even remotely based on fact, but we do know that the regime as a whole did indeed follow policies of such a nature, and we also know that Chou himself was stressing unmistakably moderate pol-

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<sup>51</sup> January 1962 meeting: Red Flag No.13, 17 August 1967. JPRS 42866, Translations from Hung Ch'i, p.40. Also Ching Kang Shan, Fighting Corps of the 4th Hospital, Peking Municipality, May 1967. CB 834, 17 August 1967, p.20. A CC document referring to this meeting states that at it Mao called for a thorough implementation of proletarian democracy without which centralism could not effectively work. 'On the Decision to Further Consolidate the Collective Economy of the People's Communes and to Develop Agricultural Production', 10th Plenum, 27 September 1962 - Lienchiang documents.

February 1962 meeting: Red Flag No.13, 17 August 1967. JPRS 42866 p.20; Kweichow Radio 17 June 1967 refers to the 'enlarged centre work conference', 'at the beginning of 1962', SWB FE/2497/B/18-20; according to the supposed confession of Liu the date was 21-26 February. Mainichi - China News Analysis No. 663, 9 June 1967, p.4.

<sup>52</sup> See for example SWB FE/2497/B/18-20; and CB 834, p.21, where it is stated that Mao's critics said 'It will take more than five years to make a recovery'.



itical and economic policies a little later at the NPC.<sup>53</sup> It seems likely therefore that if Mao had personal reservations on the long term efficacy or desirability of some of these measures they were, at that time, either of no great substance or no one heeded them. The truth may lie somewhere in between: Mao's views on a wide range of domestic issues may not then have been fully formulated and consequently not expressed, or if expressed not definitively or in coherent form.<sup>54</sup> The Cultural Revolution material may provide a clue to this for, interestingly enough, no real claim is made for consistent positive

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<sup>53</sup> The NPC session was held from 27 March to 16 April. Chou made the following points:

Economic

1. Increase agricultural production; particularly grain, cotton and oil-bearing crops.
2. Rationalise light and heavy industry; produce more daily necessities.
3. Continue to retrench capital construction, economise on material, equipment and manpower.
4. Reduce urban population, and workers and functionaries; first by persuading those who came from rural areas to return.
5. Improve inventory work, examine and fix the amount of funds for each enterprise to release unused funds and material.
6. Ensure good commodity supplies and market conditions.
7. Improve foreign trade.
8. Adjust and improve cultural, educational, scientific, public health work.
9. Generally reduce expenditures and increase revenue.
10. Improve planning; priority on agriculture, then light industry and finally heavy industry.

Political

Unite with the patriotic elements of the national bourgeoisie, who were to retain their fixed interests for another three years starting from 1963.

Unite with the minorities and overseas Chinese.

Unite with the patriotic religious believers, who were to continue to be permitted freedom of religious belief.

NCNA Peking, 16 April 1962, CB 681, 18 April 1962.

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See the Statement that Mao was 'non-committal' over a certain rural policy in the summer of 1962, in Translations on Communist China: Political and Sociological No.430, JPRS, 43357, 16 November 1967, p.14.

leadership by Mao in 1962 until the 10th Plenum. In effect these sources are either claiming that Mao was not the leader or, more probably, that he was and the less said about it the better. In any case there was, overtly, only one collectively espoused line: that of moderation and caution. Whatever Mao thought personally of this policy, he too was publicly implicated in the collective decision. Beneath this surface of collective reasonableness, however, we are told there existed continuing and mounting pressure from a number of senior cadres. Liu is said to have addressed 7,000 people at the January work conference of the Central Committee, calling for a re-examination of the errors of the 'Leftist period' with a view to having the verdict on P'eng Te-huai and his so-called fellow conspirators reversed.<sup>55</sup> It was also presumably at this conference that Mao is supposed to have called for vigilance against the possibility of a restoration on the part of 'reactionaries and bad elements'. Lin Piao, too allegedly criticised comrades who did not act in accordance with Mao's instructions and called on the whole Party to study Mao's thoughts.<sup>56</sup> Thus we are now told in effect that Mao and Lin had in January advocated political and ideological courses of action which were successfully suppressed, except in the PLA, until after the 10th Plenum. This may well be true, we simply cannot

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<sup>55</sup> Down with Liu Shao-ch'i - reprinted by the Ching Kang Shan Fighting Corps of the 4th Hospital, Peking Municipality, May 1967. CB 834, 17 August 1967, p.20. Possibly the original source was Ching Kang Shan, Peking, 18 April 1967. SCMP 3946 25 May 1967, p.3, where this meeting is described as a 'meeting of cadres of five levels'. Liu was said at this meeting to have attributed the economic difficulties 30% to natural calamities and 70% to man's error. According to another source Liu and others had as early as June 1961 made efforts to 're-open cases' - Who is Min I-fan? Hsin Hua Kung Pao No.3, Canton, 13 January 1968. SCMP 4112, 6 February 1968, p.8.

Liu was also said to have produced a report which 'negated class and class struggle, and opposed the dictatorship of the proleteriat and Mao Tse Tung's thinking', Kweichow Radio, 17 June 1967. SWB FE/2497/B/20.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., B/18. The occasion is referred to as the enlarged centre work conference at the beginning of 1962. See also translations on Communist China: Political and Sociological No.430, JPRS 43357, 16 November 1967, p.17.



tell. It is certain however that even the much-maligned T'ao Chu paid at least lip-service to the need to strengthen education in class struggle before the 10th Plenum.<sup>57</sup> We also know, as has been noted, that Lin Piao was definitely pushing similar policies in the PLA as early as the autumn of 1960 and that the central authorities advocated their extension to the whole of society at that time. In any event the supposed efforts of Liu and his colleagues in January are said in part to have resulted in P'eng himself calling for a reversal of verdict in an 80,000 word document presented to the Party in June.<sup>58</sup> In addition we are informed that throughout the period a number of influential literary workers carried on an indirect campaign against Mao. Wu Han in February seemingly foresaw an imminent thaw.<sup>59</sup> Pa Chin expressed his doubts in May when he wrote: 'I am a little afraid of those who ... go looking for mistakes' (of writers).<sup>60</sup> Teng T'o is reputed to have said at the end of June that they were at the 'crossroads', and that it was time 'to halt and study awhile'.<sup>61</sup>

The first half of the year was certainly a period of placation.<sup>62</sup> The earlier advocacy of economic rationality has been noted. In May and June the regime maintained its emphasis on cautious policies; for example, the need for careful statistical and accountancy work, the requirement for working within planned limits, and the necessity for returning to its original users agricultural land taken by the state for industrial construction. In May too we are told that Ch'en Yun put forward his plan for stimulating agricultural production: the so-called

<sup>57</sup> In a speech marking the anniversary of the founding of the CCP-carried in Nan Fang Daily, 3 July 1962. SCMP 2829, 1 October 1962, pp.1-7.

<sup>58</sup> Peking Radio, in Japanese, 18 October 1967. SWB FE/2612/B/9.

<sup>59</sup> Yao Wen-yuan has 'documented' this whole period of literary opposition in his article on the 'Three Family Village', Wen Wei Pao, 10 May 1966, NCNA 4 June 1966, SWB FE/2181/B/2-20. The reference to Wu Han's article is on B/10.

<sup>60</sup> Pa Chin's article appeared in Shanghai Wen Hsueh, 5 May 1962. SCMM 323, 23 July 1962, pp.1-5.

<sup>61</sup> People's Daily 21 May 1966, NCNA 21 May 1966. SWB FE/2177/B/5.

<sup>62</sup> Liu is said to have stressed the necessity for a tactical retreat and for placating the peasants. People's Daily, as quoted by NCNA 9 December 1967, SWB FE/2644/B/5-8.

'black' programme of individual effort.<sup>63</sup> During this period one of the last steps was taken to consolidate relations with bordering states, in the form of the Sino-Pakistan agreement to negotiate their boundaries. The first six months also witnessed a continuation of the democratic unity theme, with the holding of forums of intellectuals, congresses of democratic parties, a national conference of Catholics, celebrations of Buddha's birthday, the need to preserve cultural objects, and the marking of the 800th anniversary of Genghis Khan's birthday. Chou himself at the spring session of the NPC had reiterated the need to continue paying the bourgeoisie their fixed interests.

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<sup>63</sup>The 3 Freedoms and 1 Guarantee (extension of private plots and free markets, responsibility for an enterprise's own profits and losses; the guarantee of production). It is not clear from the various sources whether Ch'en or Liu, or someone else, was responsible for this programme. See, for example, Ching Kang Shan, Peking, 18 April 1967. SCMP 3946, 25 May 1967, p.5; People's Daily, NCNA 9 December 1967 SWB FE/2644/B/5; Red Flag 17 August 1967, JPRS Translations from Hung Ch'i, pp.77-84; Tsinghua, Ching kangshan pamphlet on the Trial of Wang Kuang-mei. CB 848, 27 February 1968. It is nevertheless quite clear from both overt and covert sources that this rural programme had strong backing from the regime as a whole. Whether the slogan was the 3 Freedoms and 1 Guarantee, 3 Guarantees and 1 Reward, 4 Fixed, or the system of reward and responsibility, the intention was to boost production mainly by means of material incentives. See, for example, Work Bulletin 526-8; Canton and Peking city propaganda in October and November 1960, SCMP 2413, 10 January 1961, pp. 1-17; People's Daily 21 December 1960, SCMP 2408, 3 January 1961, pp.10-14; Red Flag 17 August 1967 (see above); Shanghai Radio 4 June 1967; SWB FE/2486/B/7; Canton Radio 1 December 1967, SWB FE/2638/B/11; NCNA Canton 10 January 1968, SCMP 4102, 18 January 1968, p.4.

There is, at the time of writing, still remarkably little in the way of accusations against Ch'en Yun in Cultural Revolution publications; his actual role after the GLF or status today is quite unclear. For some representative accusations see: Peking Ts'ai-Mao Hung Ch'i, 23 February 1967, SCMP 3899 15 March 1967, pp.4-5; CB 834, p.21 (footnote 55); Peking Ching Kang Shan 18 April 1967; SCMP 3946 25 May 1967, p.5; Mainichi - China News Analysis No.663, 9 June 1967, p.4.



Teng T'ao may only have been expressing the views of the majority of leaders when he said in June that they were at the crossroads. Indeed other developments were to unfold in the months preceding June that would have forced any regime to pause and take stock. At the beginning of the year there was a sudden increase in tension along the Sino-Indian border, but it was of short duration. In April Peking commenced in earnest an anti-Indian propaganda campaign on the boundary question. April, too, saw the start of a mass exodus from Kwangtung into Hongkong.<sup>64</sup> At the same time, according to more recent statements by Peking, the Soviet Union enticed away 'tens of thousands' of people from Sinkiang: in other words there had been another mass exodus from China.<sup>65</sup> What made the thousands flee? A cause common to most who reached Hongkong was hunger. The reasons for the exodus into Sinkiang are not really known; presumably hunger was also a contributing factor, but in addition racial and religious discrimination appears to have had much to do with the flight of non-Han peoples. In fleeing all these thousands had in effect cast their vote against the regime, not so much because it was Communist but largely because it had failed to provide the first basic requirement of the people: food. This was an unmistakable vote of non-confidence, made public to the people of China and to the whole world, the impact of which on the self-esteem of the leadership and presumably on the personal prestige of Mao must have been tremendous.<sup>66</sup> While the refugees were still streaming across the borders the national press suddenly took up two new themes: natural calamities and the threat from Taiwan. The first had a basis of truth to it though, in blaming nature for the hardships, the leadership

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<sup>64</sup> For example The Times, 12 May 1962. T'ao Chu appears to have instructed the Shumchun officials to open the borders, thus permitting '20-30,000 persons with full labour capacity' to escape. Cultural Revolution leaflet, SCMP 3908, 30 March 1967, p.7.

<sup>65</sup> The Origin and Development of the Differences between the leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves, NCNA, 6 September 1963, CB 714, 12 September 1963, p.20.

<sup>66</sup> Mao's prestige suffered if, as has been indicated above, criticism of the 'centre' for GLF errors entailed criticism of the centre's chairman.

was attempting to shift the responsibility from itself. Regardless of who was to blame for the GLF or to what degree the food shortages were caused by man-made difficulties in contrast to natural ones it is now generally agreed that China had indeed suffered from poor weather. Nevertheless it is interesting to note that most of the areas said to be suffering from natural calamities, after the exodus had started, were those from which the refugees had flown. Even if true, the propaganda would have been more convincing had it preceded the flight. The second theme is not easy to evaluate, as it is hard to separate cause from effect. We have seen that Peking had earlier given evidence of apparent fear of, or sensitivity to what may have appeared to be looming external threats or insufficiently secure relationships with bordering states. It may thus have been this general sense of insecurity which caused Peking to react in the way it did to what was genuinely regarded as a more bellicose attitude on the part of Taiwan, and the intractability of the southern Chinese at that time would have aggravated the regime's sensitivity.<sup>67</sup> Be that as it may, early in June Peking rushed large numbers of troops into the south-eastern coastal provinces.<sup>68</sup> As this move was never publicly disclosed by the regime one must assume that it was intended initially as a covert military build-up, either aimed at a limited pre-emptive strike against one or more of the off-shore islands or, perhaps more likely, as a purely defensive move in case of a US-backed KMT landing. Whatever the case Peking acted first; its overt though indirect propaganda offensive was only launched after the American disclosures.<sup>69</sup> While all this had been going on the propaganda theme on the Indian threat had been maintained and intensified. It was made more pointed by the withdrawal, 'after completion of his tour of duty', of the Chinese ambassador to India on 18 July.

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<sup>67</sup> The regime also could have manufactured a 'threat' to facilitate the imposition of controls on the southern coastal people which would otherwise have been intolerable.

<sup>68</sup> According to official US sources. See The Times 22 June 1962-press sources on 21 June understood this build-up to have begun about ten days earlier.

<sup>69</sup> For coverage of this at the national level see SCMP etc. An interesting example of local level treatment is the following Kweichow Radio account: 'On the evening of 28 June, when the news of Chiang Kai-shek's attempt to attack the mainland was broadcast ...', Kweichow Radio, 28 November 1967, SWB FE/2636/B/21.



When the Party leaders came together again in the middle of 1962 they would have had much to discuss.<sup>70</sup> High up on the agenda must have been the domestic political and economic situation, and also probably the question of the Taiwan and Indian 'threats'. What exactly was said at this meeting, or at others which preceded it, we can only guess; there was obviously little with which to be pleased.<sup>71</sup> Consequently the discussions on how to deal with the situation must have been of considerable gravity. In such circumstances an outward show of unity was almost mandatory, and indeed the national press at about that time front-paged a picture of a cherubic Mao shaking hands with a somewhat contrite Ch'en Yun, with the rest of the 'monolithic' leadership gathered about in smiling approval.<sup>72</sup> One of the main reasons for the midsummer meeting,

<sup>70</sup> In all probability there were two meetings in this period: the first of the Politburo, the second of the Central Committee. Both seem to have been held at Peitaiho. We are told that T'ao Chu went there, together with others in July - Canton Liaison Centre of the Wuhan Revolutionary Rebel HQ of the Red Guards for the Thought of Mao Tse-tung, 14 January 1967. CB 824, 27 April 1967, p.20. Indeed one source refers to the conclusion of a Politburo conference 'about July' - Wen-ko T'ung Hsun, 11 December 1967. SCMP 4097, 11 January 1968, p.7. The second is referred to as the Central Committee's working conference in August - The Draft Resolution of the CC of the CCP on some problems in current rural work, 20 May 1963. Baum and Teiwes, p.60. This substantiates the point made by the Canton Liaison Centre (see above) that a conference was in progress in August. At one of these meetings Liu is said to have declared that 'the peasants have gained nothing from the collective economy in the last few years'. Translations from Hung Ch'i No.16, 1967, JPRS 43921, 9 January 1968, p.28. In contrast to this Mao is said to have been advocating class struggle at the August meeting - Baum and Teiwes, pp. 60, 62.

<sup>71</sup> See 'Draft Resolution of the CC of the CCP on some problems in current rural work', 20 May 1963, Baum and Teiwes, pp.60, 62. One of these meetings was the 7th Plenum of the YCL at which Teng Hsiao-p'ing is alleged to have made some trenchant remarks. Peking Ching Kang Shan, 8 March 1967. SCMP 3933, 5 May 1967, pp.6-7. See Also Peking Radio 3 December 1967, SWB FE/2638/B/17.

<sup>72</sup> Kwang Ming Daily, 1 July 1962, p.1.

which seems to have been a protracted affair, was probably to make an evaluation of the situation from which to draw major guidelines for presenting to the 10th Plenum.<sup>73</sup> It is of passing interest that as the leaders were gathered together to thrash out their problems, Liu Shao-ch'i's 'How to be a Good Communist' was reprinted and put on sale. Cultural Revolution publications make a great deal of this event and the inference we are encouraged to draw is that in having his work reprinted at this time Liu was going directly against Mao, attempting to boost his own prestige and propagandising ideological and political views that were both inappropriate and erroneous.<sup>74</sup> There may be some truth in the statement concerning Liu's prestige: doubtless respect for Mao had lessened since the GLF, even in the PLA for a short time, and anything that would have enhanced the standing of Liu would therefore have at least indirectly lessened that of Mao. Whether Liu's publication was put out with this specific end in mind is however another question, and one that cannot be answered confidently at this stage. The charge that the thoughts contained in Liu's work were inappropriate or erroneous would be less easy to sustain: morale in China was at a dangerously low level in those days and anything that could have been considered to be a morale-booster or an aid to improving cadre organisational methods and discipline, within the then-existing limitations, would surely have been attempted and must have been considered by most leaders to be efficacious.

When the delegates to the 10th Plenum sat down to start their discussions in Peking on 24 September, they probably did

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<sup>73</sup> What little we know of such matters suggests that the timing was about right for the traditional pre-plenum policy meeting. See footnote 72.

<sup>74</sup> See, for example, Kwang Ming Daily, 23 July 1967, CB 836, 25 September 1967, p.5.

We are told that Teng had suggested early in 1961 that Liu's 'Selected Works' should be published, that a committee had been set up in February that year to arrange for this, and that K'ang Sheng dissolved the committee in January 1962, Canton Wen-ko T'ung-hsun, 11 December 1967, SCMP 4097, 11 January 1968, pp.4-5.

Yet it is of considerable interest to note that People's Daily (allegedly basing itself on a Chieh Fang Chun Pao report) was as late as 20 December 1964 publicising the study of Liu's article by a unit of the PLA SCMP 3369, 4 January 1965, pp.2-5.



so in an atmosphere charged with tension. They had surely been told of the spring exodus, if some of them had not actually witnessed it. They must have read the newspaper accounts of the threat from Taiwan and probably knew also about the PLA moves to counter this. They would almost certainly have been acquainted with at least the Chinese version of the Berlin and Cuban affairs, that were then becoming serious. They undoubtedly knew something of the increasing friction along the Sino-Indian border. They may too have been informed of the intention to 'quarantine' the Soviet consulates in Harbin and Shanghai, and the reasons for this.<sup>75</sup> Just how much they knew about all this is, however, not clear; the plenum's communique does little to enlighten us. It mentions the Taiwan 'threat' but says nothing at all on the Sino-Indian border. This silence is the more remarkable when, as we know, the press had quite fortuitously provided the sitting delegates with 7 Chinese casualties over which to become incensed.<sup>76</sup> On purely domestic developments, however, the communique was revealing, particularly when compared with the subsequent allegations of the Cultural Revolution.

The 10th Plenum, we are told, decided on the interchange of leading government and Party cadres, strengthened the Control Commission and elected three new members to the Secretariat.<sup>77</sup> Following the lead of a People's Daily article, a few days before the session started, it announced that there

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<sup>75</sup> This had occurred on 26 and 27 September, respectively. See The Times 5 October 1962. Similar moves may have been taken at that time against the Soviet consulate in Urumchi. We can only speculate on the reason for this action - it is just possible that as the consulates were in touch with White Russian residents who could have been the source of useful information to the USSR the move was designed to cut off this source.

<sup>76</sup> And yet only a few days later on 1 October the People's Daily informed them (after the plenum had concluded) that: 'The Indian reactionaries have dispatched troops along the whole line of the Sino-Indian boundary to carry out incessant provocations against our country, carrying out their plot to make large-scale encroachments on China's territory'. CB 691, 5 October 1962, pp.6-10.

<sup>77</sup> For the whole of this paragraph, see Communique of the 10th Plenum, Peking, NCNA 28 September 1962. CB 691, 5 October 1962, pp.1-5.

had been a slight though general improvement in the economy despite natural calamities and mistakes in work; the summer harvest had been slightly better than the previous year's and the autumn one was expected to show an increase.<sup>78</sup> These agricultural gains were due, it was claimed, to correct policies. The industrial situation had also improved due to effective readjustments: 'Many enterprises have improved their management ... their production costs have been cut and their labour productivity has been raised ...' Commercial work, too, was slightly better. However some leading cadres had been incompetent and as a result a number of production teams, factories and businesses had produced less and had therefore become unwelcome to the masses. The communique further noted that throughout the long period of transition to communism the struggle between the proletariat and bourgeoisie would continue: 'Class struggle is inevitable ... we must never forget it'. There was a further warning that this would inevitably find its expression in the Party, and that 'we must be vigilant and resolutely oppose in good time various opportunist ideological tendencies in the Party.'

Taking these points seriatim, it seems possible that the planned interchange of leading government and Party cadres was partly a reflection of what had since at least 1961 been the general rule, particularly in the staffing of the Regional Bureaux. It may therefore have denoted little more than an expansion of the scheme and its formalisation.<sup>79</sup> Again the initial Control Commission expansion may well, as we have noted, have occurred much earlier; here too, however, it is possible that there had been further expansion since, or that a greater expansion had been decided upon at the mid-summer Party conference. The de facto elevation of at least two of the three

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<sup>78</sup> PD 20 September 1962. SCMP 2830, 2 October 1962, pp.12-15.

<sup>79</sup> By September 1962, or just after, there had been a series of senior staff 'interchanges', e.g., in the Secretariat, the SPC, and the Agriculture and Forestry Office of the State Council.

According to one source, at the Plenum 'Hsi Chung-hsun, a member of the Kao-Jao anti-Party alliance ..., was dragged out and P'eng Te-Huai's sinister scheme to reverse the verdict was smashed'. Shanghai Wen-hui Pao, 20 May 1968, SCMP 4205, 25 June 1968, p.6.



new Secretariat members probably took place some time previously; once more the plenum's announcement seems only to have regularised the arrangement.<sup>80</sup> There is no reason to doubt the truth of the modest agricultural claim; what is of interest, however, is that this was attributed to correct policies. These, we know, found their basic expression in the 60 articles.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore it is certain that these articles, Cultural Revolution allegations notwithstanding, were considered respectable enough to have been approvingly referred to by the Central Committee<sup>82</sup> and by lower level Party organisations.<sup>83</sup> They were also consistently advocated by the Work Bulletin and were said to have been formulated in accordance with Mao's

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<sup>80</sup> K'ang Sheng, Lo Jui-ch'ing and Lu Ting-yi. T'an Cheng and Huang K'e-cheng, who were 'dismissed' by the plenum, had been in disfavour for many months; they had probably been replaced in effect by K'ang and Lo. Lu Ting-yi had been elevated to vice-premier by April 1959; his de facto appointment to the Secretariat may, however, not have taken place till 1962.

<sup>81</sup> The reference here is to the 'first revised draft' of 1961. This draft was not further amended until the 10th Plenum, or more probably by the high level meetings in July and August. 'Draft Resolution of the CC of the CCP on some problems in current rural work', 20 May 1963, Baum and Teiwes, p.59. See also 'The Problem of Good Arrangements for 1962-63 Winter-Spring Work' by Ch'en Fu-lung in Lienchiang Documents.

<sup>82</sup> 'Draft Resolution of the CC of the CCP on some problems in current rural work', 20 May 1963; 'Some Concrete Policy Formulations of the CC of the CCP in the rural Socialist Education Movement', September 1963; the revised draft of same, 10 September 1964; Baum and Teiwes, pp. 59, 86, 113.

<sup>83</sup> 'Further Consolidate the Collective Economy and Develop Agricultural Production' by Wang Hung-chih (1962 - post 10th Plenum); 'The Problem of Good Arrangements for the 1962-1963 Winter-Spring work' by Ch'en Fu-lung, 21 December 1962; Lien-Chiang Documents.

1959 speech at Chengchow.<sup>84</sup> Industrial progress also was due to correct policies: efficient management, lower production costs and increased productivity. These were precisely the major themes of the 70-article industrial programme, attributed to the 'top capitalist-roaders' by Cultural Revolution sources.<sup>85</sup> In sum both programmes now labelled revisionist were rigorously backed by the regime, were eminently suited to a crisis situation, and presumably were generally agreed upon by the leadership. However Mao's personal attitude to them, at that time, is really not known. As has been pointed out above he may have had reservations on many of the current domestic policies; he may actually have wished or attempted to oppose these policies but lacked sufficient authority or organisational power to do this; he may, too, have been unable to make up his mind on such matters. One source in point of fact says that in the summer of 1962 he had been undecided on the question of land-loaning and that Liu had interpreted this non-committance as a

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<sup>84</sup> Work Bulletin, p.456. (See also note 43).

According to Kweichow Radio 17 June 1967, SWB FE/2497/B/18, Mao seems to have discussed some of these points in a letter of instruction to the Party in April 1959. Li Ching-ch'uan is alleged to have attached a cautionary note to this letter because 'we had to get more grain and put forward our best efforts in the struggle against revisionism. We feared that Chairman Mao's letter of instruction would play a passive role when it was transmitted downwards.' This would suggest, if true, that Mao was at that time advocating a more realistic or 'revisionist' line than Li Ching-ch'uan. See also Kweichow Radio 23 December 1967, SWB FE/2660/B/12.

Further substance is given to this supposition by the fact that Chang Wen-t'ien is stated to have told P'eng Te-huai that this 'inner-party bulletin', dated 29 April, 'played a useful role but also established an individual (work) style.' P'eng Te-huai's speech at the 8th Plenum, Collected Materials on P'eng Te-huai, Peking Red Guard Congress Tsinghua University Ching Kang Shan Corps. Union Research Service Volume 50, No. 17, 17 February 1968, p.214. (See also CB 851, 26 April 1968 p.30.

<sup>85</sup> Referred to approvingly by Wang Hung-chih and Ch'en Fu-lung; Lienchiang Documents.



qualified approval by Mao. After this policy was declared erroneous its earlier implementation was defended by attributing it to a decision by the Central Committee.<sup>86</sup> The inadequacy of the data does not permit us to form firm conclusions. On balance, however, it would seem to be the case that when these policies were formulated they were regarded by everyone, including Mao, as being necessary.<sup>87</sup> The question of cadre failings is also of interest in view of the republication of Liu's essay on 1 August, and subsequent publishing of minority-language editions of the same work. The decision to do so was probably governed by the desire to remedy defects in cadre work, a central theme in Liu's essay. It would seem highly unlikely that this decision was taken solely on the authority of Liu. In any case his works were not the only ones printed at that time: minority-language versions of Mao's 4th volume of Selected Works also came off the press. Cultural Revolution sources make much of the fact that the 10th Plenum called on the Party never to forget class struggle, claiming that this was at Mao's instigation. Indeed the communique did touch on this topic, and the press and radio subsequently gave further coverage to it. In addition we are informed by authoritative Party sources subsequent to the plenum that it was Mao who apparently was advocating an anti-revisionist line at about that time.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>86</sup>Translations on Communist China: Political and Sociological No.430, JPRS, 16 November 1967, pp.14, 24.

<sup>87</sup>Mao's alleged statement on retiring to the second rank in the leadership during this period could be a convenient method of absolving himself from personal responsibility for 'revisionist' policies. In claiming this inviolability, however, Mao could not have absolved Lin Piao from responsibility for earlier following or permitting PLA publications to approve such policies. It is of course just possible that, as Cultural Revolution sources claim, Lin's authority was not absolute but was being eroded by men such as Lo Jui-ch'ing. This explanation though again very convenient may have a slight basis of truth to it but probably not sufficient to indicate that Lo was able to influence major policy decisions in the PLA. See for example: Canton Ching Kang Shan and Kwantung Wen-i Chan Pao, Nos.7-8, 5 September 1967. SCMP 4046, 24 October 1967, pp.1-11.

<sup>88</sup>Wang Hung-chih refers to 7 principal contradictions discussed by the plenum - Lienchiang Documents. The Draft Resolution on rural work (20 May 1963) explicitly states that Mao was the advocate of the anti-revisionist line. Baum and Teiwes, pp.60, 62; see also pp.70, 73.

Yet, at the same time, the 'Central Committee' was stressing economic policies that conflicted with or at least did not particularly conform with the more romantic line otherwise being pushed by Mao.<sup>89</sup> It is probable, therefore, that Mao did remind the delegates that despite or because of evidence of a slight economic recovery, economics was not everything. The goal was still political and ideological purity. It may further be conjectured that this view was held only by Mao and a few others and that to the mass of delegates, including Liu and other influential leaders, this conjured up visions of ideological extremism such as had led to the near-catastrophic GLF. This question is of course central to the present study; however the crucial facts are missing. The thesis of class struggle was not given much prominence in the communique itself, but it was there; and not long after it became the dominant overt propaganda theme. The almost off-hand call in the communique to oppose opportunistic tendencies in the Party suggests that the collective leadership was not wholly convinced of the importance of expressing an awareness of the dangers of creeping revisionism or lack of central control at the lower administrative levels but that it realised such a situation existed.<sup>90</sup> Nevertheless it remains unclear who was advocating this harder line at that time and who opposed it, and to what degree lip-service (an indeterminable but highly important factor) must be taken into consideration. Nor is it clear, even if it is assumed that most of the leaders agreed on the diagnosis, that they were therefore equally persuaded on the treatment.

It would be unrealistic to hope to unfathom the details of this period. Yet it seems necessary and, indeed, feasible to try to draw some generalised conclusions from the evidence available both at that time and since. The period of the 10th

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<sup>89</sup> On the Decision to further consolidate the collective economy of the People's Communes and to develop Agricultural Production', 10th Plenum, 27 September 1962 - Lienchiang Documents.

<sup>90</sup> Although taking place the previous year we are informed that Liu Chien-hsun severely reduced small-scale iron and steel making enterprises in Honan and that 'Though the Central Committee expressed some views, it was forced to give up ...' Translations on Communist China: Political and Sociological No. 430, JPRS 43357, 16 November 1967, p.24.



Plenum was clearly one of a watershed. Prior to it the domestic political and economic situation had been fragile and depressed, and the regime had concerned itself almost exclusively with mending its fences both internally and externally. It had made sweeping changes in its control organisations, rearranging many of its central departments and creating powerful regional administrative bodies. It had purged the army of unreliable elements, and drastically reorganised the militia.<sup>91</sup> It had grappled firmly and realistically with its agricultural and industrial problems, compromising its stand on ideological purity in so doing. It had, possibly in part due to its sensitivity on this score, maintained or intensified its strong stand against 'revisionism' abroad but had done so in a reasonably controlled and indirect manner. It had exerted every effort to build up friendship with the majority of its neighbours. It had, finally, been subjected to real or imaginary threats to its security from outside the country, and had been humiliated by the exodus of thousands of its citizens across its borders. But it had passed the test: there had been no disintegration.

This much seems clear enough. The price the regime had to pay in political and ideological terms, however, must have been considerable, though to this day we cannot tell exactly what this entailed. Politically, it would appear, much of the expenses came out of the pocket of one man: Mao. In relative terms his standing had almost certainly been diminished. Up to about the autumn of 1958 this no longer applied. Publicly he had lost one position, and this had had to be explained away to the people. Adulation diminished. His GLF policies were called into question by the masses, and probably by many of the leaders. His ideology was temporarily and possibly only for tactical reasons replaced by a system of thought that, compared with the policies of the winter of 1957-58 and today, could only be described as revisionist. Only in the PLA, it appears, was his writ completely accepted. As a consequence he seems to have retreated into his inner-self or, as he is alleged to have put it, retired to the second row of leadership, leaving the actual running of the country to others. He may have been

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<sup>91</sup> The purge started at the beginning of November 1960. The militia reorganisation seems to have started in late 1959 or early 1960; a major effort was made to resolve outstanding problems in January 1961. See Work Bulletin, pp.25-8, 136-45.

forced to do this. It seems more likely, on the other hand, that he was acute enough to realise that the national crisis he had certainly helped bring about could only be overcome by ideologically questionable methods.<sup>92</sup> Discretion therefore dictated the donning of the saffron for a while to avoid implication and to prepare for the greater tasks ahead, judging perhaps that the majority of leaders had themselves been too committed to his policies to enable them to dispense with the myth of Maoist infallibility or with the man himself.

The period between the 8th and 10th Plenums can only be described as one of retreat and consolidation. The policy-makers were looking back at Mao's errors, and at their own, or in any event had not yet started to look forward systematically to a practicable future. To retreat in the face of overwhelming odds is not a difficult decision to take: few if any of the leaders could have opposed it. As the nation retreated, so did Mao. But the time had come when it was necessary to decide on the nature and timing of the national counter-offensive. It is in such times that decision-making becomes difficult. Mao, too, had been preparing: 'The counter-offensive is a long process, the most fascinating, the most dynamic, and also the final stage in a defensive campaign ... The first battle must be won. The plan for the whole campaign must be taken into account.'<sup>93</sup>

<sup>92</sup> Several sources refer to Mao's personal leadership in 1959. For example, 'Collected Materials on P'eng Te-huai'; and Shuang-ch'en-yueh, 10 January 1968, SCMM 616, 25 March 1968, p.18.

<sup>93</sup> Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-tung, Foreign Languages Press, Peking 1963, pp.120, 129



## THE OFFENSIVE PERIOD

The counter-offensive was launched very soon after the close of the 10th Plenum. It could be argued in retrospect that the whole long campaign had been minutely planned by then and that the precise end in view was the overthrow of the 'top capitalist-roaders'. But it seems more likely that in early October the leaders saw no further ahead nor more positively than that it was necessary to attempt to regain lost ground. There was clearly a requirement for action if the regime was to reassert itself as it felt it had to overcome nascent revisionism. Mao may have seen further than this at the time, but the evidence is not there despite the 'revelations' to warrant the conclusion that the leadership was rift over the issue. The regime was forced to move ahead, not only on the domestic front but also internationally. It had to regain momentum.

Two events occurred in October 1962 which literally shook the world. The one, the Sino-Indian war, would have had a considerable effect on internal Chinese affairs. The other, Khrushchev's Cuban fiasco, had a more subtle effect. The two events, though, cannot be separated and need to be regarded almost as one. The Cuban affair, according to United States sources, had been developing to their knowledge since at least July.<sup>94</sup> In September there had been a significant increase and change in Soviet activities.<sup>95</sup> Thus during a period when to the outside world and to most Chinese the Peking regime was floundering or at best hesitating at the crossroads, and was in real terms leaning over backwards not to affront any potential aggressor, the Soviet Union had stirred up a crisis in Berlin and finally moved offensive weapons right on to the doorstep of the common enemy. It is nevertheless not impossible that if a primary motive was to attempt to improve his bargaining position vis-a-vis Washington a secondary one could have been the desire to demonstrate to Peking that a United States threat from Taiwan could be countered by the Soviet Union from Cuba. On this last point however there is no evidence to indicate that Soviet relations with China played any part in their dec-

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<sup>94</sup> When the first information relating to defensive weapons was obtained, The Times, 24 October 1962.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

ision to embark on the Cuban venture. Whatever the motives, Khrushchev's gamble did not come off. At almost exactly the same time that the Chinese attacked India the first American counter-measures were taken, to be followed in a few days by Khrushchev's offer to remove the missiles.<sup>96</sup>

The Sino-Indian war had its true origins much earlier. Regardless of who was primarily to blame for its initiation it seems clear that at a time when China was on the defensive in most matters it was generally speaking only reacting to Indian activities in the border areas. During the first half of October considerable space was given in Chinese propaganda media to describing and deploring these Indian deployments. On the 20th Peking declared that large-scale Indian attacks had occurred along the whole border, and that these had been repulsed. The war had started. In a very short time indeed it had concluded, and the Chinese had won.

The connection between the two events was not merely one of coincidence in time. In the one instance the Soviet Union or, more particularly, Khrushchev had been humiliated. In the other China had triumphed: in more explicit terms, the PLA had once again and very convincingly proven itself on the field of battle. The repercussions of the Cuban fiasco were probably felt throughout the international communist community, and in the Soviet Union itself became part of the motivating force for the removal of Khrushchev two years later. The results of the Sino-Indian war, on the other hand, could only in some respects be interpreted negatively. For the most part, certainly domestically, the PLA victory was a glorious achievement which was attributed to correct ideology, implicitly that of Mao, and by the rest of society.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid, 22, 23 and 24 October.

<sup>97</sup> See for example Ch'en Fu-lung's statement, 9 February 1963: 'when we engage in production, we do battle with the world of nature, fighting just as the PLA does ... Recently the PLA achieved a great victory on the Sino-Indian border ... why was this possible? It was because of ideological work.' Lienchiang documents.

See also NCNA, 5 March 1963; SCMP 2936, 12 March, pp.1-4.



October, then, marked the true turning point in the fortunes of the regime, and of Mao.<sup>98</sup> The first tentative plans may have been laid months before, the first moves in the national counter-offensive may have been taken in the summer, but the first battle was won in October. This is not by any means to state that the Sino-Indian war broke out when it did because of Khrushchev's activities in Berlin and especially Cuba, nor because an external venture on the part of China was then mandatory. Quite clearly the Chinese attack came for a variety of reasons, the most compelling of which was probably that of military appropriateness or necessity. Nevertheless, very few if any wars are waged for purely military reasons and the decision to unleash the PLA could only have been taken by the Politburo in the light of the overall situation.<sup>99</sup> Whether domestic political factors were important considerations in this cannot be determined, but they could not have been overlooked. It is virtually certain, nonetheless, that it was from this time on that emulation of the PLA first started to evolve into the powerful political movement it was to become.<sup>100</sup> The victory over India was not only sorely needed reconfirmation of the power of China, it was in addition evidence of success on the part of the one organisation in the country which had from at least 1960 onwards shown itself to be the most responsive to the thoughts of Mao. This had deep significance, as the PLA was perhaps the only instrumentality

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<sup>98</sup> One source refers to October as the month when 'the work of retrenchment was finished'. The Red Criticising Liu Shao-ch'i Combat Corps of Canton, January 1968. SCMM 616, 25 March 1968, p.23.

<sup>99</sup> 'All operations ... must be considered from the political as well as the strategic angle, and must be decided by the Party centre in accordance with the needs of the situation as a whole' (referring to the Fukien front). Canton Ching kangshan and Kwangtung Wen-i Chan-pao, 5 September 1967; SCMP 4046, 24 October 1967, p.5.

<sup>100</sup> The actual Lei Feng campaign commenced in January 1963. It may have been decided upon by the MAC meeting which probably followed the 10th Plenum. In Liaoning propaganda started at least by 25 January. Details of the campaign proper were probably worked out at the PLA Political Department conference from 2-27 February.

of force and ideological soundness in which Mao personally could have had any real confidence.<sup>101</sup>

October was remarkable in other respects, too. Doubtless sensing the new climate of opinion Teng T'o discontinued his polemical allegories. One of his most stinging tales, the 'Cure for Amnesia', was singled out for abuse at about the same time. If polemical publications were for a time no longer considered fashionable by the intelligentsia, the opposite was the case for the regime. The remainder of the year was devoted to a campaign of vilification of Dange and Nehru, of Tito, of Togliatti and of a variety of comradely European parties. Behind all the specific name-calling, however, the real target was not hard to discern. It was the CPSU leadership and particularly Khrushchev. One of the most revealing of these articles was carried in the People's Daily in mid-November. Ostensibly it marked the anniversary of the Moscow Declaration of 1957, but in fact the burden of the message was that the principal criterion for discerning the difference between true Marxist-Leninists and revisionists was their attitude to imperialism; the former being in the forefront of the struggle against it, the latter being afraid of struggle and opposing it.<sup>102</sup> Coming so soon after the Cuban debacle and the Sino-Indian war the message could not have been clearer. Whether the heated debates at the European Party congresses that preceded or followed this editorial stemmed from Peking's criticism of the CPSU leadership or were caused by Soviet guilt complex unrelated to direct Chinese action is unclear.<sup>103</sup> In any event, November and December were particularly good polemical months; Mao's birthday was celebrated in all probability by his viewing of the draft of the most trenchant criticism of the CPSU since April 1960.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Evidence for this is to be found in the first section of this paper.

<sup>102</sup> People's Daily, 15 November 1962; SCMP 2862, 11 November 1962, pp.26-31. See also Red Flag No.22; SCMP 2863, 20 November 1962, pp.24-7.

<sup>103</sup> These congresses were held by the following parties: Bulgarian, Hungarian, Italian and Czechoslovakian.

<sup>104</sup> 'The Differences between Comrade Togliatti and us', People's Daily, 31 December 1962; CB 702, 1 January 1963.



The genesis of the Cultural Revolution cannot be adequately understood out of the context of the general trend of events in China during this last quarter of the year. In addition to the purely domestic issues and the requirements of China's foreign policy, it is related to developments within the individual communist societies and between them, and between, for example, the USSR and the USA or India. Quite clearly such a context is too complex to describe in a short study. Yet as the Cultural Revolution is not solely attributable to indigenous causes unconnected with trends and influences of the outside world certain interrelationships must nevertheless be alluded to even if their full import is not yet knowable.

Thus we can see in the general period of the 10th Plenum two distinct and possibly non-complementary trends emerging in China: the one realistic, the other somewhat idealistic. While the former was maintained mutatis mutandis for another 3 or 4 years, or at least was not rejected out of hand, the latter soon achieved pre-eminence. Whether it would have done so had the PLA been defeated in India is problematical. As we have seen, Central Committee documents show Mao to have called for class struggle at the 10th Plenum, but these documents post date both the Cuban affair and the Sino-Indian war. In the actual documents of the Plenum itself, anti-revisionism was more of a plea than a clarion call: the overall emphasis remained conservative and practical. During this resurgent phase ideology was both the driving force and the force driven. Required to stimulate the nation it was itself replenished and stimulated by the achievements of the military arm of the nation. The regime might genuinely have feared an attack by India, though we ourselves may find this hard to believe, but the Chinese campaign was most certainly meticulously prepared and presumably undertaken with the conviction that it would succeed. Fortuitously or otherwise, Peking won a resounding victory just when Moscow was forced to retreat, and could claim that true Marxist-Leninist daring or Maoist military genius had triumphed where modern revisionism had failed. Thus a domestically derived ideological upsurge had been coupled with a successful strike against a potentially dangerous enemy and paralleled by the blunders of the principal foreign contender for ideological and political supremacy. The reaction between these developments led in turn to a further intensification of the ideological upsurge, both internally and externally. Revisionism, however, was not easily to be routed. Domestically its roots were deep,

and of recent years it had of necessity bloomed. As Mao moved against it at home the campaign against it externally was greatly intensified. The socialist education movement cannot be separated from the open Sino-Soviet polemics which started late in 1962 and the beginning of 1963. The two were integral, being logical variants of the one phenomenon.

The Chinese campaign against foreign revisionism, especially that of the CPSU leaders, is too well documented to require detailed exposition here. The campaign of vilification, or rather mutual recrimination, slowly gathered momentum from the end of 1962, reaching a climax the following September. One reason for this intensification would seem to have been the necessity for both parties to justify themselves before coming together to discuss their differences. These talks appear to have been scheduled for May 1963 but the Chinese asked for postponement till mid-June.<sup>105</sup> It was finally agreed to hold them in Moscow on 5 July, by which time there had been a further deterioration in relations.<sup>106</sup> While the Chinese delegation was in Moscow, the USSR, USA and UK were in the process of negotiating the partial nuclear test-ban treaty. This treaty was in fact signed on 25 July. As the Chinese put it at the time: 'This situation causes us concern,' the USSR should beware not to fall into the American trap.<sup>107</sup> The line thereafter followed was that the Soviet Union and the USA were allying to oppose China, and that signing the treaty equated to capitulation by the former or joint blackmail.<sup>108</sup> The climax came in September, when Peking published a series of open attacks against Khrushchev, including

<sup>105</sup> Letter of the CCP to the CPSU, 14 June 1963; SCMP 3003, 20 June 1963, p.40.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, where the Chinese protest the breaking of their display windows in Moscow. Furthermore, the Chinese complained that the CPSU for the first time publicly attacked the CCP by name, and expelled embassy staff and students. 'The Origin and Development of the Differences between the leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves', CB 714, 12 September 1963, pp.21, 23.

<sup>107</sup> People's Daily, 19 July; SCMP 3025, 24 July 1963, pp.29-32. On 31 July, People's Daily called for total prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons, SCMP 3032, 2 August 1963, pp. 30-3.

<sup>108</sup> See SCMP etc. covering late July and August.



'The Origin and Development of the Differences between the leadership of the CPSU and Ourselves', and 'On the Question of Stalin'.<sup>109</sup>

The second and related theme of Peking's attack against revisionism was that of the socialist education movement, which in this study is interpreted as the campaign to rectify erroneous thought and action in propaganda, culture, industry, agriculture, and throughout the whole of society. This movement had been unfolding in an uncertain manner since late the previous year. It did not emerge as a thorough-going movement until, at the earliest, February 1963. Even as late as January, Chou En-lai was speaking in two voices. Openly he was avowing the technical or expert ('bourgeois') line, and making little or no mention of the thoughts of Mao.<sup>110</sup> In addition, however, he was also talking about the socialist education movement and advocating ideological ('Maoist') themes.<sup>111</sup> It is uncertain, however, that this denotes conflict between the two lines at this stage as Chou was addressing two different kinds of meeting and, furthermore, there is little inherently conflicting in calling for good economic results simultaneously as stressing selflessness and the like. Chou may of course have been placing his bets both ways, which apparently would not be out of character. But it seems more likely that the decision to push socialist education into a thorough-going formalised movement throughout society had not by then been taken. In the event a Central Committee work conference was

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<sup>109</sup> The former was dated 6 September. See CB 714, 12 September 1963, pp.2-24. The latter was dated 13 September. See CB 715, 20 September 1963, pp.1-11.

It may be relevant that Cultural Revolution sources allege that during this period, i.e., August, Teng T'o was saying that Khrushchev had unlimited loyalty to the revolution and to socialism. People's Daily, 21 May 1966; SWB, FE/2177/B/7.

<sup>110</sup> Addressing a scientific and technological conference at Shanghai on 29 January. SWB, FE/1164/B/1.

<sup>111</sup> See Chou's 8 points discussed at the East China meeting of advanced collective representatives in Shanghai. Ch'en Fu-lung, 9 February 1963; Lienchiang Documents. This presumably was the East China Advanced Agricultural Units conference which commenced in Shanghai on 1 February, SWB, FE/1166/B/1.

convened in February. Very little is known of the deliberations of this meeting, although we are informed by Cultural Revolution sources that at it Mao approved the Hunan provincial Party committee's experiences in 'lifting the lid off class struggle'.<sup>112</sup> This report was dated 8 February, and was endorsed by Mao.<sup>113</sup> It is likely therefore that the real beginning of the socialist education movement can be attributed to this work conference, and that the date was subsequent to the eighth.

The first two months of this year saw the emergence of a particularly significant aspect of socialist education: the campaign to learn from Lei Feng. This was no ordinary campaign. Its certain purpose was the propagandisation of a prototype Maoist of the new generation, and one which at that time could only apparently be found in the PLA.<sup>114</sup> By extension, therefore, this was the beginning of the campaign to learn from the PLA. It is uncertain exactly when the decision was taken to initiate this movement, which was to have such an impact on the rest of society over the course of time. One of its first indicators was the People's Daily article towards the end of January 1963.<sup>115</sup> The details seem to have been worked out at the all-PLA Political Department conference in February.<sup>116</sup> The decision to undertake it, however, appears to have been made at the enlarged Military Affairs Committee meeting which must have followed the 10th Plenum.<sup>117</sup> Certainly Liaoning province, where Lei Feng died, had been emulating him for some months before the Political Department conference.<sup>118</sup> In any case, the deci-

<sup>112</sup> Canton Radio, 26 October 1967; SWB, FE/2610/B/3.

<sup>113</sup> Draft Resolution of the Central Committee of the CCP on Some Problems in Current Rural Work', 20 May 1963. Baum and Teiwes, p.61.

<sup>114</sup> Although the burden of this movement was emulation within the PLA, it also applied to civil agencies (see below).

<sup>115</sup> People's Daily, 25 January 1963; SCMP, 2914, 7 February 1963, pp.4-5.

<sup>116</sup> Held from 2-27 February. See Political Department notice, 9 February 1963; SCMP, 2933, 7 March 1963, pp.4-5 and NCNA, 5 March 1963; SCMP, 2936, 12 March 1963, pp.1-4.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., p.3, wherein this is implied.

<sup>118</sup> People's Daily, 16 February 1963; SCMP, 2933, 7 March 1963, p.5.



sion to conduct the national campaign has been attributed to Mao personally.<sup>119</sup> Knowing what we do of Mao's recent role this is perhaps true, as the central theme of the campaign was reliance on the 'great red banner of the thought of Mao Tse-tung'.<sup>120</sup>

March and April 1963 were devoted to extending and consolidating particular aspects or experimental policies of the socialist education movement. By the beginning of May the regime seems to have felt sure enough of the results to move into the next phase. Propaganda media started to unfold a more intensive campaign against erroneous philosophical and cultural trends.<sup>121</sup> PLA media, for their part, maintained their emphasis on correct politics and ideology.<sup>122</sup> Cultural Revolution sources allege that Liu and others were during this period actively opposing Mao's policies. We are informed for example, that Li Ching-ch'uan was experimenting with an economistic cadre work system, the so-called 2-5 system.<sup>123</sup> Yet if this policy was to be regarded as incorrect eventually, it does not seem to have been so at that time as it was more or less the one advocated in Red Flag in July.<sup>124</sup> Moreover the regime was publicly continuing to stress practical economics at that time.<sup>125</sup> The most that can be said consequently is that the policy dichotomy, early noted, had not ended. Whether this indicated high-level opposition to Mao's policies or an over-riding requirement to balance political fervour with hard-headed economic practicality is uncertain. What is certain, however, is that there is no thoroughly convincing evidence of such opposition, al-

<sup>119</sup> NCNA, 6 March 1963; SCMP, 2937, 13 March 1963, p.10 (quoting Liberation Army Daily).

<sup>120</sup> SCMP, 2936, pp.1-4.

<sup>121</sup> For example, a National Conference of writers and artists was convened. NCNA, 21 May 1963; SCMP, 2986, 24 May 1963, pp.2-5

<sup>122</sup> The Central Committee's regulations on political work in the PLA were promulgated 17 March. Propaganda on the Good 8th Company came in the late spring. SCMP 2981, 17 May 1963, pp. 3-7. Hsiao Hua's report to the Political Department (2 February 1963) was carried in People's Daily, 1 April 1963; SCMP 2971, 3 May 1963, pp.1-16.

<sup>123</sup> Chengtu Radio, 13 February 1968, SWB, FE/2698/B/2-4.

<sup>124</sup> Red Flag, 10 July 1963. SCMM 376, 6 August 1963, pp.1-13.

<sup>125</sup> See issues of SCMP etc. for the period.

though it is probable that not all the leaders agreed on the line requiring the most stress.

On 20 May the Central Committee promulgated its first major statement on rural policies since it revised the Sixty Articles in the autumn of the previous year. This was the First Ten Points.<sup>126</sup> We are informed by Cultural Revolution sources that this document was drawn up by Mao personally.<sup>127</sup> It is nevertheless not clear whether this is literally true. It is possible that he merely suggested the guidelines, as his directive concerning these matters quoted in the First Ten points was said to have been issued 'recently'.<sup>128</sup> In any event this Central directive was promulgated in the form of broad policy guidance in preparation for a more formalised extension of the movement in the autumn.<sup>129</sup> The general theme was that of emphasising political and ideological struggle, but this was qualified: 'Under the condition that production not be deferred and that all undertakings be closely coordinated with production ...'.<sup>130</sup>

The remainder of the summer was spent in experimenting with many of these new ideas and in preparing for the extension of the socialist education movement.<sup>131</sup> It is evident from the overt press of the time and implicit in Cultural Revolution statements that some of the regional leaders may have tried out certain policies, during this period of experimentation, that were later found wanting and consequently abandoned. It is possible that some genuinely misunderstood the full import of the movement or lacked competence; others might have deliber-

<sup>126</sup> Following the terminology of Baum and Teiwes in 'Ssu-Ch'ing', where the full text can be found, pp.58-71.

<sup>127</sup> Canton Radio, 26 October 1967, SWB, FE/2610/B/3.

<sup>128</sup> First Ten Points, Baum and Teiwes, p.70.

<sup>129</sup> Implicit in the text of this document and also of the Later Ten Points in September. See Baum and Teiwes.

<sup>130</sup> First Ten Points, Baum and Teiwes, p.70.

<sup>131</sup> Later Ten Points, Baum and Teiwes, p.72. It is interesting to note in this respect that according to Ho Fei Radio, 23 March 1968, 32-38 percent of Anhwei's private plots were 're-formed' in 1963. SWB, FE/2734/B/15.



ately attempted to sabotage it. T'ao Chu appears to have seen it as designed primarily to increase agricultural productivity.<sup>132</sup> He is also said to have feared struggle excesses, which is quite possible and may have been the opinion of others.<sup>133</sup> This hardly equates to active opposition, but it may not have compared favourably with the more acute interpretations of Sung Jen-ch'ung and K'o Ch'ing-shih in the North-east and East China,<sup>134</sup> or with the advocates of some provincial experiments.<sup>135</sup> During this period, too, there was a sudden if temporary resurgence of activity against bourgeois culture: a play put on in February was sharply criticised in August, and promptly taken off for a time.<sup>136</sup>

The leadership formulated yet another set of rural edicts in the autumn: the Later Ten Points.<sup>137</sup> This document was much more specific than its predecessor and was clearly the harbinger of a more intensive and widespread movement. As its preface stated, referring to the experimentation that had basically

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<sup>132</sup> Canton Radio, 26 October 1967; SWB, FE/2610/B/3. It is valid to point out however that this could have been adduced from Mao's directive at the end of the First Ten Points: 'When this educational movement is completed, there will emerge throughout the nation a new climate for progress into greater prosperity.' Baum and Teiwes, p.71. It certainly did not run counter to the second point, clause six, in the Later Ten Points (September 1963). Baum and Teiwes, p.77.

<sup>133</sup> Canton Radio, 26 October 1967.

<sup>134</sup> First Ten Points, Baum and Teiwes, p.59. See also the overt press accounts, in SCMP etc, of Sung's article on rural youths, and the East China movement to compare, learn, catch up and help, launched in June.

<sup>135</sup> Hopei and Shansi are specifically commended in the First Ten Points, thus indirectly commending Li Hsueh-feng. Baum and Teiwes, p.59. Honan, Hupeh and Hunan, also referred to approvingly in the First Ten Points, were, however, under T'ao Chu's Central-South Bureau. Baum and Teiwes, p.59.

<sup>136</sup> According to Cultural Revolution sources. The play was about a Taiping hero, and was criticised by Ch'i Pen-yu who was to gain fame for a time during the Cultural Revolution. See China News Analysis 683, 3 November 1967, p.2.

<sup>137</sup> Dated September 1963, Baum and Teiwes, pp.72-94.

ended: 'Experiences gained in such spot-testings have amply proved that comrade Mao Tse-tung's analyses and instructions on such problems as classes, class contradictions and class struggle in a socialist society, have great revolutionary and historic significance. They have also proved that this Socialist Education Movement, launched in accordance with comrade Mao's instructions, has long-range and far-reaching significance in repulsing the frantic offensive of the once lordly aggressive imperialist and feudal forces, in consolidating the position of rural socialist and proletarian dictatorship, in destroying the social basis from which revolution stems ...'<sup>138</sup> It then went on to describe ten basic problems that had not been solved during the trial period and which henceforth must be solved. Once more we do not know whether, if Mao's authorship or at least sponsorship is accepted, Liu and the other leaders were in agreement.<sup>139</sup> Unfortunately the date of the document is given merely as September. It seems probable that it would not have been promulgated as a Central Committee edict without first being discussed by the Politburo. Cultural Revolution sources do mention such a meeting, but not the date.<sup>140</sup> As Liu was in North Korea from 14-28 September we are left with three possibilities: the Politburo sat at some time during the first fortnight, it sat in the last two days of the month, or that Liu was not present when the document was being finally considered.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Later Ten Points, Baum and Teiwes, p.72.

<sup>139</sup> Another top capitalist-roader' (Teng Hsiao-p'ing?) is stated to have been responsible for this, according to one source. Joint editorial of the People's Daily, Red Flag and Liberation Army Daily, 23 November 1967. JPRS, 43921, 9 January 1968. Translations from Hung Ch'i, No.16, 1967, p.31.

<sup>140</sup> Mao Tse-tung Chu-i Chan-tou Pao, 23 February 1967. SCMP, 3903, 21 March 1967, p.7. As has been noted, the Politburo normally meets prior to an NPC session, which later was held in November. Moreover, most leaders were in Peking on 30 August.

<sup>141</sup> Of the three the first is slightly preferred as the Politburo presumably was consulted before publication of the most trenchant Chinese attacks against the Soviet leadership between 6-13 September. It would have been logical for Liu to have been briefed on these developments before he left for North Korea, and also to have had an opportunity to discuss, in a Politburo session, the draft of the Later Ten Points before formalisation.



September was clearly a crucial period. During the month the regime had initiated a formalised two-pronged campaign against revisionism, both foreign and domestic. It did so at that time for a complex of reasons, some of which were external; but probably one of the most telling of these was the knowledge it then presumably had of good crop prospects.<sup>142</sup> It is fairly clear in retrospect that whereas in September the previous year the economy had only slightly improved, by the autumn of 1963 this improvement was more substantial. Although this was reflected chiefly in the agricultural sector, industry for its part was not lagging behind. The most notable evidence of this was the announcement of the establishment of the Fourth Ministry of Machine Building in May,<sup>143</sup> and of the Fifth and Sixth Ministries in September.<sup>144</sup> It is impossible to tell when the decision to establish these ministries was actually taken. There was, as we have seen, a Central Committee work conference in February, and there may have been a Politburo meeting in the first half of May. Either could have been the occasion for making the decision to set up all three ministries. No such meeting is known to have taken place in the summer, at which the last two could have been planned, but there was one in September. In any event the formal creation of two of these ministries was made known in the autumn and was clear evidence both of the general economic upsurge and of an overt effort to expand the national programme of self-sufficiency in the field of modern military technology.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> The late summer is the traditional time when a basically agrarian China takes stock of its annual agricultural production, following which policy decisions are then evolved.

<sup>143</sup> NCNA, 25 May 1963, revealed that Wang Cheng had been appointed minister.

<sup>144</sup> NCNA, 28 September 1963.

<sup>145</sup> It is misleading to deduce that the overt establishment of these three ministries in 1963 indicated that only then was this programme initiated, as biographical records show that they had evolved out of existing machine-building ministries. The original ministries had been reorganised in 1960, probably due to the withdrawal of Soviet specialists. In addition there were a series of related personnel changes in 1962 and the first half of 1963. It is clear therefore that the process was gradual and that component parts of these new ministries, including the Seventh, had for some time existed either within the ministerial complex or in other institutions. Nevertheless, their formal public unveiling did denote the arrival of a new phase of development.

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The general optimism over the economy was reflected in the regime's public statements at the time of the National People's Congress in the winter.<sup>146</sup> 'Our economy has begun an all-round turn for the better', it was proudly announced. The Soviet debt had been largely paid off and the remaining small portion would be repaid by the end of 1965. Not that this signified a solution to all China's economic problems, far from it. There was for example the question of urban unemployment,<sup>147</sup> the nature and role of government agencies in economic matters,<sup>148</sup> the type of incentive required to stimulate scientific and technical work.<sup>149</sup> All these problems, and others too, were troubling

<sup>145</sup> (continued)

The Second to Seventh ministries, inclusively, were represented on the National Defence Council. The Third, Fourth and Fifth ministries were respectively headed by men with the following military backgrounds: signals, artillery and naval. The vice-ministers where known had relevant experience.

<sup>146</sup>

17 November to 3 December.

<sup>147</sup>

Cultural Revolution sources allege that T'an Chen-lin was negatively advocating transferring urban youth to the countryside: in other words, urban unemployed, lacking any hope of finding meaningful employment, should be moved into rural areas, thus leaving the fundamental problem unsolved. This is a consistent allegation of the Cultural Revolution and, if not necessarily to be attributed to Liu, T'an and Chou Jung-hsin, probably accurately reflect a growing awareness of the problem on the part of the regime. See, for example, Chih-nung Hung-ch'i, 1 November 1967, in JPRS 44052, 17 January 1968. Translations on Communist China, Political and Sociological, No.436, pp.2, 3. Also Ko-ming Ch'ing-nien, 10 November 1967. SCMP 4093, 5 January 1968, p.5.

<sup>148</sup>

Kwangming Daily, 9 May 1967. SCMP 3948, 29 May 1967, pp.1-9. This discusses Liu's alleged advocacy of setting up a system of industrial trusts in imitation of Soviet practices.

<sup>149</sup>

Regulations were issued by the State Council on 1 December 1963 concerning awards for inventions and technical improvements. These had been originally approved by the State Council on 23 October. SCMP 3117, 11 December 1963, pp.6-13. See also People's Daily editorial, 2 December, on the same, pp.14-16.

Liu and Teng Hsiao-p'ing are supposed to have supported the Scientific and Technological Commission's drafting of regulations on the conferring of degrees and titles, which Mao later rescinded. Peking Ching Kang Shan, 8 March 1967. SCMP 3933, 5 May 1967, p.15.



the regime. Nevertheless, sufficient progress had been made overall to enable the leadership, if not to compel it, to initiate other activities. Following the promulgation of the September directives it seems that a number of the regime's top leaders involved themselves in rural experimentation work. Cultural Revolution sources strongly criticise Liu, among others, for the part he played in such work. He is stated to have entrenched his wife in a rural area not far from the capital and there deliberately sabotaged Mao's directives on the socialist education movement.<sup>150</sup> As the winter is the best time for conducting rural experiments, being a relatively slack season in most parts of China, it is more than likely that considerable efforts were made to test the political and ideological validity and economic practicability of socialist education in the countryside. This is not to say, however that there is proof of serious opposition to these policies. There may have been; we simply do not have the evidence.<sup>151</sup>

The year ended and 1964 began with the emergence of two new developments: the one affecting cultural and the other military affairs. In the first instance Cultural Revolution material relates that Mao, some time in December, addressed himself to the question of socialist art and literature. 'Problems abound in all forms of art ... and in many departments', he said, 'very little has been achieved so far in socialist transformation.'<sup>152</sup> If these allegations are only partially true they would indicate that much indeed remained to be done in this field.<sup>153</sup> T'ao Chu, for one, has been criticised consistently for opposing Mao's attempts to socialise literat-

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<sup>150</sup> Down with Liu Shao-ch'i, Ching kangshan Fighting Corps of the Fourth Hospital, Peking, May 1967. CB 834, 17 August 1967, p.23.

<sup>151</sup> Aspects of this will be examined below.

<sup>152</sup> NCNA, Peking, 29 October 1967. SCMP 4052, 1 November 1967, p.4.

<sup>153</sup> For a cross section of these see: Compendium of T'ao's Problems. CB 825, 2 May 1967, p.9; NCNA, 17 May 1966, SWB, FE/2167/B/1; Kwang Ming Daily's criticism of Chien Hsien, 9 May 1966, SWB, FE/2164/B/1-5; People's Daily on Chien Hsien, 21 May 1966, FE/2177/B/3-9; Liberation Army Daily and Kwang-ming Daily article, 8 May 1966, FE/2160/B/1-19 (particularly B/12).

ure and art, and indeed he may have done so, but pre-Cultural Revolution data suggest that he may only have erred on questions of emphasis, that he misunderstood or doubted rather than opposed.<sup>154</sup> The outcome of the new directives concerning literature and art was an outpouring of revolutionary works that to some at least were as ideologically correct as they were aesthetically unsatisfactory.<sup>155</sup> At the end of the year the first great regional symposium on socialist drama was held in Shanghai; it closed on 22 January.<sup>156</sup> Noting that not a single modern play had been put on during 1963 it called for strenuous efforts to revolutionise drama as quickly as possible in order to oppose bourgeois and feudal thought which was hindering and undermining the socialist economic base.

The second development was that of the intensification of revolutionary political work in the armed forces. A meeting was held by the general Political Department from late December to mid-January, thus coinciding almost exactly with the East China drama festival.<sup>157</sup> The main purpose of this conference apparently was the drawing up of measures designed to improve the study and understanding of Mao's thoughts and to counteract revisionism. Its most obvious outcome was the formalised adoption of the campaign to learn from the PLA which had its origins, as we have seen, in the Lei Feng emulation movement. This conference then may have reflected an attempt to resolve the problem of training priorities which seems to have emerged at about that time: whether to emphasise training in military skills or in ideology. The conference, convened by the PLA, clearly advocated the latter. On the other hand, it is equally certain that military training was also being stressed at the

<sup>154</sup> See, for example, Nan Fang Daily, 6 June 1963. SCMP 3019, 16 July 1963, p.4.

<sup>155</sup> Liu Chien-hsun for one is supposed to have said: 'But to speak honestly, as far as personal preferences are concerned, I love to see the traditional items ... It seems to me that they are more tasteful than modern revolutionary plays.' Fan-tung Fan-she-hui-chu-i Fen-tzu, Fan-ko-ming Liang-mien-p'ai Liu Chien-hsun-te Tsui-o Shih-shih. JPRS 43357, 16 November 1967. Translations on Communist China: Political and Sociological No.430, p.15.

<sup>156</sup> Speech by K'o Ch'ing-shih at the East China Drama Festival, People's Daily, 29 December 1963, SCMP 3144, 22 January 1964, pp.7-12.

<sup>157</sup> 23 December-1 January 1964.



same time. Whether this denoted opposition to Lin Piao by his Chief of Staff, Lo Jui-ch'ing, as is now alleged is uncertain.<sup>158</sup> There is insufficient data from which to draw any conclusions, but it seems likely that as at least up to February 1964, the general aim of the regime was the creation of both 'red' and 'expert' soldiers; there was room for both approaches noted above. It is quite possible even so that different military leaders responsible for different departments, for example the Political Department as against the Staff Department, stressed their own specialities to the point that personal antagonism was engendered. Moreover, the problem of 'red' versus 'expertness' is an endemic one, and in practical terms potentially or inherently contradictory. Indeed, on the question of training methods one source has it that Lo Jui-ch'ing acted without the consent of Lin Piao and the Military Affairs Committee in organising an all-PLA military tournament in January 1964. The allegation is that at the end of the year, possibly the end of December, in the light of Mao's ideas 'and the large amount of material provided by the armed forces at the time', Lin directed that politics should be brought to the fore. He simultaneously criticised Lo's methods.<sup>159</sup> Thus while it is probable that views differed it may be going too far to assume serious conflict at the highest levels of leadership; the line once approved may in any case only have changed later in the year.

In addition to these two developments there appears to have been under the surface a third problem, and one directly

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<sup>158</sup> The campaign to study Kuo Hsing-fu's training methods was said to have been pushed by Lo Jui-ch'ing. Yeh-chan Pao, 15 October 1957. SCMP 4078, 12 December 1967, p.19. If so it was apparently backed by the MAC, which directed that Kuo's method should be studied. Peking Radio, 17 February 1964, SWB, FE/1483/B/2. It was certainly applied on a wide scale. Four field conferences were held in East China, and probably elsewhere, to push its adoption. It was said to be in conformity with the thinking of Mao and Lin. The conferences were presided over by Yeh Chien-ying and Lo. NCNA, Nanking, 17 February 1964. SCMP 3175, 10 March 1964, pp.5-7.

<sup>159</sup> Canton Ching kangshan, 5 September 1967, SCMP 4046, 24 October 1967, pp.4-5.

related to the others.<sup>160</sup> This was the question of the main direction of the struggle against revisionism and the analysis of its fundamental causes. It is alleged that to Liu the issue was clear. In direct contrast to Mao he is reported to have told the Academy of Sciences in November that the struggle was a national one, dictated by domestic circumstances, a war of the pen against the Soviet Union.<sup>161</sup> In such a war anyone, regardless of his political standing or ideological viewpoint, could play an active role in 'opposing external revisionism without opposing internal revisionism, and opposing foreign revisionism to prevent internal revisionism'.<sup>162</sup> He is further stated to have denied the possibility of a fundamental rapprochement between the USSR and the USA.<sup>163</sup> His crime, if such existed, may therefore have been in his assessment of the principle danger to China at that period in history. To him it may have appeared that there was in fact no real danger of a Soviet-American rapprochement. The USSR was, after all, still basically a socialist state,<sup>164</sup> and the latter an imperialist and capitalist one. Consequently he may have argued that the major danger to China lay in the emergence of revisionism abroad which could of course have a detrimental effect on domestic Chinese developments. By extension, then, if foreign revisionism was successfully combatted at its source China could be secured from both external and internal threats. Nevertheless, Liu does not appear to have denied the necessity of a simultaneous attack on the native evil. It is relevant to note that this was implicitly the line taken by a Kwangtung conference addressed by T'ao Chu in May 1963. The conference noted that foreign revisionism was attempting to 'disintegrate the revolutionary will of the people', and that all must employ the thought of Mao 'to resist firmly the reactionary adverse

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Information on this comes largely from recent allegations and is therefore not wholly reliable. There is, however, some slight indirect confirmation to be found in sources that antedate the Cultural Revolution.

<sup>161</sup>

Down with Liu Shao-ch'i Ching kangshan Fighting Corps of the 4th Hospital, Peking, May 1967. CB 834, 17 August 1967, p.23.

<sup>162</sup>

Ibid.

<sup>163</sup>

Ibid.

<sup>164</sup>

Drag out Liu Shao-ch'i', Peking Ching kangshan, 18 April 1967. SCMP 3946, 25 May 1967, p.6.



current of modern revisionism and clean out thoroughly the ideological poisons spread by it.<sup>165</sup> At the November conference of the Academy of Sciences, which was addressed by Liu, the question of the 'active struggle against modern revisionism in the sphere of philosophy and social science' was indeed stressed, but in the context of the study of Mao's thought.<sup>166</sup> Assuming that the NCNA account of these proceedings was accurate, if incomplete, the adopted policy would not seem to have differed much from Peking's overt stand during this period, which seems to have been that of fighting revisionism at home and abroad in a coordinated manner. However, if the two forms were related, the domestic evil was a distinguishable indigenous phenomenon that could and should be combatted separately. If Liu erred, he may again have done so on questions of emphasis, for there is no entirely convincing evidence of his fundamental opposition to the socialist education movement.<sup>167</sup>

This period, the end of 1963 and beginning of 1964, seems to have been a critical one during which policy decisions were taken that were to have far-reaching results. Whether these decisions were made at the September Politburo meeting or at a later meeting, possibly in December, is not known. As certain policy trends suddenly became apparent only at the end of December, it is possible that the Politburo sat again early that month.<sup>168</sup> It is possible, too, that an enlarged meeting

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<sup>165</sup> May 1963. Nan Fang Daily, 6 June 1963. SCMP 3019, 16 July 1963, pp.4-5.

Chou En-lai too was emphasising this line to the NPC in December 1964: 'as long as the world still contains imperialism, capitalism, reactionaries, and modern revisionism, it is inevitable that the sinister winds of capitalism will frequently blow into socialist countries.' SCMP 3370, 5 January 1965, p.8.

<sup>166</sup> NCNA, English, 25 November 1963.

<sup>167</sup> Even if the charges are partly correct concerning his attitude to this movement (the Ten Points in their various forms) they would suggest more that it was his methods that differed rather than his ends.

<sup>168</sup> Chou En-lai went off on a protracted Afro-Asian tour in mid-December. In his absence Teng Hsiao-p'ing was promoted to acting premier. It would have been logical to convene a Politburo session just before Chou left on an important tour, though not presumably imperative to have done so.

of the Military Affairs Committee was held shortly after, at the beginning of January, during the latter stages of the Political Department conference. There apparently was such a meeting in 'early 1964'.<sup>169</sup> In any event, as has been noted, there was a marked change in emphasis on literature and art, and on the role of the PLA in society, at about that time. Shortly after the conclusion of the Political Department conference the press published an explanation of PLA political work terms.<sup>170</sup> A week later the People's Daily called on the whole country to learn from the PLA, specifically demanding the establishment of regular political work systems modelled on the PLA.<sup>171</sup> This was the overt beginning of the creation of political departments in the organisations of the Party and government.

Some understanding of this new movement will help explain how the Cultural Revolution was prepared. If these political departments were set up with the express intent to erode the organisational power of certain leaders then knowledge of when it was decided to establish them would indicate when the first direct move may have been made against them in the central Party and civil agencies. Altogether another problem is that of Lin Piao's activities in the PLA immediately following the overthrow of P'eng Te-huai. These may or may not have been related to the distant task of removing Liu and the others; it is impossible to tell. Nor can we be certain when the actual decision was made to establish the political departments. It may have been in September, or in December. The latter date seems more likely, coinciding as it did with the emergence of new policy trends. Indeed, the reason for and means of their establishment may well have been the major theme of the Political Department conference in late December. Furthermore, one Cultural Revolution source relates that Mao directed that they be created in the Finance and Trade system in December.<sup>172</sup> By far the more dif-

<sup>169</sup> Mao Tse-tung Chu-i Chan-tou Pao, 23 February 1967; SCMP 3903, 21 March 1967, p.10.

<sup>170</sup> People's Daily, 23 January 1964. SCMP 3162, 19 February 1964, pp.8-9.

<sup>171</sup> People's Daily, 1 February 1964. SCMP 3164, 24 February 1964, pp.1-8. The army was at the same time instructed to learn from civil society.

<sup>172</sup> Hofei Radio, 22 June 1968. SWB, FE/2809/B/8.



ficult problem however is that of discovering the causes for their establishment. Basically the options seem to be: they were created simply to assist in revolutionising that segment of society not hitherto dealt with in the socialist education movement, without at that time any ulterior motive; or they were created to establish the power of the PLA in purely Party and government organs, with the ultimate aim even then of overthrowing Mao's opponents.<sup>173</sup>

As with many problems concerning contemporary Chinese affairs there are sufficient data to support diametrically opposed arguments, but insufficient to form conclusions. In the present instance it would be misleading to choose between the two possibilities. All that can be said is that the creation of these political departments led eventually to a considerable movement of PLA cadres into organs hitherto outside their direct knowledge and beyond the authority of the Military Affairs Committee or its agencies.<sup>174</sup> Whatever the original reason it is obvious that when it later became necessary to overthrow the leadership of vital Party and government organisations the presence of these cadres, and the experience and authority they had obtained in the meantime, enabled the regime to maintain a degree of control over them which would otherwise have been quite impossible.<sup>175</sup>

The spring and early summer of 1964 was taken up with the continuation and extension of the policy trends which had emerged at the commencement of the year. The theme of the rev-

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There are alternative variants to these possibilities but essentially it must be decided whether or not these departments were designed, at that stage, for ulterior purposes.

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Takung Pao, 16 June 1965, states that 32 percent of the political workers in the Heilungkiang Finance and Trade system were demobilised PLA cadres. SCMP 3495, 13 July 1965, p.6. See also p.10 where it is said that as far as possible demobilised PLA cadres should be employed in this work.

<sup>175</sup>

A Chengtu broadcast dated 29 March 1965 indicates that apart from the purely political and ideological authority of these departments, which would have been considerable, the local Finance and Trade political department had propaganda, cadres and security divisions.

olutionisation of modern drama received considerable propaganda emphasis throughout the first three months. February saw the promotion of a new generation of revolutionary songs; in April the PLA held its own drama festival. Finally, at the beginning of June an eight week long festival of Peking opera was opened. By the early summer the movement to establish political departments had grown to the point where most of the important economic ministries and many provincial departments had set them up or were in the process of so doing. National conferences were convened on political work in Industry and Communications, and Finance and Trade, and on the campaign to learn from the PLA.<sup>176</sup> Despite the fact that these were held in the middle of the socialist education movement material incentives were still stressed.<sup>177</sup> Youth work, as an integral part of the general socialist education movement, also gained prominence. In March the Central Committee of the Young Communist League held a conference on socialist education and on learning from the PLA. Two months later the PLA, too, convened a conference on youth work. On 11 June the Young Communist League's Ninth Congress opened in Peking.<sup>178</sup>

Before the session commenced Mao and many other top leaders, including PLA officers, Regional Bureau and provincial secretaries, received the delegates.<sup>179</sup> It is probable that mid June was also the occasion for the Politburo work conference

<sup>176</sup> The first Industry and Communications conference was held late January and early February. NCNA English, 2 February 1964. The second was from the end of March to the beginning of April. Peking Radio, 3 April 1964, SWB FE/1511/B/1.

The first Finance and Trade conference was convened prior to 29 March 1964. See Chengtu Radio, 29 March 1965. The second was held from 15 May to 6 June. People's Daily, 7 June 1964. SCMP 3249, 30 June 1964, pp.1-3.

<sup>177</sup> The second Industry and Communications conference, March-April 1964. This may support Cultural Revolution charges of opposition to the socialist education movement by Po I-po who headed the Industry and Communications group.

<sup>178</sup> NCNA English, 6 July 1964.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.



which several sources refer to as having been held.<sup>180</sup> The main purpose of the Ninth Congress was clearly the analysis of the socialist education movement, with particular reference to the past and future role of the Youth League in it; a new and more revolutionary constitution was also enacted.<sup>181</sup> It can be seen from the congress speeches that, in addition, the theme of cultivating revolutionary successors was discussed.<sup>182</sup> It is possible that this theme had been expounded by Mao earlier in the year; in any case both the Youth Congress and the Politburo work conference would have provided convenient platforms from which to make further pronouncements on it. The actual text was not published till 3 August, or some two months after the Ninth Congress.<sup>183</sup> With the benefit of hindsight it is significant that this document made mention of the necessity to select revolutionary successors to the nucleus of leadership. It noted moreover that although the majority of people in the nucleus of leadership had been tempered in earlier class struggles and had been armed with the thought of Mao, there still remained a few intractable elements and incorrigible die-hards who had to be isolated.<sup>184</sup> Hindsight may however be too revealing in this case for the targets of this veiled attack, at that time, may not have been foreseen precisely or may merely have been singled out in the Youth League.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> See for example the Twenty-three Articles, Baum and Teiwes, p.120. This is called a meeting of the standing committee of the Politburo, and was attended by First Secretaries of the Regional Bureaux.

Many of the leaders were also present on 15 and 16 June, to review PLA units. Peking Radio, 17 June 1964. SWB FE/1583/B/1.

<sup>181</sup> See the reports by Hu Yao-pang and Hu K'e-shih, NCNA 6 July 1964, and CB 738, 30 July 1964, pp.3-23. In addition there were substantial changes made in the league's Central Committee.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid, and pp.41-3.

<sup>183</sup> People's Daily, 3 August 1964. SCMP 3274, 7 August 1964, pp. 1-6.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid, pp.2-3.

<sup>185</sup> Cultural Revolution sources state that Mao, addressing the All China Federation of Literary Workers in June, warned against the danger of intellectual dissidence. He said that they were on the verge of revisionism because associated cultural organisations had basically not carried out Party policies in recent years. NCNA, 6 June 1966, SWB FE/2183/B/4.

Recent sources have claimed that throughout this period a number of influential officials were doing all they could to oppose a whole range of Mao's policies. Teng Hsiao-p'ing is supposed to have criticised the conduct of the socialist education experiment at Peking university as being misdirected and too intense.<sup>186</sup> Li Ching-ch'uan is said to have opposed the Ta Chai experience with a peculiar Ssichuanese version of the same which negated political work.<sup>187</sup> Yang Hsien-chien supposedly systemised his theory of the unity of contradictions.<sup>188</sup> Liu, himself, is stated to have gone to Canton to propagate his T'aoyuan experiences, in direct opposition to Mao's views, and to have been abetted in his endeavours by T'ao Chu.<sup>189</sup> In the late summer, furthermore, Liu is alleged to have advocated the decrease of full-time education, which measure if implemented would have made it more difficult for the poorer classes to obtain adequate education.<sup>190</sup> Simultaneously he was calling for a reduction in permanent workers, and the placing of greater reliance on temporary labour.<sup>191</sup> At the same time T'an Chen-lin is stated to have seen a surplus over employment possibilities of one million urban youths and suggested that these, including reactionary elements, be absorbed in rural areas.<sup>192</sup>

<sup>186</sup>  
Pa-erh-wu Chan-pao, 14 February 1967. SCMM 574, 1 May 1967, p.17.

<sup>187</sup>  
Chengtu Radio, 19 November 1967. SWB FE/2629/B/11. Chengtu Radio, 7 February 1968. SWB FE/2693/B/5-6.

<sup>188</sup>  
Red Flag, 31 August 1964. SCMM 434, 14 September 1964, p.2. The attack against Yang gathered way in June; Red Flag sponsored a forum to refute his theories from 24-25 August. See CB 745, 2 December 1964, pp.1-40 (particularly pp.26-31).

<sup>189</sup>  
Peking Radio, 28 October 1967. SWB FE/2610/B/3. Also the People's Daily, Red Flag and Liberation Army Daily joint editorial of 23 November 1967. JPRS 43921, 9 January 1968, p.32.

<sup>190</sup>  
Ching kangshan, 18 April 1967. SCMP 3946, 25 May 1967, p.7. See also Canton Pa-san-i, December 1967. SCMP 4118, 14 February 1968, pp.8-11.

<sup>191</sup>  
Ching kangshan, 18 April 1967.

<sup>192</sup>  
Chih-nung Hung-ch'i, 1 November 1967. Translations on Communist China: Political and Sociological No.436, JPRS 44052, 17 January 1968, p.2.



Taken together these charges suggest that there was a degree of opposition to some of the more radical organisational effects of the socialist education movement, and that central to everything was the question of youth. It would appear that there is probably a basis of truth to them, in that the leadership since at least the June Politburo work conference, if not long before, was being confronted with a series of inter-related and fundamental problems the solution to which was being earnestly debated. Once more, however, it is not feasible to deduce from the charges anything more than that views on how to solve these problems probably varied considerably. If Liu and others were directly attempting to oppose Mao, this has yet to be proved. Most of the leaders probably saw the innate difficulty of balancing the solution of China's economic problems with that of preventing the growth of revisionism, let alone trying to eradicate it. Liu and others might have been wary of ideology where Mao saw little but it, but even this is uncertain. What is certain is that the pressure was on: the socialist education movement was moving into a new more radical phase.

On 10 September, the 'Central Committee' made known to the Party its further decisions on the socialist education movement: the revised Later Ten Points.<sup>193</sup> It is probable that these had been drawn up at what may have been another Politburo meeting held shortly before, either in August or early September. It has been claimed that this document was the particular work of Liu, and that it was directly opposed to Mao's thoughts as expressed in the First Ten Points drawn up in May 1963.<sup>194</sup> There is nothing to substantiate this claim. It is true that there was a difference in tone between these documents, but it is not clear whether this was due to the evolution of policy caused by changing circumstances and subscribed to by most of the leaders, or due to opposition to Mao. In view of what appears to have been the generally more pessimistic view of the regime during this period it is hardly surprising that this September directive was more sombre in tone than the earlier ones. Cultural Revolution sources, however, go further.

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<sup>193</sup>  
Baum and Teiwes, pp.102-17.

<sup>194</sup>  
Joint editorial, 'The struggle between the two roads in China's Countryside', translations from Hung ch'i: No.16, 1967. JPRS 43921, p.32.

They make a number of charges which in some instances are specific enough to enable analysis in the context of pre-Cultural Revolution data. One authoritative source, a joint editorial of the People's Daily, Red Flag and Liberation Army Daily, particularly requires close scrutiny.<sup>195</sup> It first makes the point previously noted that the September 1963 Later Ten Points were drawn up by Teng Hsiao-p'ing with the express intent to absolve the capitalist forces in the rural areas, to protect the agents of the bourgeoisie in the Party, and to direct the spearhead of the struggle against the poor and lower middle peasants.<sup>196</sup> The second point is that Liu then drew up the revised Later Ten Points, presumably the September 1964 Document,<sup>197</sup> to lead the socialist education movement astray and to suppress the poor and lower middle peasants and a large number of comparatively good cadres, in order to protect a handful of capitalist-roaders in the Party; he also deliberately distorted the theory of contradictions for the same purpose.<sup>198</sup> In another source this second charge is stated as the advocacy of 'unity of 95 per cent of the cadres as the premise of the unity of 95 per cent of the masses'.<sup>199</sup> The third charge, in another source, is that at the Supreme State Conference in December Liu tried to have these erroneous views of the September 1964 directive promulgated throughout the country.<sup>200</sup>

It is not possible to prove or disprove that Teng Hsiao-p'ing authored the September 1963 document. As previously noted he may well have drawn up the first draft, qua General Secretary, but the final document was a 'Central Committee'

<sup>195</sup>  
Ibid, pp.19-36.

<sup>196</sup>  
Ibid, pp.31-2. Source refers to the Later Ten Points as being concocted about four months after the First Ten Points.

<sup>197</sup>  
Ibid, p.32.

<sup>198</sup>  
Ibid, pp.32-3. This is, in fact, specifically criticised in the Twenty-three Articles. Baum and Teiwes, p.119 (Article II).

<sup>199</sup>  
Chingkangshan, 18 April 1967 (see above) p.8. T'ao Chu is alleged to have stated that they must rely on the old cadres, and also clean up the masses, who were being exploited by a new type of rich peasant. Fan-hsiu Chan-pao, 8 July 1967. SCMP 4018, 11 September 1967, p.4.

<sup>200</sup>  
Chingkangshan, 18 April, p.8.



one. Though more specific than the First Ten Points of May, which were apparently devised by Mao personally, it did not fundamentally differ from the early directive and was in many respects a logical extension of Mao's instructions. On the other hand in becoming more specific it did point out that, 'Experiences gained in spot-testing at various places have proved that to consolidate (unify) over 95 per cent of the cadres is a pre-requisite to the consolidation of over 95 per cent of the masses'.<sup>201</sup> It emphatically directed that the cadres were not to become the main target. This is clearly the basis of the evidence adduced by the Cultural Revolution sources, but does not as these sources would have it equate to advocating attacking the peasant masses. It seems that the directive had been made more specific in this respect because information gained since May 1963 necessitated its amendment. On balance, then, it would appear that the first charge is based on tendentious reasoning.

In any event the regime can hardly have it both ways for, even allowing for the passage of time, Teng Hsiao-p'ing is made to have sinned in protecting the cadres in 1963 where Liu sinned a year later in making them the major target. In point of fact however even this latter allegation is open to question for if Liu had authored the September 1964 directive, the target for attack was carefully limited: 'Cadres who have committed serious mistakes are usually connected with certain cadres of higher level organisations or other organisations, and are instigated, supported and protected by them ... no matter to what level cadres belong, or what positions they hold, as long as they have collaborated with undesirable cadres of basic level organisations and done bad things they should be subjected to open criticisms before the people ...'.<sup>202</sup> The September 1964 document in any event is by no means unambiguous. It called both for uniting with the masses before the cadres, and for uniting with them after the cadres.<sup>203</sup> It is possible to deduce from these changes and contradictory injunctions, much as one did from the opposing themes in the Moscow Declaration and Statement, a reflection

<sup>201</sup> Later Ten Points, September 1963. Baum and Teiwes, p.85.

<sup>202</sup> Revised Later Ten Points, September 1964. Baum and Teiwes, p.111 and 115 (emphasis added).

<sup>203</sup> Revised Later Ten Points, Baum and Teiwes, p.103 and 108.

of policy dispute. On the other hand it is equally possible to argue that this is evidence of a general change of emphasis due to changed circumstances not necessarily involving leadership dispute, and that it is also evidence of prevarication or muddled thinking. At this stage it is difficult to choose between the alternatives with any certainty, if indeed they are mutually exclusive alternatives. It is certain however that the regime's case against Liu in this respect lacks conviction.

The third charge must be considered in the light of events at the end of the year. Before doing so it is necessary to take note of three developments, two external and one internal, which probably had an impact on the leadership. The first was the confrontation between the naval forces of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the United States in the Gulf of Tonkin. Although the first incidents had occurred on 2 and 4 August, another serious one took place on 18 September. It created a considerable commotion at the time, and was publicly interpreted by Hanoi and Peking as incidents fabricated by the Americans to justify further aggression against North Vietnam and China. Simultaneously Peking propaganda on the escalation of the war increased markedly, particularly in relation to the despatch of the First Cavalry Division and the alleged use by the Americans of poison gas. It is not known whether the Chinese knew of forward deployment of the North Vietnamese naval forces, but if they were not overjoyed at the failure to achieve military success they must nevertheless have regarded these incidents as confirmation of Hanoi's correct assessment of the nature of imperialism and consequent requirement for continuing if not intensifying the armed struggle against it. The second development was the explosion of China's first nuclear device on 16 October. This was by any standard a great achievement, regardless of the fact that for a nation which had far from solved its fundamental problems it might by some be regarded as a luxury. It must have considerably impressed the nation as a whole. To Mao, Lin Piao and the military leaders it was probably most gratifying. Thus in normal circumstances all should have been proud of China's success, if some might have doubted its necessity. But we cannot be sure, in retrospect, that anything contributing to the prestige of Mao and Lin Piao in those days would have been specially pleasing to Liu and some others. The third event was the fall of Khrushchev, which preceded the nuclear test by about two days.<sup>204</sup>



There is no reason to believe that the two events were casually related, in all probability they were not. Both depended on detailed and secret planning, and on certain factors affecting the precise timing which were not entirely foreseeable by the planners. Both were independently motivated. Nevertheless the enmity between Khrushchev and Mao seems to have transcended that of ideology or even nationalism, it was clearly partly personal, and the fall of the one entailed the elevation of the other. The two events were therefore as related as were the Cuban affair and the Sino-Indian war two years earlier.

If Mao had needed a boost to his personal prestige during this period the Gulf of Tonkin incident, the nuclear test and the fall of Khrushchev would have provided it. Though there is no evidence of such a need, presumably increased stature at any time would not have come amiss. It is possible that these events had some bearing on domestic policy-making, though this is little more than speculation. It has been seen that in the third charge Cultural Revolution sources claim that Liu, having authored the September 1964 regulations, attempted to have these conveyed to the whole nation at the Supreme State Conference in December. Superficially this is an extraordinary allegation to make as one must assume that a 'Central Committee' document such as this had already been promulgated by that time. Perhaps this was not entirely so and Mao had managed to have it withdrawn or suppressed after his successes in October. In such an event the allegation might make sense, otherwise it would seem to be groundless. In any case these December days were eventful ones. On the 18th Liu, as Head of State, convened the Supreme State Conference; he was not recorded as having addressed it.<sup>205</sup> Three days later the National People's Congress opened; to close on 4 January. Chou En-lai addressed the delegates on 21 and 22 December.<sup>206</sup> This speech is of considerable interest, throwing light as it does on the evolution of policy during this period which was not otherwise publicised. Chou went to some lengths in describing the healthy state of the economy and the plans for further advances in 1965.

<sup>205</sup> NCNA, 18 December 1964. SCMP 3363, 23 December 1964, p.1.

<sup>206</sup> Summary of Report on the Work of the Government, NCNA 30 December 1964. SCMP 3370, 5 January 1965, pp.1-18.

He also revealed that the Third Five-Year Plan would commence in 1966. In the same breath he attacked 'ideas advocating stagnation, pessimism, inertia and complacency', and pointed out that 'new bourgeois elements, new bourgeois intellectuals and other new exploiters will be ceaselessly generated in society, in Party and government organs' and the like. These people, he warned, would 'invariably try to find their protectors and agents in the higher leading organisations'. Referring presumably to the period between 1959 and the 10th plenum he specifically condemned the domestic policies of '3 Self and 1 Guarantee', liberalisation, reversal of verdicts, and capitulation in United Front work. Additionally attacked was the policy of '3 Reconciliations and 1 Reduction'; that is, reconciliation with imperialism, reactionaries and modern revisionists, and reduction of assistance and support to the revolutionary struggle of other peoples. He then noted that domestic 'class struggle and the revolutionary movement are the motive force for developing production ...' On questions of philosophy and culture he condemned the view of 'two combining into one', and revisionist drama. He also commended the instructions of chairman Liu Shao-ch'i on educational reform: the reform of the full-time system and the establishment of part-time institutions. The overall significance of Chou's report is not, it would seem, in that it attacked policies later attributed to the 'top capitalist-roaders' but that it marked the clearest overt move away from such policies by the regime. The most explicit commendation of Liu's educational policies, and Chou's analysis of the production benefits derivable from the socialist education movement, are of particular interest. They indicate that on such matters Cultural Revolution allegations lack credibility.<sup>207</sup> But the report is significant for other reasons. It underlined the concern of the regime over a state of 'stagnation, pessimism, inertia and complacency'. It also provided the first indicator of an awareness of weaknesses, if not conflict, at the highest levels of leadership.

It seems probable that this report of Chou's would have been discussed by the Politburo before being released, but

<sup>207</sup> Ching Kangshan Fighting Corps of the Fourth Hospital, Peking, May 1967. CB 834 17 August 1967, p.24. T'ao Chu also is alleged to have seen little but economic benefits. See for example Red Guard Pamphlet, 14 January 1967. CB 824, 27 April 1967, p.13.



there is no knowledge of any session at that time. In any event, that Chou spoke with the full authority of the regime cannot seriously be questioned. Very shortly after this speech the Politburo did meet. We know little more than that this was in the last ten days of December and that at it Mao is said to have repudiated Liu's bourgeois line and drawn up the Twenty-three Articles.<sup>208</sup> The accuracy of these statements is not entirely clear. The Politburo did apparently meet about that time certainly most of the leaders were present in Peking, and all came together on Mao's birthday.<sup>209</sup> Moreover it is possible that the Twenty-three Articles were either drawn up at this meeting or at least tentatively discussed at it, as it is improbable that the full conference on the subject which took place on 14 January could have been held without adequate preparations.<sup>210</sup> On the other hand there is no evidence to support the claim that the meeting repudiated Liu's line: only a few days earlier Chou spoke approvingly of Liu, and on the 30th Liu once again convened the Supreme State Conference. Why it was necessary to have two meetings of this august body, which meets most infrequently, only twelve days apart, remains a mystery. To have done so indicates that something important had occurred in the meantime.<sup>211</sup> Unlike the account of the earlier session, NCNA mentioned that Liu spoke 'on the current international and domestic situation and on important questions of work'.<sup>212</sup> What this speech contained and how it differed from the line previously enunciated is not known. Less than 48 hours later however People's Daily published its New Year message for 1965.<sup>213</sup> This provides a clue to the contents of Liu's speech. For the most part it discussed the socialist education movement, stressing three important questions: the principal contradiction or the struggle between socialism and capitalism, the correct method of carrying out this struggle, and the correct personal attitude to work. Also discussed in brief was the international situation. It is clear therefore that the division of subject

<sup>208</sup> Yenan Huo-chu, 5 October 1967. SCMP 4062, 17 November 1967, p.3.

<sup>209</sup> NCNA 27 December 1964. SCMP 3368, 31 December 1964, pp.2-3.

<sup>210</sup> Twenty-three Articles, Baum and Teiwes, p.118.

<sup>211</sup> The second meeting was on 30 December 1964.

<sup>212</sup> NCNA 31 December 1964. SCMP 3371, 6 January 1965, p.1.

<sup>213</sup> NCNA 1 January 1965. Ibid, pp.3-6.

matter in the editorial was precisely that of Liu's speech. Furthermore a comparison of the open editorial with the classified text of the Twenty-three Articles reveals a very close parallel in themes,<sup>214</sup> with the exception of the discussion of international affairs which was only implicit in the latter.<sup>215</sup> It is thus apparent that Liu's speech, the People's Daily editorial and the Twenty-three Articles had much in common. It is also reasonable to suppose that as the last-mentioned was promulgated as the twenty-sixth document of the Central Committee in 1965,<sup>216</sup> the international affairs section of Liu's speech may have borne the serial number twenty-five or twenty-seven. In sum the only event that appears to have come between the dates of the two meetings of the Supreme State Conference seems to have been the Politburo meeting which drew up or discussed, as has been postulated, the Twenty-three Articles. There is, furthermore, no direct evidence to suggest that Liu's position or prestige had by then suffered. The Twenty-three Articles programme thus becomes the apparent reason for convoking the second meeting of the Supreme State Conference.

In many respects this new programme was a mere continuation of earlier ones, and as has been pointed out by others it was the most terse and obscure of all these directives.<sup>217</sup> This is curiously recognised in the Central Committee's introduction to the directive where it is stated that 'If this document should contradict previous Central Committee documents concerning the Socialist Education Movement then this document shall uniformly be taken as the standard'.<sup>218</sup> In two respects however there were singular differences, both of which being highlighted by their inclusion in Article II, sub-headed 'The Nature of the Movement'.

<sup>214</sup> See text of the Twenty-three Articles, Baum and Teiwes, pp. 118-26.

<sup>215</sup> The first of the Twenty-three Articles states that 'Our Party will not betray the trust and hopes of the people of the whole nation and of the people of the world', Baum and Teiwes, p.119.

<sup>216</sup> Twenty-three Articles, Baum and Teiwes, p.118.

<sup>217</sup> Baum and Teiwes, p.35.

<sup>218</sup> Twenty-three Articles, Baum and Teiwes, p.118.



The first was fundamental. The socialist education movement differed from everything that had preceded it: previous explanations of the movement 'do not explain the nature of to-day's contradictions; they are not Marxist-Leninist methods of looking at things'.<sup>219</sup> The current movement was the embodiment of the essence of the contradiction between socialism and capitalism. The second difference was expressed as follows: 'The key point of this movement is to rectify those people in positions of authority within the Party who take the capitalist road' of whom 'some are out in the open and some are concealed ... and even in the work of provincial and Central Committee departments ...' One is tempted to conclude from this that, at that time, the specific target was already Liu and the others, but this is far from certain. If it were the case then possibly it was also the case in September 1964, when the directive of the Central Committee allegedly sponsored by Liu spoke of misdeeds being ultimately attributable to high-level cadres.<sup>220</sup> Yet, as we have seen there are difficulties in such an assumption. It would also have been the case for the third week of December, when Chou spoke of the protectors and agents in higher leading organisations.<sup>221</sup> At that time however Chou was commending one of Liu's policies.<sup>222</sup> On the other hand it would be foolhardy to assume an ability to read the innermost thoughts of Mao during this, or for that matter, any period. He may

<sup>219</sup> Ibid., p.119-20. Article I, 'The Situation', equates to a preface. On this particular point my assessment agrees generally with that of Baum and Teiwes, see pp.36-7. (emphasis added).

<sup>220</sup> Revised Later Ten Points, September 1964, Baum and Teiwes, p.115.

<sup>221</sup> Report to the National People's Congress, December 1964. (See above).

<sup>222</sup> It is also of interest to note that certain PLA units were even then busily studying Liu's 'How to Be a Good Communist'. People's Daily allegedly based on a Liberation Army Daily report, 20 December 1964. SCMP 3369, 4 January 1965 pp.4-5. See also the summary of the Liberation Army Daily, 1 January editorial carried in People's Daily, 2 January 1965. SCMP 3376, 13 January 1965, pp.1-6. Lo Jui-ch'ing at the same time, addressing the National People's Congress, gave fulsome praise to Mao and Lin Piao, the latter having 'creatively applied Mao Tse-tung's thinking in current army building', NCNA 29 December 1964. SCMP 3369, 4 January 1965, pp.1-2.

well have decided by then, or even much earlier, to purge Liu and the others, but there is no evidence for this and surmise will do little to elucidate the matter. The most logical explanation seems to be, if Mao's possible ulterior motives are not taken into account, that there was a general awareness in the Politburo of the unreality of attributing all the inadequacies and evils of society to lower level cadres. There was therefore a need to put pressure on senior cadres, as a body, with the publicised intention not so much of weeding out known culprits but of discovering who they were.

This new phase of the socialist education movement, which commenced at the end of December, also affected the PLA. Not unusually the National People's Congress was followed by a plenary meeting of the National Defence Council.<sup>223</sup> Some one hundred delegates attended and were addressed by Liu and Lo Jui-ch'ing. It is not known what was said by these speakers but it may be inferred that the socialist education movement, particularly the Twenty-three Articles,<sup>224</sup> was discussed, as probably was the war in Vietnam. It is not unlikely that an enlarged session of the Military Affairs Commission was convened at about the same time. It may have been in January that the Central Committee, through the Military Affairs Commission, decided upon the abolition of military ranks and insignia,<sup>225</sup> and on the new more revolutionary forms of address to be adopted by the armed forces.<sup>226</sup> In any event the nation learned of these decisions only in the summer. Just before this People's Daily and Red Flag both carried articles ostensibly marking the 20th anniversary of the victory against Fascism but in reality criticising what China saw to be the Soviet revisionist stand on peaceful co-existence with particular reference to the war in Vietnam.<sup>227</sup>

<sup>223</sup> NCNA, 8 January 1965. SCMP, 13 January 1965, p.1.

<sup>224</sup> The Twenty-three Articles were alluded to in the Liberation Army Daily editorial of 1 January. People's Daily, 2 January 1965. SCMP 3376, pp.1-6.

<sup>225</sup> Theoretically decided by the National People's Congress on 22 May, and announced on 24 May.

<sup>226</sup> Announced on 6 June.

<sup>227</sup> People's Daily, 9 May 1965. CB 761, 12 May 1965, pp.1-12. Red Flag article by Lo Jui-ch'ing, 10 May 1965. Peking Foreign Languages Press, 1965.



The socialist education movement was certainly reflected in the national conference on political work in the Finance and Trade system, which was held in February that year.<sup>228</sup> A comparison of the comments on this meeting and on the June 1964 one<sup>229</sup> reveals the extent of change in the objectives of political department work by the beginning of 1965. Whereas the former was almost entirely concerned with the over-riding theme of emulating the PLA and by extension with establishing political departments, the latter concentrated on class struggle as defined in the Twenty-three Articles. This was a natural development in the circumstances, but it was also a significant development.

It has been observed that the decision in late 1963 to establish political departments cannot be said unequivocally to have equated to a direct move against Liu and the others at that time. It did nevertheless lead to an influx of PLA cadres into organisations hitherto foreign to them. In the course of the next 12 months or so these cadres had not presumably been idle, and several press releases on the subject suggest that by at least the middle of 1965 they had greatly consolidated their position.<sup>230</sup> A Ta Kung Pao article of that period indicates however that there was a certain degree of opposition to this. It criticised three erroneous viewpoints: two questioning the necessity to set up political departments at all, the third challenging the ability to staff them. In refuting the third view the authorities ruled that 'Cadres who are demobilised from the armed forces and who are capable of doing political work must be assigned to political work as far as possible'.<sup>231</sup> Cultural Revolution sources also allege that to Lo Jui-ch'ing the establishment of military representatives

<sup>228</sup> Held 'recently': Peking Radio, 27 February 1965. SWB FE/W305/B/20. Conferences were also held by the Industry and Communications, and Agriculture and Forestry Systems at about the same time. The latter system held another political work conference in August.

<sup>229</sup> Peking Radio, 6 June 1964. SWB FE/W268/B/20.

<sup>230</sup> See for example Ta Kung Pao articles of 16 June 1965. SCMP 3495, 13 July 1965, pp.5-10. Ta Kung Pao, 10 May 1965 has it that the February national conference set the deadline for completion of the establishment of these organs, down to the basic level, at before the end of 1965.

<sup>231</sup> Ta Kung Pao, 16 June. SCMP 3495, p.10.

in the national defence industrial system, 'is an expression of distrust for the Party and the masses'.<sup>232</sup>

Opposition to the system notwithstanding, by the summer of the year it is probable that military infiltration of the Party and government institutions had considerably progressed. Political departments had been set up in the Industry and Communications, and Finance and Trade systems of both Party and government, from the central to the provincial levels, and were spreading downwards. PLA involvement in rural affairs of such a nature seems to have come somewhat later, though by means of the PLA emulation campaign and the socialist education movement it had certainly increased from the beginning of the year.<sup>233</sup> It spread further by May, when Mao appears to have called for direct PLA involvement in the socialist education involvement.<sup>234</sup> Thus the influence of the military in all major Party and government organisations concerned with the economy had reached a significant level by the summer. There remained only the Party and government system of propaganda, culture and education, together with such important institutions as organisation, administration and the like. These seem partly to have remained outside the PLA's orbit. Yet even in the propaganda group there must have been some effect, as linked with the effort to revolutionise drama was the campaign to emulate the PLA. It was only during the Cultural Revolution, however, that the org-

<sup>232</sup> This presumably refers to the establishment of political departments. The date for the statement is not given. Ching-kangshan and Kwangtung Wen-i Chan-pao, 5 September 1967. SCMP 4046, 24 October 1967, p.6.

<sup>233</sup> A national conference on political work was convened in August by the 'Department of the Central Committee of the CCP in charge of political work in agricultural and forestry units'. NCNA, 22 August, 1965; SCMP 3526, 26 August 1965, p.1.

<sup>234</sup> See the second anniversary statements in Mao's directive of 7 May which stressed that 'army men should learn politics, military affairs and culture, engage in agricultural production ... take part in the socialist education movement in factories and villages'. For example, NCNA, 8 May 1968; SCMP 4177, 14 May 1968, p.13.



anisational structures of the propaganda group, and of the Party and government organisation and administrative institutions, were drastically affected.<sup>235</sup>

During the spring and summer, too, the socialist education movement had brought increased pressures on culture and education, on youth work, and the economy. In February the North China modern drama festival was held, at which the principle participants were Lu Ting-i, Chou Yang and Lin Mo-han. The overt account of this festival reveals nothing of a suspicious nature. Its apparent purpose was the revolutionisation of drama along the lines of earlier festivals and in accordance with the principles of the new regulations on the socialist education movement.<sup>236</sup> A general campaign against erroneous tendencies in cultural work was simultaneously launched, and went on into May. At about the same time several personnel changes in related organs were announced.<sup>237</sup> In addition, the Young Communist League was active during the period. It held its second plenum from 29 March to 14 April, the major published themes of this being intensified study of Mao's thoughts and class struggle. Also discussed was the need for youth participation in production activities; the league was instructed to mobilise educated youth to go to the rural areas.<sup>238</sup>

If Cultural Revolution sources are any indication, the leadership at various levels was simultaneously seriously concerning itself with economic matters or, more precisely, with various aspects of the socialist education movement that were related to the economy. Thus we are told that Liu was claiming to have evolved a system to prevent a capitalist restoration

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The extent of penetration of the propaganda group is unclear. There was at least a political work division in the Ministry of Education. It now seems to be the case that the Cultural Revolution Group had, initially, as one of its main functions, the task of replacing the propaganda, organisation and administrative organs of the Party and government.

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NCNA, 25 February 1965; SCMP 3407, 2 March 1965, pp 20-1.

<sup>237</sup>

Shen Yen-ping and Hsia Yen were dismissed from the Ministry of Culture, the former by December 1964 and the latter by April 1965.

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NCNA, 3 May 1965; SCMP 3452, 7 May 1965, pp.1-2. The plenum also called for the establishment of 'Communist children's organisations'.

that relied on the mobilisation of the masses in the 'Four-Cleans' rectification movement; the transformation of the education system into two separate systems, full and part time; and, later, the enforcement of cadre participation in labour.<sup>239</sup> This seems however to have been generally the line of the regime at the time, although another source claims that Liu and Teng Hsiao-p'ing denied the necessity of education through labour in the cities due to the launching of the Four Cleans movement.<sup>240</sup> T'ao Chu at that time is said to have been interpreting the socialist education movement as designed principally to achieve better economic results. His criterion for success in the Four Cleans movement is said to have been judging whether or not cadres increased production; this allegedly went counter to Mao's criteria.<sup>241</sup> If this was T'ao's only criterion the allegation would be true, but it may only have been one of the criteria, and the allegation thus tendentious, as the last of Mao's six criteria was: 'We must see whether production is increasing or decreasing'.<sup>242</sup> It is certain nevertheless that in mid-June T'ao did describe the first harvest after the socialist education movement as being very successful and went so far as to predict another revolutionary soaring leap.<sup>243</sup>

The spring and summer was additionally the occasion for the regime to evince more interest in the outside world. The Sino-Soviet dispute flared up again in March, with Peking reacting strongly to the Consultative Conference of Moscow - aligned parties, calling this a schismatic meeting which signified little of consequence. It was merely further evidence of Soviet chauvinism and revisionism, and of collusion with United States im-

<sup>239</sup> As with Chou En-lai, Chang Chi-ch'un was also supporting this programme. Kuang Ming Daily, 6 January 1965; SCMP 3385, 26 January 1965, pp.11-13. See also the accusations against Liu in Peking Ching kangshan, 18 April 1967. SCMP 3946, 25 May 1967 p.8 and The Red Criticising Liu Shao-ch'i Combat Corps of Canton January 1968. SCMM 616, 25 March 1968, pp.21-30.

<sup>240</sup> Peking Ching kangshan, 18 April (above).

<sup>241</sup> Canton Radio, 6 December 1967. SWB, FE/2644/B/3.

<sup>242</sup> Twenty-three Articles, Baum and Teiwe, p.120.

<sup>243</sup> Yang-ch'eng Wan-pao, 15 June 1965. SCMP 3489, 2 July 1965, pp 10-11.



perialism against the interest of the revolutionary peoples of the world. Chou En-lai, probably taking this as his cue, hastened to Bucharest, thence making an extended tour of a number of African and Asian countries, which included Indonesia. P'eng Chen, too, visited Indonesia on the occasion of the forty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the PKI, from late May to early June. A PKI delegation then went to China for a month's visit. This was followed in August by the visit of Aidit to Peking and by two high-level Chinese delegations to Jakarta, the one led by Li Hsueh-feng and the other by Ch'en Yi. This was the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Indonesian independence.<sup>244</sup> During the latter half of June Chou made another trip abroad, principally to negotiate the preliminaries to the Second Afro-Asian conference. It seems that his main concern was to prevent USSR participation in the conference on the grounds that it was not an Afro-Asian nation. In the event the conference was postponed indefinitely. During this period China evinced renewed interest in the Vietnam war. In February mass demonstrations were held throughout the land to denounce American bombing of North Vietnam. Less than a month later strong criticism was made of the commitment of American ground forces to offensive operations in the South.<sup>245</sup> On 11 June, People's Daily called this an acceleration towards a Korean-type war.<sup>246</sup>

Peking's attitude to these developments was a mixture of aggressiveness and defensiveness. On the one hand the regime was taking the ideological conflict with the Soviet Union, and all who followed its lead, right into the enemy's camp. It did not require this to split wide the Afro-Asian organisation, but it helped. Peking was obviously more interested in expelling the 'European' Russians from the Afro-Asian revolutionary movement than in working for collective unity and strength. It was, in addition, making strenuous efforts to influence the Indonesians, and in particular the PKI. Vietnam, on the other

<sup>244</sup> The increase of Chinese interest in Indonesia during these months was marked. It is apparently explained by a legitimate requirement to celebrate important anniversaries. However the fact remains that within 11 days of the departure of the last two delegations, which also visited Aidit, Soekarno was overthrown.

<sup>245</sup> Announced by State Department, 8 June.

<sup>246</sup> NCNA, 11 June, 1965; SCMP 3478, 16 June 1965, pp.29-30.

hand, seems to have been assessed in a different light. Peking's overt propaganda media consistently warned of the danger of war. Lo Jui-ch'ing in May reiterated Chinese preparedness to go to the support of North Vietnam should this be required. But this pledge was made in the context of China being prepared for war; she did not fear 'the US imperialists'' bombing threats or their clamour for enlarging the war.<sup>247</sup> The nation was urged to prepare for this possible war and for being invaded; considerable emphasis was laid on militia training. However it is not clear even today whether the regime genuinely feared such a development, or whether this outside 'threat' was magnified for domestic consumption as an aid to conducting revolutionising movements in the PLA and in society in general, as the war to the south had escalated and equally certainly domestic efforts would have benefited from external threats. In any event at the beginning of September both Lin Piao and Lo Jui-ch'ing authored substantial articles on the problems of war, ostensibly in commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of China's victory over Japan.<sup>248</sup> Both stressed the growing possibility, if not inevitability and imminence, of a major conflagration. The message was unambiguous: should we be attacked we will surely win because, in particular, we are becoming ever stronger politically and ideologically. To the peoples of the world, especially those in Vietnam, eschewing Soviet revisionism, relying on one's own strength and following China's example, were the surest guarantees of ultimate victory.

When the Politburo convened its next enlarged meeting the agenda almost certainly reflected these developments. It is not entirely clear when this meeting commenced or exactly when it concluded, but as many regional and provincial officials were in Peking on 27 September it is probable that it was being held at about that date; it may have been extended into early October. Cultural Revolution sources speak variously of this as the enlarged meeting of the Politburo in September, or in September and October.<sup>249</sup> Certainly most of the leaders appear

<sup>247</sup> Red Flag, 10 May 1965. Peking Foreign Languages Press, 1965 p.29.

<sup>248</sup> See CB 769, 13 September 1965, p.1-30, and CB 770, 14 September 1965, p.1-12.

<sup>249</sup> For example, Tung Fang Hung, 18 February 1967. SCMP 3903, 21 March 1967, p.5 where this is referred to as a work conference of the Central Committee in September and October.



to have been in Peking throughout the period. These sources suggest that this meeting in some ways marked the real beginning of the Cultural Revolution and that, at it, Mao first raised the question of criticising bourgeois reactionary thinking of the type represented by Wu Han.<sup>250</sup> Whether or not this claim is correct in all its details, it is certain that not long after the campaign against Wu Han did commence.<sup>251</sup> In any case the meeting was obviously a crucial one. In all probability its ostensible purpose was to examine the state of the economy, especially in the agricultural sector; the development and progress of socialist education; and foreign affairs. Shortly before and after it two conferences appear to have been held to discuss a number of serious socio-economic problems. The first was the 'central job placement conference' of 14 September, at which the Secretary-General of the State Council is reported to have said: 'Every year, hundreds of thousands of junior middle school graduates cannot continue schooling and are left idle in the cities. The unemployed must be taken care of, but the principal concern is for the young intellectuals'.<sup>252</sup> At the second, 6 November, Liu put forward what are purported to be his own ideas of preventing revisionism by means of part-time labour and part-time study systems, and on cadre labour.<sup>253</sup> Regardless of such problems the regime seems to have assessed that the economy had considerably improved and agriculture could be expected to yield much better results than the previous year.<sup>254</sup> It would thus be fair to deduce that Peking saw at that time good reason to believe in its ability to provide for the next year.

<sup>250</sup> A vice-mayor of Peking. Liberation Army Daily, 6 June 1966. SWB FE/2183/B/5.

<sup>251</sup> See Yao Wen-yuan's article in Wen Hui Pao, 10 November.

<sup>252</sup> Chih-nung Hung-ch'i, 1 November 1967. Translations on Communist China: Political and Sociological 436. JPRS 44052, 17 January 1965, p 3. See also NCNA Canton 10 May 1965. SCMP 3468, 1 June 1965, p.3-4 and subsequent propaganda on the problem of the employment of educated youth.

<sup>253</sup> Peking Ching kangshan, 18 April 1967. SCMP 3946, 25 May 1967, pp.8-9.

<sup>254</sup> See text of National Day speeches by Chou En-lai and P'eng Chen. CB 774, 15 October 1965, pp.2-8.

The second general subject, the evaluation of the progress of the socialist education movement, must have been the cause of earnest debate. The new phase which was launched during the previous winter and spring would have been assessable by the autumn. The direct participation of the PLA in the movement also probably had reached a significant level by then. In addition, the new political departments had evolved to the point where, with the possible exception of some of the propaganda system's units, the Party organisation group and some purely administrative organs, the whole structure of Party and government had been affected. Moreover by the autumn the process of revolutionising youth work and cultural affairs, matters not obviously directly connected with political department activities, had been intensified. It thus seems likely that this period marked the attainment of a new and higher level of development which required analysing before decisions could be taken on its subsequent course. Foreign affairs, too, called for urgent consideration. Even before the Indonesian coup Peking was clearly concerned with certain trends in the outside world. Sino-Soviet relations had reached an all-time low with each side charging the other with hampering the world-wide revolutionary movement. The Afro-Asian organisation had split asunder. Chinese policies had not been meeting with total or unqualified success in Africa. The Indo-Pakistan war had been fought to a standstill, and if Peking was not entirely displeased with some results it could have found no occasion to rejoice in the increased Soviet standing in that region following its offer of mediation. While the enlarged Politburo was presumably in session the Indonesian coup was attempted, and Soekarno fell. The PKI role in this affair is debatable, but not the immediate consequences for the party; these were disastrous in the short term. Despite Peking's subsequent rationalisations, when the coup failed and for some time to come the Chinese leadership was probably dismayed by the developments.

This session of the Politburo, if it is assumed to have extended into October, must therefore have been the occasion for vigorous debate. It may be speculated that some leaders would have called for a renewed emphasis on the kind of practical economics that had helped produce the good results of 1965, and hence that they would have preferred to see the socialist education movement kept rigorously within bounds. The proponents of such a line, if they existed, would also presumably have advocated a less offensive or more realistic foreign policy line. On the other hand it could equally well be argued



that in view of the good economic results there was a sufficient margin of safety to enable the regime to follow more ideologically-motivated if not adventurist policies both internally and externally. These would appear to be the logical extremes of thinking for that period. There is no proof however that such was in fact the thinking or that if Mao advocated the extremist approach Liu or anyone else opposed it.

In late October four people intimately involved in the opening phases of the Cultural Revolution went on tour. These were Wu Han and Yang Yung, to North Korea, and Lo Jui-ch'ing and his wife to southern China. Cultural Revolution materials state that, as has been noted, Mao raised the question of criticising Wu Han at the Politburo conference, and that on 10 October he delegated the task of attacking him to Shanghai Party officials.<sup>255</sup> It is not known whether these allegations are correct in all details, but they do not seem improbable and certainly the first broadside was fired from Shanghai a month later.<sup>256</sup> Wu's trip to North Korea thus assumes some significance; for he was absent from the country at precisely the time the first moves were being planned against him.<sup>257</sup> Yang Yung, for his part, occupied the vital post of Commander of the Peking Military Region. As has been suggested in the study of P'eng Te-huai's dismissal, reorganisation of the Peking Military Region was a necessary pre-requisite to the overthrow.<sup>258</sup> We do not know whether Yang was in effect replaced at this time, but it is not improbable that this was so or at least that his absence then had been arranged for ulterior motives.<sup>259</sup> This supposition seems the more likely when seen in the context of the activities of Lo Jui-ch'ing; again the similarity with the

<sup>255</sup> The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution - A Record of Major Events, (Record). Translations on Communist China: Political and Sociological 420. JPRS 42349, p.3.

<sup>256</sup> Yao Wen-yuan's article, 10 November 1965.

<sup>257</sup> He was there from 21-30 October.

<sup>258</sup> See my article in China Quarterly, issue 37, January-March 1969.

<sup>259</sup> He returned to Peking on 30 October. He made several other appearances up to the late summer of 1966, but as Liu also appeared in public for some time after his demotion this is an unreliable indicator of a man's true status.

p'eng case is unmistakable. Although Lo was not to make his apparent exit until the end of November it is significant that he seems to have left Peking before Yang Yung returned. He certainly was in Canton by 31 October, and appears to have remained there for some days. His wife meanwhile also left the capital, together with Madame Liu. They both left on the 23rd, parting company in Shanghai five days later. Madame Lo eventually went on to Canton where she remained, presumably with her husband, till 3 November. Lo does not appear to have returned to the capital till late November; he was there to greet Lon Nol on the 21st. The fact that these four people were among the first victims of the Cultural Revolution strongly suggests that their peregrinations during this critical period were the beginnings of their journeys into oblivion.

On the morning of 26 November, Lo Jui-ch'ing made his last known public appearance in Peking before his downfall; later the same day he flew to Shanghai. On the 28th Lon Nol left Shanghai in the company of Hsu Kuang-ta to visit southern China, and was bade farewell by Lo. Hsu Kuang-ta, who commanded the Armoured Corps, remained with Lon Nol until the latter left Canton on 10 December. As Hsu was also later to fall victim of the Cultural Revolution it is difficult to escape the conclusion that he was being kept out of Peking at this time. After 28 November Lo disappeared completely, except for appearances at various struggle meetings held in his honour. Almost exactly when Lo dropped out of the news so did Yang Shang-k'un. In this case however the evidence is less reliable as Yang's activities normally received scanty publicity. Moreover his 'disappearances' often coincided with those of Mao. It is likely therefore that on this occasion he might have accompanied Mao when he left the capital at the end of November, and for a short time at any rate was ostensibly retained to fulfil his duties as coordinator of the routine administrative affairs of the Party. In the event he does not seem to have come under attack until the beginning of May 1966, but his apparent absence from Peking during this period is noteworthy.

There is, in sum, fragmentary evidence to suggest that several organisational moves had been effected by the end of November 1965. Mao's personal safety was ensured by his moving away from the capital into areas presumably under the control of the reliable military commanders, principally those under Hsu Shih-yu of the Nanking Military Region. Lin Piao also seems to have been in East China then. In addition the Party's



organisational structure seems to have been somewhat disrupted, with the executive rump remaining in Peking but with important elements including those concerned with policy-making, situated in East China. Further insurance seems to have been obtained by moves apparently affected in the PLA. The reliability of the Air Force had earlier been ensured; with the death of Liu Ya-lou in May 1965, Wu Fa-hsien became concurrent commander and political commissar. The commander of the Armoured Corps had been kept away from the capital. The commander of Peking Military Region and the all-important Chief of Staff both seem to have been put off balance and eventually replaced by men loyal to Lin Piao and Mao. It was in all probability during this time that Yang Ch'eng-wu, who was already a deputy Chief of Staff, took over Lo's duties, bringing into the capital city military apparatus Teng Hai-ch'ing and Fu Ch'ung-pi. The Director of the PLA Political Department, Hsiao Hua, also probably played a vital role over this period. Hsieh Fu-chih appears to have stayed in the capital where he would have had direct control over the remaining instrument of armed power, the Public Security troops.<sup>260</sup> The evidence is far from conclusive but, in the light of the known developments which followed, it suggests that the first moves were made against certain persons over a period of four weeks between the end of October and November.

Even if this assumption is correct it does not necessarily follow that the specific targets at that time were Liu and Teng Hsiao-p'ing, or that they felt themselves to be directly threatened. It is conceivable that the move of Lo out of the capital was made for an ostensibly legitimate military reason; perhaps the necessity to supervise defensive arrangements generally related to Vietnam and the possibility, however remote, of an invasion of China. People's Daily, two months before Lo's departure from Peking, had painted a dark picture:

The US imperialists are stepping up their war of aggression in Asia. They are sending more reinforcements to South Vietnam, intensifying their bombing of North Vietnam, instigating large-scale armed attacks against Pakistan by the Indian reactionaries along the western section of the Sino-

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The naval forces compared to the arms mentioned above were an insignificant factor under such conditions.

Indian border. The US propaganda machine has raised a hue and cry for 'nuclear counter-attack against China'.<sup>261</sup>

This propaganda was maintained throughout the period. There were certainly very good and obvious reasons for Yang Yung's visit to North Korea. It was also not unusual for Hsu Kuang-ta to act as tour director for a visiting military delegation, or for vice-premier Hsieh to spend his time in the capital. It is therefore not unlikely that the 'reasons' for most of these developments were known to the individual members of the Politburo, and that there was no apparent mystery attached to them. If Liu and Teng Hsiao-p'ing had at that time understood that the ultimate goal was the unseating of 'capitalist-roaders' then it may be argued that they still hoped that the net would bring in nothing larger than Lo Jui-ch'ing or at the worst P'eng Chen. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, the evidence on this point permits no conclusiveness.

Cultural Revolution sources allege that P'eng Chen vigorously attempted during the period that followed to side-track the campaign against Wu Han from the plane of politics or ideology to that of an academic discussion of the evaluation of an historical character, and that he prevented the reprinting of Yao Wen-yuan's criticism by the Peking newspapers until 30 November.<sup>262</sup> These allegations would seem to be basically correct. The article did not in fact appear in the People's Daily till 30 November, and was appended to an editorial note which was, if nothing else, clearly defensive in tone.<sup>263</sup> These sources then go on to chronicle P'eng's efforts to protect Wu Han and others throughout the next few months.<sup>264</sup> The details of these allegations are not assessable, but in general do not seem to be improbable. It would have been only natural for P'eng, and others responsible for propaganda and cultural work, to have attempted to blunt the attacks or divert them to protect their subordinates in order to protect themselves.

<sup>261</sup>  
NCNA, 21 September 1965; SCMP 3544, 24 September 1965, pp.33-4 (emphasis added) ..

<sup>262</sup>  
Record, pp.3-4.

<sup>263</sup>  
CB 783, 21 March 1966, pp.1-2.

<sup>264</sup>  
Record, pp.4-11.



The next phase seems to have commenced with the convening of a PLA Political Department conference lasting twenty days to discuss the department's previous work and make plans for 1966.<sup>265</sup> This organisation, which is directly subordinate to the Party, had extensive control over political matters in the armed forces, and probably throughout the newly-created network of civil political departments which had by then spread over the whole country. A number of important officials addressed the conference, among whom were Hsiao Hua and Yang Ch'eng-Wu. Yang had by then presumably taken over Lo Jui-ch'ing's General Staff Department duties. This conference was also attended by 'responsible comrades in political work in the ground, naval and air forces, public security forces, institutions of higher education and scientific research institutes and by a number of political commissars of army divisions'. It would seem to be a fair surmise that the majority of the concerned divisions had been earmarked to play a key role in the Cultural Revolution. Be that as it may, one of the announced topics for discussion was the implementation of Lin Piao's Five Principles government political work in the armed forces. These principles had been promulgated in mid-November,<sup>266</sup> and were said to have been opposed by Lo Jui-ch'ing. Allegedly he had insisted on emphasising combat training and relegating political work to the second place,<sup>267</sup> thus calling into question the wisdom of Lin's leadership. True or not, Lo had probably been removed from power by the end of December and the conference thus might have had as its real purpose the discussion and condemnation of his 'crimes', and the preparation of the armed forces for the struggle ahead. It may also have been at about this time that some of the military moves affecting Peking municipality, which may have been tentatively arranged earlier, were consolidated.

In the text of the NCNA account of the proceedings of this Political Department conference there is some evidence to support the contention that its actual purpose was the condemnation of Lo Jui-ch'ing. It was stated that:

<sup>265</sup> NCNA, 18 January 1966; SCMP 3622, 24 January 1966, pp.1-4, and 3627, 31 January 1966, pp.2-5.

<sup>266</sup> On 18 November. See NCNA, 24 January 1966; SCMP 3627, 31 January 1966, p.6.

<sup>267</sup> Ching kangshan and Kwangtung Wen-i Chan-pao, 5 September 1967. SCMP 4046, 24 October 1967, p.5.

To give prominence to politics forms a basis from which we strengthen the revolutionisation and modernisation of our army ... and guarantee that our army never becomes apostate ... Mao Tse-tung's books should be taken as a guideline of the highest order in all fields of work in the whole army ... resolutely rejecting and opposing all things in contradiction with Chairman Mao's instructions ... (this) is applicable not only to the fighters and basic-level cadres, but even more so to cadres at higher levels.<sup>268</sup>

NCNA followed this up with lengthy extracts from Hsiao Hua's speech which underscore the significance of this conference. Though Hsiao included in his speech one reference to Liu, the overwhelming emphasis was on the greatness and omniscience of Mao, and on the brilliance of Lin Piao. He made several statements on revisionism and leadership which generally find their echo in the more detailed charges of the Cultural Revolution.<sup>269</sup> 'Our Army is the main instrument of the dictatorship of the proletariat', Hsiao said. 'The class enemies at home and abroad always regard our Army as their deadly opponent. They always try to destroy and corrupt us in every possible way.' He then went on to criticise those who denied the absolute supremacy of politics in military work, noting that the Party had struggled against the purely military viewpoint since the Kut'ien conference in 1929. 'The struggle between two thoughts and two lines on army building is a reflection within the Party and Army of class struggle', he added. Finally he dealt specifically with the problem of individualism. 'We must oppose the practice of acting on the decisions of one man alone .... Conceit and egoism are a manifestation of bourgeois individualism ... Those who have this flaw will one-sidedly exaggerate their personal role .... If these people do not resolutely rectify their mistakes but continue doing what they have done, they will face a very great danger.'<sup>270</sup>

<sup>268</sup> SCMP 3627, pp.2-5 (emphasis in original).

<sup>269</sup> As specifically related to Lo Jui-ch'ing see Ching kangshan, and Kwangtung Wen-i Chan-pao, 5 September 1967. SCMP 4046, 24 October 1967, pp.1-12.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid (emphasis added). Compare this with the Liberation Army Daily description of the recently uncovered counter-revolutionary anti-Party clique which had 'opposed the Party's Central Committee and Mao Tse-tung's thought, had overtly agreed to but



P'eng Chen's defensive activities early in 1966 have been touched on above. Specifically, he is alleged to have concocted a 'Central Committee' report that was designed to protect his subordinate Wu Han and, therefore, himself. It is not clear where the standing committee of the Politburo was located during these critical days, but it possibly was in or near Shanghai. In any case the general Shanghai area seems to have been the location from which Mao or his lieutenants were operating. P'eng and K'ang Sheng were in Shanghai on 12 and 13 February, ostensibly to meet the Japanese Communist Party delegation headed by Miyamoto. P'eng is said to have utilised the occasion for another attempt to influence the Shanghai Party leaders to desist from attacking Wu Han except on purely academic grounds.<sup>271</sup> The next phase seems to have developed in the second half of March. Having ensured control of the Peking municipal apparatus and, principally by means of Yang Ch'eng-wu and Hsiao Hua, of the PLA in general, the standing committee of the Politburo is said to have been convened on 17 March. Before the session closed, three days later, Mao appears to have instructed that as many of the cultural departments were still in the hands of the bourgeoisie they required to be overhauled.<sup>272</sup> A week later, apparently in Shanghai, Mao is stated to have concluded that if P'eng, the Peking municipal Party committee and the Propaganda Department continued to harbour 'bad persons' they should be disbanded.<sup>273</sup> The reliability of this allegation is unknown but it would not seem to be far off the mark, for P'eng appears to have faded out of the news from about this time. It is relevant to note that these allegations refer only to general criticism of bourgeois elements at the meeting of the Politburo which presumably was attended by Liu.<sup>274</sup> When it became specific, however, and directed at P'eng personally, Liu was not present. If the charges are correct, the explicit cam-

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<sup>270</sup> (continued)

covertly opposed comrade Lin Piao's directives on putting politics to the forefront ... had given first consideration to military affairs ...' 1 August 1966. SWB, FE/2229/B/7.

<sup>271</sup> Record, p.8.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid, p.9.

<sup>273</sup> 28-30 March, ibid.

<sup>274</sup> He was in Peking just before the meeting was convened and again after its conclusion. He could therefore have attended it whether it was held in Shanghai or elsewhere.

campaign against P'eng started between 28 and 30 March at which time Liu was in Pakistan. Whether this means that the first positive steps were taken to overthrow P'eng without Liu's approval is not clear. The decision may have been taken at the actual Politburo meeting mentioned, or it may conceivably have been taken earlier. Nevertheless the possibility remains that P'eng's fall was arranged to take place while Liu was abroad and therefore not available to defend him.

Several Cultural Revolution reports claim that during this initial phase of the revolution a military coup was planned by Liu and others; according to one source the first preparations were made in the autumn of the previous year.<sup>275</sup> These preparations involved in some way the provincial military districts; the militia were provided with ammunition. Another source states that the preparations for the armed revolt were undertaken at the end of February 1966, and that Ho Lung had made an inspection of Sinkiang with this end in mind. The truth or falsity of these accusations is unknown. It is conceivable that certain defensive steps were taken by the 'top capitalist-roaders' in the autumn: indeed Ho Lung did visit Sinkiang then. Nevertheless, the few facts available indicate that several key military leaders had been effectively dealt with before the end of the year, which further suggests that if a coup had been planned it would have been less likely to have succeeded in February than it would the previous autumn. It is thus possible that the regime, having acted against several military leaders in order to ensure that no coup could have been undertaken then 'discovered' that one had been plotted which conveniently involved other more senior officials, and that these were subsequently charged with the non-existent crime. If Liu had been plotting to overthrow Mao it seems strange that he should then have deliberately gone abroad where, apart from the possible convenience of disassociation, he would have been less able to keep in contact with developments.

This series of visits made by Liu at a time when it is certain that momentous decisions were being taken in China is a curious phenomenon. The most obvious but least satisfact-

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See for example the Peking wall poster quoted by UPI, Tokyo dateline 17 April 1967. Also Ching Kangshan, 18 April 1967. SCMP 3946, 25 May 1967, p.9.



ory explanation is that the apparent lack of success in Peking's relations with foreign countries had been hotly debated by the enlarged Politburo session at the end of September 1965. Possibly one of the critics had been Liu. In any case he, as Head of State, would have been a good choice to head delegations to some of the countries involved in order to effect an improvement in relations. There would consequently have been a legitimate reason to go on these visits; in all probability he had been personally invited to do so by the various delegations which had not long before been in China. Perhaps the visits could not easily have been postponed by Liu because he had himself earlier advocated them, but this seems a somewhat far-fetched explanation. In any case, go he did. On 26 March he arrived in Pakistan, returning to Sinkiang five days later. He then went unreported till 4 April, when he arrived in Afghanistan. He returned once more to Sinkiang on the 8th. A week later he left Kunming for East Pakistan and Burma, returning to Kunming on the 19th. His activities between the 8th and 15th were unreported. It is not known where he was during the periods between visits, nor what role he played in the downfall of P'eng. It seems possible however that allowing for the initial or ostensible legitimacy of the reasons for his visits abroad, he was being deliberately excluded from policy-making meetings by this means. Moreover it is equally possible that during this time he was being kept under close observation, if not some sort of custody, by Mao's personal security aide, Wang Tung-hsing. Wang accompanied him on his visits to West Pakistan and Afghanistan, and though he is not publicly mentioned as being part of the entourage to East Pakistan and Burma he may well have been.

If Cultural Revolution allegations concerning this period are correct Liu had nothing to do with the meetings held by the Secretariat and the Politburo to deal with P'eng in April. At the first of these, between the 9th and 12th, P'eng apparently attempted to defend himself before his accusers, amongst whom was Teng Hsiao-p'ing.<sup>276</sup> The meeting of the Politburo standing committee, of which Liu was a member, was held on the 16th when he was in East Pakistan.<sup>277</sup> This meeting seems to have been the occasion for taking the first concrete steps to bring down

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<sup>276</sup>Record, p.10.

<sup>277</sup>Record, p.11.

p'eng.<sup>278</sup> It was also while Liu was out of the country that the Liberation Army Daily published the first of its Cultural Revolution broadsides.<sup>279</sup> Though concerning itself primarily with the revolutionisation of cultural work in the armed forces the fact that it was immediately reprinted by People's Daily shows its broader application. In the words of the editorial:

The PLA ... has consistently played a vital role in the proletarian revolutionary cause and will also play an important part in the great socialist cultural revolution.

It concluded with some particularly ominous remarks:

There has been an upsurge in the great socialist cultural revolution and a mass movement is rising in this revolution. The great revolutionary waves will surely wash away the filth of the bourgeois trends in art and literature ... We should have the confidence and courage to dare to do what our predecessors never did ... we must take an active part in the great socialist cultural revolution ...<sup>280</sup>

The editorial, published a day before Liu's return to Kunming, thus marks the commencement of the leading national propaganda role of the Liberation Army Daily and the first real indication of the future widespread employment of the PLA in Cultural Revolution activities.

The Politburo appears to have held another meeting on 4 May, presumably this time attended by Liu, at which the whole question of the activities of P'eng, Lu Ting-i, Lo Jui-ch'ing and Yang Shang-k'un was discussed.<sup>281</sup> If this is true it clear-

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.

<sup>279</sup> 18 April 1966. Reprinted in People's Daily, 19 April. CB 791, 21 June 1966, pp.16-27.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid, p.25. The contents of this were said to be based on a forum convened by Chiang Ch'ing, the summary of which being approved by the Military Affairs Committee, 30 March, when Liu was in Pakistan. Record, pp.10-11.

<sup>281</sup> Record, p.11.



ly indicates the scope of the campaign against the initial group of 'top capitalist-readers', for these four men occupied strategic positions in Peking municipality, propaganda, the PLA and the Party administration. Once more, however, as analogous cases have strongly suggested, if the stage has been reached where personal activities are 'discussed' it invariably means that the persons concerned have already fallen. 4 May was in any case a memorable day, being in addition the occasion for the publication of the second broadside of the Liberation Army Daily. The editorial was entitled: 'Never Forget Class Struggle'. In its opening lines it was described as being the logical extension of the 18 April editorial.<sup>282</sup> It attacked anti-Party anti-socialist elements:

Taking advantage of the position and powers given them by the Party and the government, they seize control of some departments and units and disobey the Party's leadership. By means of the tools under their control, they plot against the Party and socialism. These people are generally 'authorities' and enjoy a certain 'reputation' in society'.

The article went on to warn that the present struggle was not merely a literary dispute,

every counter-revolutionary come-back in history started in the sphere of mind.

It then called for special vigilance on the part of the PLA which should,

keep close watch against the enemies with guns and be always ready to defeat armed attack by US imperialism and its lackeys, and at the same time maintain a high degree of vigilance against enemies without guns and resolutely crush the criminal plots of the bourgeoisie against the Party and socialism.

There is thus some reason to believe that these four men, and others linked with them, had generally been discredited if

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<sup>282</sup>  
CB 791, pp.28-32.

not actually overthrown by the beginning of May, and that the way was then clear to take the process through to its next stage of development. The role of Liu and Teng Hsiao-p'ing in all this is not quite clear. Teng seems to have attempted to ensure his survival by participating in the denunciation of P'eng, for whom he may in any case have had no particular liking, and appears to have maintained some degree of standing in the hierarchy until after the demotion of Liu. The latter also apparently survived the first wave of attacks, making normal appearances right through until 18 August. Indeed one Cultural Revolution source refers to him as being in charge of the routine work of the Party in late May,<sup>283</sup> and others describe his earnest defensive actions up to the end of July.<sup>284</sup> Thus it is possible that he too denounced P'eng and the others, when it became clear that they could not escape, in a vain attempt to save his own skin. In any event the decision to reorganise the Peking municipal Party committee appears to have been made by an enlarged meeting of the Politburo on 16 May,<sup>285</sup> and had been preceded by Mao's call to the PLA to participate directly in the Cultural Revolution.<sup>286</sup> Throughout the next two months Liu and other 'top capitalist-roaders' fought tenaciously to maintain their standing, but the pressure was irresistible and with the essential paraphernalia of dictatorial power in the hands of Mao the conclusion was inevitable. On 1 August the 11th Plenum was convoked; it closed on the 11th. During its later stages, we are told, the standing committee of the Politburo re-elected itself, demoting Liu and selecting Lin Piao as the successor to Mao.<sup>287</sup> In point of fact the Sixteen Point decision of the Central Committee, which in effect announced the aim to overthrow the 'top capitalist-roaders', was made on 8 August or three days before the plenum ended. It is

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<sup>283</sup> Peking Ching Kangshan, 18 April 1967. SCMP 3946, 25 May 1967, p.10.

<sup>284</sup> Record, up to p.31.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid, p.12. The formal reorganisation seems to have come on 25 May, and was not publicised till the beginning of June. Several sources refer to 16 May as the real beginning of the purge. See, for example: Shanghai Wen-hui Pao, 15 May 1968. SCMP 4203, 21 June 1968, pp.9-12.

<sup>286</sup> Made 7 May. NCNA 8 May 1968. SCMP 4177, 14 May 1968, p.13.

<sup>287</sup> Record, p.33.



interesting to note that Mao has since observed that he had just prior to that time been almost alone, and that people 'said that my views were out of date'. He alleged that at the plenum he had received the consent of 'only slightly more than half of those present'.<sup>288</sup> Be that as it may, the plenum marked the formal end of the preparatory stage of the Cultural Revolution. Though Liu and the others were to continue to appear in public for several months, and undoubtedly put up prolonged and active resistance, the 11th Plenum in a sense legalised what had thus far been achieved and set the seal of theoretical approval on what was yet to come.

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Pamphlet reprinted by a PLA factory revolutionary group in September 1967. SCMP 4200, 18 June 1968, pp.1-5.

## SOME OBSERVATIONS

It is well known to all serious students of contemporary Chinese affairs that source material is generally both inadequate and, to say the least, of uneven reliability. It is clear from this study that analytical processes have to be a mixture of careful scrutiny and controlled imagination. Sole reliance on 'fact' is obviously unrewarding if not utterly misleading. Some of the problems of evaluating the evidence derive from the inability to establish an accurate chronology. The dating of personnel or structural changes, for example, is often impossible; in most cases these have been effected some time before being announced. It is therefore difficult if not at times impossible to discover when the decision was taken to make the changes. Hence it is harder still to assess the true reasons for policy shifts. The regime has consistently attempted to misdirect the attention of outside observers by these and other devices. Although Central Committee plenums have usually been advertised, as often as not the key issues announced to the delegates have been thoroughly edited before their public release, and at times totally suppressed. In any case, decision-making is not the function of the plenum: this belongs to the Politburo, or to a small group within it. Meetings of the Politburo are very inadequately documented, and the dates of such meetings are seldom released. When they are we usually do not know whether it is the standing committee, the full Politburo or an enlarged Politburo that has met. Rarely is it known what decisions were made. Similarly, important conferences of the Military Affairs Committee are generally obscured. Sometimes they seem to have been held under the guise of a National Defence Council or Political Department conference, and more often than not their actual purpose is not disclosed.

The allegation that Mao retired to the second rank of leadership appears to be another example of duplicity, in that we are encouraged to draw unwarranted conclusions from this. Mao may have retired somewhat from the everyday decision-making process, but it now seems that if he did his intention was thereby to gain some personal advantage. It is also a Maoist convenience to be able to assert that Red Flag, People's Daily and some other publications were under the control of the 'black gang', for if this is accepted then it is very much more



difficult to evaluate Cultural Revolution charges: if we cannot say that policy lines publicised in such media represented the actual policy of the regime at the time we cannot therefore test the validity of the charges. As to the Cultural Revolution material itself, this can be divided into two basic categories. The first is that of the central authorities, and is reasonably well controlled. The second is the enormous outpouring of the generally uncontrolled lower-level material. The former is an authoritative mixture of truths, half-truths and fabrications. The latter is all this and more. It contains, as often as not, an unfortunate degree of misunderstanding of centrally-released material. Even when genuine or well-informed it may represent little more than a selection of material for specific local and temporary purposes, as a means of self-preservation or as part of a campaign against a particular individual or group. In general, then, if the problem of verification of sources has always been with us it has never been so acute or intractable, even during the Great Leap Forward, as it is today.

A review of the preceding sections of this study highlights certain developments whose description at this stage it may be advantageous to summarise. The Cultural Revolution seems to have had its direct antecedents in the period of re-appraisal and shock which followed the initial realisation of the failure of the Great Leap Forward. Though the full realisation was not to come till later, the end of 1958 saw the first steps taken to remedy the faults that were then apparent. A crisis was looming: the Tibetan uprising, which was some time later to have its impact on relations with India, was in certain respects merely a manifestation of the failure of the Great Leap Forward. The first and most specific result of this failure however was the dismissal of P'eng Te-huai and the others in the summer of 1959. It now seems likely that the chief aim of this purge was not so much the dismissal of a few men, but the preliminary to the thorough reorganisation of the PLA to improve general morale and efficiency before the foreseeable overall crisis developed. The second major result of this awareness was the creation of a new form of Party control: the Regional Bureaux. The taking of such a step demonstrated the gravity with which the central leadership viewed the situation as, despite the improvements made in the system since then, the earlier regional organisations had shown themselves to be inherently dangerous. Both developments, the reorganisation of the PLA and the creation of regional authorities, were entirely

necessitated by existing conditions. If they were interrelated developments they seem, in addition, to have been in certain fundamental respects mutually antagonistic, in that control of the new military apparatus was vested in Lin Piao while that of the latter seems to have come largely under appointees of Liu Shao-ch'i.

In the years 1960 and 1961 the regime fought intensely for survival. It had at its disposal three powerful weapons: the revamped armed forces, always there but not used directly against the masses; the more rigidly controlled and, down to the provincial level at least, more efficient Party machine; and the ideology of realism. In every sphere except that of Sino-Soviet relations the regime's policies were practical or even placatory. Even China's battle against external revisionism was conducted in a controlled manner and, compared to what was to come, was essentially defensive. Chinese domestic policies were designed, not so much positively but more in a reactive way, to prevent the collapse of central authority. Agricultural production came before all else. That and the necessity to provide fuel and clothing was the over-riding concern. It mattered little what means were utilised to fulfil these goals so long as they produced the required results. In other respects, too, the regime tried hard not to offend either its own people, including the bourgeoisie and the varied hue of intellectuals, or those just across its borders. In spite of the crisis of early 1962 when many thousands made their exit from China the regime finally weathered the storm. The net result of its energetic efforts, together with the benefits of more clement weather than it had always been granted in the past, was comparatively satisfactory by the late summer of 1962. There is no entirely convincing evidence to indicate that Mao had been forced to retire into the background during this period, or that Liu and others had conspired to overthrow him. Mao seems to have remained in control of the ultimate source of power, the armed forces. Whether or not the Party machine, particularly that of the Regional Bureaux, was wholly responsive to his bidding is perhaps questionable. Nevertheless he quite clearly had suffered something of a setback in personal prestige and by contrast Liu had commensurately benefited.

The late summer of 1962 was a watershed in domestic developments. Before then the political climate was fragile, the regime quite unsure of itself. But about the time of the 10th Plenum this situation changed. The causes of such a change are



undoubtedly complex, however the single most important factor leading to it was the knowledge the leaders then had of the improved economic outlook. For the first time in four years it was feasible once more to look forward with a degree of assuredness. Shortly after the plenum ended the PLA gave convincing proof of its political reliability and military effectiveness in the short war with India. Coinciding with this victory was Khrushchev's failure in Cuba. Together these events probably helped considerably to refurbish the image of the nation as a whole, of the PLA and, most importantly, of Mao. Domestic Chinese policy now moved to the offensive. Early 1963 saw the emergence of the socialist education movement and the campaign to learn from the PLA. Both were clearly related to each other and to the genesis of the Cultural Revolution. At the end of the year a new Party organisational form was created. This was the political department structure which was designed to improve ideological control over the whole range of Party and government institutions. By means of this innovation the PLA eventually managed to integrate itself into national affairs normally outside its province.

With the fall of Khrushchev and the explosion of China's first nuclear device in October 1964, a new stage of development was ushered in. If there had been any doubt as to the personal standing of Mao before, this was soon banished. At the end of the year the course of the socialist education movement was suddenly changed, thereafter assuming more ominous proportions and aiming its attacks, where this was warrantable, at the very highest levels of 'opposition'. The PLA was further revolutionised, a public campaign was launched to prepare for war, and dramatic and literary workers were subjected to renewed ideological pressures. There was a marked increase in tension overall. At the end of September an enlarged session of the Politburo was convened, at which there was undoubtedly considerable debate. The central subject discussed seems to have been the future of socialism, whether abroad or at home. During the session, or at any rate shortly after, the first tentative moves of the Cultural Revolution appear to have been made. It is not known, however, precisely what policies were being advocated and by whom, nor is it by any means certain that at that stage Liu was actively opposing Mao or that the latter had by then decided on the complete purge of the Party leadership. In any event by the end of the year several key men in the Party and military apparatus seem to have been acted against and the first dramatic broadside of the Cultural Revol-

ution had been fired from Shanghai. At the most critical juncture Liu found it necessary to pay a series of visits to neighbouring countries, during one of which it appears that P'eng Chen was removed from power. Within a few months Liu himself was demoted. The central issue, that of taking and holding power, was never really in doubt. With all the essential weapons in his hand Mao could hardly have failed to topple his opponents, even if he cannot be sure that all of them will never rise up once more.

X It is still far from clear whether the Cultural Revolution, as a struggle for power, had its conscious origins in late 1958 or early 1959, or whether the downfall of Liu and others was due solely to their reaction and opposition to the events of the end of 1965. In some ways the answer may lie between the two extremes. Mao seems to have been gravely disturbed both by Khrushchev's initiation of the de-Stalinisation campaign and by its aftermath, particularly the Hungarian uprising. The Chinese have made a point of claiming that the Sino-Soviet dispute originated in 1956, though in doing so they are obviously referring solely to the beginning of the formal ideological dispute and not to the historic conflict of national interest. In actual fact the ideological dispute did become manifest the following year at the world conference of communist parties in Moscow. Coinciding generally with this external development was the conduct in China of a massive rectification campaign which culminated in the purge of a number of fairly senior Party officials. It is pertinent to note that these two events, the Sino-Soviet dispute at Moscow and the domestic Party purge, occurred shortly after the 3rd Plenum of the CCP in September 1957 at which the launching of the Great Leap Forward appears to have been foreshadowed.<sup>289</sup>

Whatever the overall motivation for undertaking this stupendous movement, one thing is clear: it did not meet with approval from Moscow. This fact and the subsequent Soviet and world-wide reactions to its failure, not to mention domestic reservations or criticism, underlies much that has been revealed during the Cultural Revolution concerning the alleged activities of the 'top capitalist-roaders'. It would seem therefore that this reaction to the failure of the Great Leap Forward very

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Report by Liu Shao-ch'i to the Second Session of the Eighth National Congress of the Communist Party of China. 5 May 1958. Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1958, p.38.



seriously troubled Mao. If he had not personally devised the scheme he must at least take the responsibility for permitting it to be undertaken. Criticism of the policy thus entailed criticism of him. In addition to the question of the Great Leap Forward and in some ways integral to it was that of the long-term aims of the regime, and the assessment of the results of such endeavours. To Mao, in the sixties of this century, it must have appeared that though credit could be taken for some noteworthy achievements in selected fields there were a number of fundamental problems that had either been overlooked or had not really been faced up to. Thus before any convincing claim could have been made to have solved the nation's basic problems these omissions would have to be rectified. Mao seems gradually to have become aware of what were, if not in everyone's terms then at least in his own, these serious weaknesses.

With the exception of the questions of youth and education there is little direct evidence of Mao's attitude to these problems, but the burden of the Cultural Revolution allegations strongly suggests that the leadership was dissatisfied with a number of areas of work. Despite the steady, even dramatic, progress in a substantial range of scientific and technological fields of activity it must have been evident even to Mao that in world terms China remained industrially and militarily vulnerable. Much more important in the long run was the estimate of the degree of real agricultural progress. For a nation such as China there is, ironically, much truth in Mao's equation of the atom bomb to the paper tiger. Nuclear weapons cannot feed a nation, and no regime can realistically expect from its people undying loyalty without guaranteeing in the first place their basic requirements. Nor, to take this argument further, can a communist regime in a country such as China simply resort to laissez-faire rural policies in the hope of feeding the nation. Although such policies have been efficacious if not indispensable in times of crisis their adoption brings in its train grave consequences. If laissez-faire principles have been effective, as clearly they have in the past, why is it then mandatory to socialise agriculture? The questioning would not, however, stop there. If agricultural socialisation, in the form adopted in China, could be dispensed with then so could the general theory of Marxist economic development, and ultimately, the Party itself. Thus, given the premise that the regime must remain communist, which is the only premise acceptable to Peking, laissez-faire economics, particularly in

the agricultural sector, cannot be tolerated except temporarily and in exceptional circumstances. No communist ruler of China can forget the fact that beneath the noble calm or apparent docility of millions of peasants there still lurks the embryonic rural capitalist. Agriculture is indeed China's Achilles heel. The question, however, is not merely that of growing more food for more people nor that of extracting the food from the producer. In Peking's terms it is more fundamental: the relaxation or removal of rural collective controls weakens overall social control and ultimately could even undermine the very raison-d'etre of the regime itself. The socialist education movement thus appears to have been, arguing from such premises, a logical necessity. The greater the material successes of the agricultural policies of the crisis period, the greater the requirement to socialise the thinking of the cadres and, more particularly, the rural masses. This surely is how Mao and probably other leaders must have viewed matters.

Agriculture, even so, was not the only problem. A more comprehensive and far-reaching one was the interrelated question of youth and education, which in addition had relevance to rural affairs. It has been reliably reported that Mao, at the beginning of 1965, felt unsure of the reliability of China's youth.<sup>290</sup> He saw two possible eventualities: firstly, that youth would continue to develop towards communism; secondly, that it would negate the revolution, bring back the remnant Kuo Min Tang and ally with the small percentage of domestic counter-revolutionaries. This is apparently what Mao thought at that time; hardly surprisingly he would not predict the outcome. Mao does not seem to have been alone in his fears, for as has been noted other leaders seem to have been seriously concerned over the problem of unemployed youth, particularly those in the urban areas. Moreover the education of youth in the countryside must also have concerned the regime. Though national statistics are lacking two areas in southern China reported in mid-1965 only 59 per cent of school age children being in school in 1963.<sup>291</sup> It is therefore apparent that, regardless of the subsequent efforts to remedy this defect, after fourteen years of rule Peking had been unable either to educate a large segment of its rural youth or provide employment for very many of its urban young people.

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<sup>290</sup> Edgar Snow, The Age (Melbourne), 25 February 1965.

<sup>291</sup> Chanchiang Special District. Nanfang Daily, 7 July 1965. SCMP 3522, 20 August 1965, pp.9-14. Kiangsi. Nanch'ang Radio, 9 June 1965. SWB, FE/1894/B/1.



The Cultural Revolution thus seems to have been motivated principally by three related developments. The first was Khrushchev's de-Stalinisation programme and the dramatic growth of 'revisionism' which accompanied it and was reflected within China. The second was the failure of the Great Leap Forward experiment. The third was the awareness of fundamental national weaknesses: despite some notable achievements China remained basically an underdeveloped agricultural country. Very much had still to be done. The nation however was unresponsive, control was unsatisfactory and the leadership at all levels of society was of insufficient reliability.

The inter-action of internal and external developments stands out remarkably in the period covered in this study. The de-Stalinisation programme is an obvious case in point. Sino-Soviet relations became visibly strained only after this, and when Peking was purging its ranks in preparation for the Great Leap Forward. We have seen also how in a time of acute crisis the regime coupled its domestic policies of reasonableness with its attempts to improve relations with most of its close neighbours. The only exceptions to this were the Soviet Union and India, and in both cases if China's attitude was aggressive it was defensively so. When domestic policies started to become radical, however, this coincided exactly with the vigorous external offensive against Soviet 'revisionism' and Indian 'imperialism'. Furthermore, the impact on domestic political developments of the PLA victory in India was intensified by the effect of Khrushchev's failure in Cuba. Such processes of interaction are of course nothing new. Nevertheless they become very clear during this period. Though the subject would repay further examination the indications are that China's overall policy has primarily been affected by two distinct domestic influences. During times of real crisis, when the very existence of the regime might have appeared to be threatened, policy concerned with external developments has been defensive. Such a period was that of the second half of 1959 to the first half of 1962. If this reasoning is correct it would suggest, for example, that during the Taiwan straits crisis in 1962 China genuinely feared invasion. On the other hand, at times when domestic policy is entering upon a positive new stage of development the regime adopts an aggressive external stand. Thus the Taiwan straits crisis of 1958 coincided with a peak period of internal activities, as did the external aggressiveness of China in the second half of 1962 and throughout 1963. This would suggest that the propaganda on the threat of war in

1965 was motivated largely by domestic pressures and that in fact the regime's apparent fear of war was not genuine. It may, furthermore, be speculated that the infiltration of Pakistani irregulars into Indian-held parts of Kashmir was either instigated by China or at least timed to coincide with general Chinese requirements. What little evidence there is suggests that it suited Peking to exaggerate what was in any case a comparatively serious situation in neighbouring areas for domestic reasons. It would seem to be the case that the threat of war, and the hostility of the Soviet Union, were essential and integral elements in the preparation of the Cultural Revolution.

A further point emerges from this study which merits recording. At a time when the world is becoming more and more aware of China's scientific and technical achievements, particularly in the field of modern weaponry, it is clear that it remains fundamentally an agricultural country. As P'eng Te-huai is alleged to have said on one occasion: 'You shoot your atom bomb, but I will eat my potatoes.'<sup>292</sup> If the Cultural Revolution has made nothing else clear it has shown beyond doubt that the creation of a modern industrial super-structure on a rural base solves only certain problems. In the long term an unhealthy situation arises when the physicist tries to communicate with the basic cadre, or when a nuclear missile experiment is conducted not many miles from where a semi-literate peasant is attempting to read the instructions on a drum of pesticides. A brief review of the chronology of decision-making during the period indirectly highlights this point. With the exception of 1961 and, to a lesser extent, 1960 the late summer or early autumn has been the time for major policy discussion.<sup>293</sup> 1960 and 1961 were acute crisis years when the regime had little scope for planning anything except in a reactive way or concerning domestic military and security affairs. The late summer and early autumn is not the only period when major policy decisions are made; other main periods are the beginning of winter and of spring. Nevertheless it is the most im-

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<sup>292</sup> NCNA, 30 September 1967. SCMP 4035, 5 October 1967, p.18.

<sup>293</sup> 1959: Politburo and 8th Plenum; July, August. 1962: Politburo and 10th Plenum; August, September. 1963: Politburo; August?, September. 1964: possible Politburo (Revised Later Ten Points); August, September. 1965: Politburo; September, October? 1966: 11th Plenum; August.



portant time. It is obvious why this is so: the national agricultural exchequer can only then be adequately assessed.<sup>294</sup> It is only then that it is possible for the regime to start realistic planning on how to allocate its material resources or to conduct its social experiments. Indeed Peking has practically said as much when it has alleged that those who were apparently opposed to the Great Leap Forward warned: 'We'll settle accounts with you after the autumn harvest.'<sup>295</sup>

The study of this pre-Cultural Revolution period has, in addition, brought into the forefront the whole question of the nature and function of purges in the country since the communists came to power. It is, not surprisingly, not possible to draw any firm conclusions about such matters: the mechanics of purges are not the best-advertised of Chinese phenomena. Nevertheless one can postulate interesting lines of reasoning, or at least raise some pertinent questions. For the purposes of this study three outstanding examples will be considered. The men involved are Kao Kang and Jao Shu-shih; P'eng Te-huai, Huang K'e-cheng and Chang Wen-t'ien; and those who fell during the Cultural Revolution. Secondary purges such as those involving Su Yu and Hsi Chung-Hsun, and general rectification campaigns such as those occurring in 1957 and today, are excluded for reasons of space.

The Kao-Jao 'conspiracy' has been described by Peking media in the following words:

The conspiratorial activities of the anti-Party bloc of Kao Kang and Jao Shu-shih and the fact that they came to a head in 1953 - the first year of the First Five Year Plan of our country's socialist construction - have not been fortuitous. They have deep his-

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<sup>294</sup>As summer has just passed and autumn begins, apart from the late-ripening rice and other crops in the southern part, crops in most areas throughout the country are entering the late stage of their growing period ... the yields of winter wheat, spring wheat and early rice in most areas are better than those of last year. At present the major autumn-ripening crops in most parts of the country are growing well...' People's Daily, 27 August 1963. SCMP 3057, 11 September 1963, p.15.

<sup>295</sup>Second Session of the Eighth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party. Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1958, p.39.

torical and social roots ... are a reflection of the growing complexity and sharpness of the class struggle in China.<sup>296</sup>

This historical context is described in terms of the earlier struggles against Ch'en Tu-hsiu and Chang Kuo-hua, which 'both took place at periods of drastic change in class relationships and of very intense class struggle'.<sup>297</sup> This interpretation is then amplified and from it four lessons are drawn: 'So long as the class struggle continues to exist domestically and internationally, class enemies will not stop trying to sway unstable and unreliable elements in our Party .... Incidents similar to that of the anti-Party bloc of Kao Kang and Jao Shu-shih may occur in the future'.<sup>298</sup> Therefore as class enemies will continue their plotting strict observance of Party discipline is necessary. Secondly, conceit and complacency, individualism and the worship of individuals, must be opposed. The next lesson is that strict, constant and systematic organisational discipline must be imposed over every Party member regardless of rank. Lastly there must be an improvement in ideological education to counteract bourgeois ideas.<sup>299</sup>

Thus in 1955 the regime released to the general public its views on the nature of the Kao-Jao purge, which it had effected over a year earlier. These views could be summarised as indicating that the struggle against these two men was due to a qualitative change in the nature of class struggle, that such a situation could reoccur and that the whole Party should therefore be disciplined accordingly. More importantly the message seems to have been that that specific struggle was almost inevitable: it was not fortuitous that it had coincided with the public launching of the First Five Year Plan. This plan, it must be noted, had particular relevance to the existing industrial bases of the North-east and East China, for which areas Kao and Jao were respectively responsible. Thus their purge was clearly related to the requirements of a new economic and institutional development. These conclusions of the Party found their echo three years later, when the Great Leap Forward was starting to unfold. This experiment had been foreshadowed in

<sup>296</sup>

Documents of the National Conference of the Chinese Communist Party, March 1955. Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1955, p.15

<sup>297</sup>

Ibid, p.35.

<sup>298</sup>

Ibid, p.51.

<sup>299</sup>

These four lessons are found in pp.51-6.



September 1957, and was intimately related to the rectification campaign. As Peking media described this campaign in early 1958: 'It is the purpose of the rectification campaign ... to raise the level of communist consciousness of the masses and to adjust relationships among the people in a systematic way so that they may meet the needs of consolidating the socialist system and further expanding the productive forces of society'.<sup>300</sup> Citing the Marxist-Leninist classics Peking restated its position on uninterrupted revolution as a means of preventing the growth of arrogance or complacency within the Party.<sup>301</sup> In short, as in the case of Kao and Jao, purge or in this instance mass rectification was integrated into a drive for new social and economic targets.

The 1959 purge of P'eng Te-huai and the others has been covered in some detail in previous studies.<sup>302</sup> The resolution of the 8th Plenum, which in part discusses this, makes the point that 'the activities of the anti-Party clique ... represent a combination and development of the case of the anti-Party alliance of Kao Kang and Jao Shu-shih'.<sup>303</sup> There is thus a specific attempt made to link the two developments directly in order to illustrate the continuing nature of the revolutionary struggle. The particular significance of the 1959 purge seems to lie in the timing of its publication. As in the case of Kao and Jao the effective isolation or removal of the 'conspirators' came earlier, the publicity however was made to coincide with more fundamental developments: in the former case with the First Five Year Plan push, in the latter with the adjustment to the failure of the Great Leap Forward. The 8th Plenum, far more than being the occasion for personal denunciation, was the platform from which a series of very important remedial directives were made concerning the great retreat. The overt purge therefore seems to have been only a dramatic aspect of a complete change in policy which necessitated new organisational forms, and as such was principally designed to achieve discipline and responsiveness.

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<sup>300</sup> Second Session of the Eighth National Conference, p.20. See also p.33.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid, p.40.

<sup>302</sup> See for example the article by D. Charles, The Dismissal of Marshal P'eng Te-huai, in China Quarterly, No.8, October-December 1961, pp.63-76. See also footnote 4.

<sup>303</sup> Resolution of the 8th Plenum on P'eng Te-huai (excerpts), JPRS 42866, Translations from Hung Ch'i, pp.29-34.

The purges of the Cultural Revolution period appear likewise to have been part of the same process. It has been postulated that Mao had been forced into an acute awareness of a whole series of grave problems, particularly those concerning rural affairs, youth and education. There may well have been other factors in the situation which we have not discussed, such as the personal role of Chiang Ch'ing or the possibility of a sudden if temporary deterioration in Mao's health, but at the bottom of everything must have been this awareness of the enormity of all these problems. To Mao there seems to have been only one way in which to proceed: complete bouleversement. As in the previous cases purge was essential, both to eliminate actual opposition and as a catalytical process. Similarly this was another period of drastic change in class relationships and of intense class struggle or, put another way, of a watershed in policy development.

Liu Shao-ch'i, ironically, is our best chronicler of the theory and practice of purge. Speaking to the Party School some twenty-seven years ago he unconsciously seems to have described his own ultimate downfall. As he put it, 'The most important aspect of the intra-Party struggle is the struggle in thought, which consists of divergencies and mutual opposition in ideological principles ... if a struggle within the Party does not reveal diverging principles ... [it] is then without principle and without content'.<sup>304</sup> Thus the first point he can be said to have made is that by definition the struggle which is integral to a purge must reveal differences on principles. He then proceeds to amplify this: 'The object of the intra-Party struggle is the education of the Party and the education of those comrades who commit errors. Therefore the intra-Party struggle is basically an indispensable type of Party education ...'<sup>305</sup> In other words the highest-level purge we are considering, if it is publicised, is only completely understandable in the context of its educative or monitory purpose. If a purge is conducted without publicity it is that much the less meaningful and, therefore, commensurately less important. This is not to say that the purges under consideration are mere publicity stunts solely designed to prepare the ground for

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<sup>304</sup> Mao's China - Party Reform Documents, 1942-44. - Boyd Compton. University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1952, p.190.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid, p.207.



some new and major change in policy and having no relationship to the positions adopted or power held by those purged. Quite clearly such factors also have relevance. But it would seem to be the case that once it is acknowledged that on occasions the primary purpose of the public purge is educative, the way is left open for employing such means irrespective of the views or positions of the victims. Indeed Liu specifically condemned struggles of this nature. Criticising those who attempt to preserve or bring about Party unity in an unprincipled manner, he says: 'They intentionally select an 'opponent' (a comrade in the Party) as a representative of opportunism, and begin the struggle, sacrificing and striking this single comrade or a few comrades ... so that cadres and Party members will work zealously and accomplish their mission'.<sup>306</sup>

In sum then it can be argued that the primary purge which is publicised, although conducted along lines possibly conforming generally with the views of the victims or at least conformable to such views, is deliberately designed to prevent a real threat occurring or to induce mass concern and therefore unity and responsiveness. Purge seems in fact to follow a crisis rather than to constitute one, and to be an integral part of the preparation of a generalised and pronounced change in overall policy. Its victims are few and are selected on the basis of the area in which institutional change is to be effected.

If this interpretation has any validity its application to the whole range of Cultural Revolution allegations would suggest that it is less important to assess the truth of the allegations than to examine their policy content. If this method is employed it should provide a clearer insight into the purposes of the Cultural Revolution. This subject has been touched upon above and it is not the present intention to expand upon it other than to raise two particular points. The first is that a preliminary analysis of the contents of the allegations strongly suggests that basic to very many of them is, both explicitly and implicitly, defence of the Great Leap Forward and Mao's role in this movement. It thus seems likely that, if one discounts the positive or more romanticist purposes of

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<sup>306</sup> Ibid, pp.209-10. Liu's complete description of this method makes interesting reading in the light of the Cultural Revolution struggles against the 'top capitalist-roaders'. (See pp.210-11.)

Mao, a primary motivation could have been self-defence. He seems to have been obsessed by the fear that the Great Leap Forward, and hence his total policy, would be thoroughly condemned when history came inevitably to be re-written by subsequent dynastic chroniclers. Though he might be unable to guarantee that this would never come to pass he could at least try to delay the condemnatory process by a considerable measure of time. He could, while alive, take steps to ensure that the successor leadership would be either so committed to his total policy or even genuine proponents of it that condemnation could be entirely avoided or so delayed as to lose much of its meaning. It is possible therefore that Mao concluded from the events following Stalin's death that condemnation of a strong leader after his passing was a natural historical process. Its avoidance could only be attempted by means of conducting a type of controlled 'de-Stalinisation' campaign before his own death.

This leads to the final point of this study. If nothing else is certain, and very little that has gone before has any certainty to it, Mao will one day die. Equally surely, his present chosen successor will also die. The question that now concerns us however is the state of their health. On this topic Cultural Revolution materials, whatever their origin, are unanimous in declaring with considerable frequency that both men are in excellent health. This may well be true. Indeed foreign visitors who have seen Mao consistently report him to appear to be healthy. But the very reiteration of this point by Peking media is significant. The least that can be deduced is that the two men had been alleged by some, for devious reasons, to be unwell and that this is a sensitive point. Lin Piao, we know, has in the past been in poor health. More recently, at some date prior to mid 1965, Liu Ya-lou visited him when he was sick.<sup>307</sup> Moreover the allegations made against Lo Jui-ch'ing to the effect that on several occasions in 1964 and 1965 he attempted to get Lin to retire on health grounds suggests that he was chronically unwell.<sup>308</sup> As for Mao, there is no reliable information concerning his health. It is just possible that in late 1965 or early 1966 he was temporarily incapac-

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<sup>307</sup> People's Daily, 12 May 1965. SCMP 3473, 9 June 1965, p.13.

<sup>308</sup> Canton Chingkwangshan and Kwangtung Wen-i Chan-pao, 5 September 1967. SCMP 4046, 24 October 1967, pp.8-9.



itated by ill health, but this is mere surmise.<sup>309</sup> Certainly at the moment he appears robust enough. The fact remains nevertheless that he is now an old man and the health of an old man can be likened to the strength of a paper tiger. If the Cultural Revolution was at least partly designed to establish a successor leadership, which it probably was, we are left with an interesting choice of alternative eventualities. The first is that Mao's successor, despite his relative youth, will not succeed him due to a premature death or early incapacitation. The second is that Mao will be succeeded by a chronically ill man. These, today, appear to be the most likely alternative probabilities. Assuming this assessment to be not wide of the mark a further question is posed. If it is a correct assessment both men also know it to be so. Why then was Lin chosen to be the successor? The real answer is of course unknown, but there are a number of logical explanations for this curious phenomenon. Firstly it could be argued that Mao chose Lin for the very good reason that he could not have overthrown Liu and the others without the complete support of the PLA and, furthermore, that Lin's health ruled out the possibility of a meaningful threat to Mao from that quarter. Secondly, it is possible that regardless of the state of Lin's health Mao is leaving the choice of the ultimate successor to him. Finally, it may be that the real successor is still lurking in the shadows. Who this man is, should he exist, the Cultural Revolution has taught us not to speculate. Even if one guessed correctly it would be impossible to tell what precise course the new helmsman would choose to set. It is clear nevertheless that the options open for any leader, while China remains basically agrarian, will be rigidly limited and not fundamentally affected by artificially-imposed mass upheavals. In this respect China's future historians will probably judge the Cultural Revolution to have been a failure. Yet if it is a failure it does not necessarily follow that it should never have been attempted. China's problems are of such a magnitude that not to attempt the apparently impossible may well be more dangerous than attempting it and failing.

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Edgar Snow has reported that at the beginning of 1965 Mao said there might be some question as to the state of his health, and that he was preparing to meet God very soon. Even so, Snow stated that Mao appeared to be in good condition. The Age, 25 February 1965.

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