

ARTHUR CLEGG

**New China  
New World**





NEW CHINA, NEW WORLD

UNION OF SOVIET  
SOCIALIST REPUBLICS



Mercator's Projection

# NEW CHINA, NEW WORLD

by

Arthur Clegg

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For my father and mother

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## INTRODUCTION

Liu Ning-i

Vice-Chairman of the All-China Federation of Labour and Vice-President  
of the W.F.T.U.

“Under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, under the banner of New Democratic Revolution, and led by their great Mao Tse-tung, the Chinese people are now,” in the words of the editorial of the initial issue of the Peiping edition of the *People's Daily*, “overthrowing the old and building a new society, overthrowing the old China and building a new China.”

That new China is now a reality. The 450 million Chinese people are on the eve of complete nationwide victory. Two hundred million of them are already enjoying the freedom of the New Democracy. The great tasks of the struggle against imperialism and feudalism that has been waged in the past 100 years will soon be triumphantly fulfilled.

Arthur Clegg's new book, *New China, New World*, will be of great help to the British working people in understanding this great historic event that is taking place in China.

The victory of the Chinese people has not been achieved in a day. They groped for the correct path in the past 100 years until they found Marxism-Leninism and organised their own party—the Communist Party of China. In its twenty-eight years of bitter struggle and historic tests, it has produced a Marxist-Leninist leadership, the leadership of Mao Tse-tung.

The Chinese people have sacrificed many an heroic life and have shed much of their precious blood. The barbarous *coup d'état* staged by Chiang Kai-shek in 1927, the ten year civil war, the heroic Long March, the eight-year War of Resistance against Japan, and, of course, the present War of Liberation, are still fresh in their minds.

Their struggle has never been an isolated one. They have fighting friends in every land. During their most difficult days, they were profoundly encouraged by the great campaigns of support in every country in the world, and particularly those of the working people of Britain.

The great campaigns in Britain against Japan's invasions of Manchuria and Shanghai in 1931-2, against Chiang Kai-shek's "extermination campaigns" in the 1930s, and against Japan's war of aggression in the years following 1937, have explicitly shown the international solidarity of the British working people with the Chinese people.

Arthur Clegg has been closely connected with all these campaigns. As one of the participants and principal organisers of them, he has fought tirelessly for the Chinese people, has shown himself their true friend and has developed a great interest in and deep knowledge of China.

I feel sure that Arthur Clegg, like every Chinese patriot and friend of China, is now rejoicing in that victory of the Chinese people to which he has devoted so many of his precious years. I can see this from the book, especially in the chapters on "Serfs of Forty Centuries" and "Comrade Chang, Engineer".

Yes, New China means a new world. Wall Street is not so strong as it looks. It is defeated in China. It can, and will, be defeated everywhere. In struggle a new bright world is being born.

Paris, March 1949.

L. N.

## CHAPTER ONE

### WALL STREET PROPOSES

*"The Pacific is our ocean."*

—A UNITED STATES CONGRESSMAN.

"THE Pacific," said Ed. Izak, Chairman of the American House of Representatives Naval Affairs Committee in 1946, "is our ocean."

Giddy with the rays of atomic bombs, Mr. Izak and many like him in those days spoke with a frankness that later became unfashionable in Washington. It did not trouble them that the Soviet Union, China, Japan, Australia, and many more countries also bordered the Pacific. The interests of others did not count.

Behind such claims lay ideas both economic and military. In part they were set out by an American correspondent of the *Financial Times* when he wrote (26 March 1946), "it is to the vast unawakened markets of India and the Far East that American exporters are looking, and China is the first of these markets"; and for another part in the report of Mr. Izak's committee that year which demanded twenty-seven bases stretching across the Pacific from Alaska to Australia and from California to the hinterland of China, with others in the Atlantic.

The Second World War had seen a stupendous rise in the profits of American business. Between 1939 and 1944 profits increased four times, from \$6,000 million to \$23,000 million. Even allowing for taxation, profits on holdings of corporation stock had doubled. The post-war problem, as American business leaders saw it, was how to maintain and increase these profits.

To cope with the problem, the State Department created within itself a new department, that of economic affairs. Its first chief, W. L. Clayton, United States Under-Secretary for Economic Affairs, outlined its policy in a speech on 14 November 1946 in a manner which makes present talk of American "generosity" seem a little out of place. "We do not claim for it [American economic

policy]", he said, "any altruistic motives." The United States, he went on, had "the greatest productive capacity of many important commodities, which exceeds that of the rest of the world combined. . . . Efficient operation of our productive machine leaves us with great deficits and surpluses, which we must trade out with the rest of the world. We need markets—big markets—around the world in which to buy and sell."

His second point concerned raw materials. "Much larger imports of raw materials are needed to feed our greatly expanded facilities for the manufacture of producer and capital goods." To this he linked his third point, and added a crack of the whip: "Because of our dependence upon imports of strategic metals and minerals, what happens to American-owned reserves of such materials abroad is a matter of national concern."

This post-war policy of economic expansion was first worked out in detail in relation to China. China, devastated by nine years of war, rent by civil war, was to be the guinea pig of the State Department. As Mr. Clayton said when talking of "the rights of all legitimate enterprises" established by U.S. nationals abroad, "they are dealt with in treaties of friendship, commerce, and navigation similar to the treaty which we signed with China [in November 1946]. We are actively at work on a major program for negotiating treaties of this character with many governments."

That treaty with China gave American citizens the right to reside, travel, and carry on trade throughout the whole of China, and gave American corporations the right to "engage in and carry on commercial, manufacturing, processing, financial, scientific, educational, religious, and philanthropic purposes", to build buildings and acquire land for these purposes and to employ anybody they wanted in China without regard to nationality. China was forbidden to discriminate against American goods by tariff, quota, currency restrictions, taxation, or in any other way; and the United States had to be given equal rights with any other nation in exploration for and exploitation of minerals, and in shipping on China's inland waters. Nobody, either in China or elsewhere, took seriously the similar "rights" given to poverty-stricken China for the establishment of factories and the exploitation of minerals in the United States.

Dotting the i's and crossing the t's of Mr. Clayton's speeches came Mr. John Carter Vincent, Director of Far Eastern Affairs in the State Department, who speaking to the American Foreign Trade Council in November 1946 declared: "You may recall a recent press statement by the Under-Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, Mr. Will Clayton, to the effect that the United States should give greater support to foreign investments of its nationals in strategic minerals that are in short supply. This statement has a special application to the countries of South-East Asia and the Far East generally, as the sources of supply of a number of strategic and critical materials."

The one lesson that the State Department learnt right away in China was that other people did not regard such open statements of policy as those of Messrs. Clayton and Vincent with the same delight as members of the Foreign Trade Council. The programme, it was found, needed "selling" abroad. So General Marshall, fresh from his experience in putting it across a reluctant China, was made Secretary of State; and Mr. Clayton, who opened his mouth too widely, was promptly returned to his former pursuit of cotton trading.

But big American firms, armed with promises of protection, began to expand their already considerable interests in China, and before the flood of American goods small Chinese businesses in Shanghai and elsewhere began to go bankrupt by the dozen. In the summer of 1946 the *Manchester Guardian* correspondent in China, in two days' reading of the Chinese press, counted five hundred Chinese firms in and around Shanghai which failed or suspended operations.\*

Had the United States desired trade, this could have been secured by an equal agreement which assisted the Chinese economy. But American leaders had no wish for equal agreements. They wished for expansion, a great empire, for the "world leadership" which Truman and Dewey were so fond of claiming. So China's economy was further destroyed.

For the achievement of this "leadership", America's rulers used a whole armoury of political and military weapons in addition to economic ones. One of the chief of these, during the Secretary-

\* *Manchester Guardian*, 1 August 1946.

ship of General Marshall, was that of obscuring the issue. To call, as Clayton had done, for the protection of American investments abroad had too much a ring of naked imperialism about it. Therefore it became fashionable to talk of "protecting nations from Communism". Yet the aim of economic enslavement remained the same. This was naïvely put by Mr. William Jackson, President of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, when he said: "Russia's totalitarian system is making a daring bid not only for the economies of its neighbour nations, but for the mind and soul of humankind everywhere. . . . An invasion of American dollars, machinery, industrial efficiency, and technical talent will be welcomed in other nations as true liberators." This was repeated, in words not very dissimilar, by President Truman in his speech on 20 January 1949, inaugurating his second term of Presidency.

Another method, also used in China, was to secure governments pliable to the will of the invading American dollar, and kept so by threats, by "aid", and by the control of the economies of their countries which the "aid" made possible. Such puppet governments could then be used for the arrest and suppression of all "souls" who did not wish to make profits for Mr. Jackson and his friends.

A third method was to try to split the opposition to American plans by the use of "third forcers" who, pretending to be both anti-capitalist and anti-Communist, in fact spent all their efforts on making impossible a united progressive stand against the building of Wall Street's empire. Here Bevin lent incalculable aid. The "third force" was and is a variant of the old imperial policy of "divide and rule". But the "third force" had little success in China.

Fourthly, American armed strength was to be built up and a chain of bases established to control the world. In China the chief ones were established at Tsingtao in the north and in the island of Formosa off the south coast. These bases were to lend support to atomic threats. Finally, when all else failed, American forces might step in.

In the use of these methods in China, the United States had many advantages. Yet all have failed.

The war had ended in China with a government in power that

was completely anti-democratic, and therefore virulently anti-Communist and subservient to American wishes. It saw in American grants and American arms its only chance of survival. In addition, the United States had its land, naval, and air forces located in bases from South to North China. Last, but by no means least, the United States had won much goodwill throughout China by its part in the defeat of Japan. It was thus calculated that it would not be difficult for American wishes to be achieved.

The chief difficulty was that the Chinese people wanted an independent and democratic country. But this was not realised by the then American Ambassador in China, General Hurley, a former oil man, who judged that the strength of the Chinese Communists was "much exaggerated", and who favoured policies of brushing aside by force all who would not come to heel when he called.

A secondary obstacle was that the American advisers of the Kuomintang desired that there should be a certain amount of "liberal" window dressing of Chiang's dictatorship, and a reduction of the corruption which made that dictatorship so inefficient. Chiang and the Kuomintang, however, were frightened even of make-believe reforms lest they gave people undesirable ideas about voting rights and freedom of speech, and were absolutely opposed to any reduction of the corruption which was their major source of livelihood and the livelihood of their many hangers-on.

The first major brush between Chiang and the people's forces came with the end of the war. Chiang's forces, which had done as little fighting as possible since the fall of Hankow in 1938, were ordered to advance and take over the towns and cities surrendered by the Japanese. At the same time, Chiang ordered the People's Armies and guerrillas, led by Communists, which had borne the brunt of the war against Japan, to stay put. The Japanese and their puppets were likewise instructed to surrender only to the Kuomintang and to resist any attempt of the popular forces to take over the cities. Naturally the popular forces could not agree, and took many cities from the Japanese in Central and North China and in Manchuria. Kuomintang troops, rushed to key cities in American ships and planes, tried to drive them out again. The immediate reaction of the U.S. commanders on the spot to popular opposition to Kuomintang occupation, was to swing their own

forces into the scale. Congressman De Lacy, speaking in the U.S. House of Representatives in November 1945, recorded that "we have permitted ourselves to become so thoroughly committed to armed intervention against the Chinese people's own struggle for freedom that only last week an officer in the U.S. Army, Lieutenant-General Albert C. Wedemeyer, authorised air attacks upon a tiny Chinese village".

So great was the outcry in China, in the United States, and elsewhere against this renewal of civil war in China and America's part in it that the Truman Administration decided to retreat a little. Its Ambassador, General Hurley, was recalled; General Marshall was sent out to "mediate"; and, at the meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in Moscow in December 1945, the United States agreed to proposals that both American and Soviet troops (which had defeated the Japanese in Manchuria) should be withdrawn from China and China encouraged to form a united, democratic government. In China a truce was declared and truce teams of American, Kuomintang, and Communist officers toured the fronts to see it was observed. A Political Consultative Council of representatives of the Kuomintang, the Communist Party, and smaller parties and groups set to work on the terms of a new constitution and the formation of a coalition government. On the surface it seemed hopeful that the civil war problem could be solved.

But reality belied appearance. While the Council talked and agreed, Kuomintang troops moved, in American ships and planes, to key parts of North China and Manchuria. President Truman said later, "Three [Kuomintang] armies were moved by air and eleven by sea, to Central China, Formosa, North China, and Manchuria." Lend-lease, though stopped for all other countries, continued to go to Chiang. Sales of American war surplus were made to Chiang at a fraction of the cost. Loans were negotiated with him, his divisions equipped with American weapons, and his navy built up with a gift of 271 U.S. warships and a dozen more from Britain. When Soviet troops withdrew from Manchuria in fulfilment of their Moscow pledges (a withdrawal completed on 20 May 1946), American forces moved into South Manchuria to protect key ports and railways for the disembarkment of the Kuomintang troops who were taking over Manchuria. As Con-

gressman De Lacy again recorded in Congress on 26 July 1946, "The chief result of General Marshall's labors has been to win time for Chiang's clique to pile up supplies and to get their armies moved into position, by American ships, for further fighting."

In March 1946 the Kuomintang Central Executive Committee decided that it was now strong enough to break the agreements made in the Political Consultative Council. It therefore resolved to maintain the Kuomintang army at a considerably higher figure than that agreed in relation to the Communist forces, and decided that the constitution drafted in the Council should now be re-drafted by itself. Clearly the Kuomintang had no intention of peace and was only awaiting the moment to strike.

By June, with the major Manchurian cities in his hands, Chiang thought the truce had lasted sufficiently long and, when the time came to renew the truce agreement, the *United Press* reported from China, "The principal barrier appeared to be Chiang's demands that the Communists evacuate a number of places they were holding. He remained adamant on those demands." The Communists had already reduced the size of their army and had withdrawn from all positions south of the Yangtze in their efforts to speed agreement. Chiang did not seriously think that they would agree to his new demands. They were merely made to provide an excuse for renewed civil war. In the early days of July, after U.S. forces had staged various attacks on the people's forces in North China to precipitate matters, Chiang threw off pretence and launched four main offensives against the Liberated Areas. The war to make China safe for dictatorship and the rule of the dollar had begun.

## CHAPTER TWO

### CHINA DISPOSES

*"Our forces are powerful because all who have joined them are consciously disciplined. . . . Their sole aim is to stand closely by the people and to serve the Chinese people with all their heart and will."*

—MAO TSE-TUNG, *On Coalition Government*.

"WE ARE backing the wrong horse", General Carlson warned America in May 1947. "General Chiang Kai-shek's troops cannot lick the Chinese Communist armies because they have not a base in the people and they are not conditioned physically, professionally, spiritually, or morally for the type of campaign necessary to achieve victory." Carlson had spent months with the Communist-led People's Armies and knew them well. He also knew Chiang's forces. But his opinion was brushed aside. None are so blind as those who will not see, and the pundits of Washington in 1946 and 1947 felt certain of a sweeping victory for Chiang.

To these armchair strategists, blinded with blitzkrieg theories, it seemed that the superiority in numbers, armament, and disposition of the Kuomintang forces far outweighed any deficiencies in morals and morale that they might possess.

Chiang's armies numbered some four million, of whom two million were his own troops, the rest from provincial armies. The People's Army totalled some one million regulars.

In armaments, Chiang's crack divisions were equipped with the latest American weapons, from new types of automatics to bazookas, and the number of such divisions constantly grew as the supply and training programme proceeded. For the rest of his men he had the Japanese equipment handed to him on the Japanese surrender, plus other armaments sent as war booty from Japan. By contrast, the People's Army had only the Japanese equipment and ammunition they had been able to capture plus what they could make in their own limited arsenals.

As for disposition, the areas held by the People's Army were

scattered and disconnected by towns and railways held by the enemy. But the Kuomintang positions had been carefully built up in the truce period. They had access to sea and air communications and their sea routes and most vital railways were under U.S. protection.

In one arm the Kuomintang had absolute superiority. The People's Army had no aircraft. Chiang, however, had considerable numbers of American and some British and Canadian planes together with American-trained fliers. At the end of 1945 the American Air Force had made a secret agreement with him (not published till 1948) to build up an additional eight air squadrons.\*

But the strength of an army cannot be estimated solely in terms of equipment and numbers. The Americans advising Chiang, who often inveighed against the iniquities of materialism, proved to be materialists of such a crude kind in practice that they overlooked half the material factors in the situation, that half which to Communists stood out as the more important. These factors concern morale, training, fighting methods, the composition of the army, and especially its relations with the people.

Chiang and his American advisers did not understand, and could not understand because of their whole background and reactionary purposes, the difference between a people's army and a semi-feudal, semi-fascist army such as Chiang's.

The difference was shown in the matter of recruits. Chiang's army was a conscript army. Most of his men had been dragged unwillingly from their villages, often in chains. The People's Army was an army of volunteers who knew what they were fighting for and loved what they knew. To be conscripted into Chiang's army was a matter for fear. The poor tried to escape, the rich bought substitutes from traders in human flesh to serve in place of their sons. But the People's Army had so many volunteers that it need choose only the best; and to be chosen was an honour, not a punishment. The volunteers were all examined by local selection boards of peasants and workers. In

\* When this agreement was published the American Committee for a Democratic Far Eastern Policy calculated that between VJ-Day and February 1948 Chiang had received over U.S. \$5,000 million worth of military and other supplies for civil war purposes, as against U.S. \$1,500 million of supplies to China for the war against Japan.

North Shansi, for example, in early 1948, out of some 2,500 volunteers only 600 were chosen by the board for service. Selection was on the basis of age, intelligence, and character, the last taking into account the need to weed out loafers, landlord elements, and fifth columnists.

One result was that not only was the morale of the People's Army higher than anything known in the Kuomintang Army, but the standard of physique and intelligence was higher too.

Similarly with training. All armies are political, but the political purpose of an army can be either for conquest and suppression, or for defence and liberation. In the first case the training of the soldier must be in unthinking obedience—"theirs not to reason why"—since the purpose of the army is opposed to the soldier's interest; or else in the mechanical absorption of pills of propaganda. In such an army its purpose is not mentioned or else is smothered in this propaganda in the fascist manner. Such an army inevitably goes to pieces after a succession of defeats which compel thought. But in a people's army its purpose is the central point of all training and discipline; it is known, loved, and discussed by all. In the Chinese People's Army training began with a discussion course on: "Why do we join the army? Why do we fight? Why do we train?" Recruits were encouraged to speak out their opinions and were free to criticise the conduct of affairs. From this conscious understanding of the purpose of the army flowed its conscious, rational yet strict discipline. Since the army grew rapidly after 1945 and absorbed many former Kuomintang units the method and level of discipline in all units was not always equal to the standards of the best. To eliminate old methods always takes time, but any officer found guilty of using old methods was certain of censure or demotion, and the general standard is continuously being raised.

After the initial period training was related to the weapons available and the tactics found most valuable. Since the rifle was the commonest weapon in the army and few heavier weapons were then available, the People's Army, during the Japanese war and after, made an exhaustive study of the use of the rifle. Only by gaining every advantage from that weapon could an army equipped almost solely with it beat an army with heavier weapons. Thus

marksmanship, grenade throwing, and bayonet fighting were the main concerns of training. With them went training in endurance and in the use of individual initiative, both so essential in the war of movement fought by the army.

Other aspects of training changed with the job in hand. In 1946-47, when the main task was to disrupt Kuomintang communications, much attention was paid to methods of attacking railways and convoys. In 1948, however, emphasis shifted to methods of demolishing fortifications and assaulting cities.

Training in battle tactics went on all the time for all ranks. As one would expect in an army led by Marxists, every soldier was encouraged to be awake and ready to learn new things. Ordinary soldiers who had shown particular ability in a certain kind of fighting were asked, under the "junior instructor system", to hold discussion courses in their methods to be attended both by the men and officers of their unit. Attention to strategy went along with this attention to tactics; the aim was that every soldier should have a clear understanding of both. So the aims and tasks of every period of the war were reduced to simple slogans that put the matter memorably. Thus in 1947 the slogans for the army, crystallising the tasks of the new period of the People's Army offensive, were: "Resolutely, thoroughly, and completely wipe out Chiang's invading troops; master positional warfare, encirclement, and manoeuvre." Such pithy sentences told each soldier what was expected of him.

In the People's Army training, discipline, and battle methods were consciously related to one another, to the arms available and to Chinese conditions and traditions. All were rational, flexible, tied to no antiquated orthodoxy, and expressed in simple and understandable terms. Naturally the army learnt from the methods of other armies, but it was never petrified by obsolete traditions. Chu Teh, Commander-in-Chief, had received German military training, but he told Anna Louise Strong in 1938, "My studies in Germany convinced me that the German model is too elaborate and mechanical for China; it cannot easily be changed to suit changing conditions." The methods which Chu and others have worked out for the People's Army are highly adapted to changing conditions. That is the main reason for their success.

They are not for the barrack square, they are for the battlefield.

The Kuomintang Army, however, was a strange mixture of German mechanical patterns (whether taken direct from German army instructors or indirectly through Japanese and American ones) and feudal inefficiency. The ideal sought by its foreign advisers had always been that of a smooth-running machine (unattainable save in textbooks); the reality was an army of mostly half-starved vagabonds led by officers whose chief concerns were their careers and fortunes. For the most part, these officers saw no relevance between the theory they had been taught and the battles they were supposed to fight. They could advance when their superiority was overwhelming, sit in prepared positions while food held out, and were utterly lost in a war of movement and surprise. Even their training schemes went all awry. In 1947 members of the American Military Advisory Group in China were complaining that the Kuomintang could not even bring sufficient recruits to fill the training camps set up by the Advisory Group. Somehow, no matter how many were sent to them, a large proportion got lost on the way.

In the matter of officers the People's Army was far superior to the Kuomintang. Many of the People's Army commanders had seen ten or twenty years of continuous war. Their leaders had been in the Nanchang uprising on 1 August, 1927, when a few Kuomintang Army units, led by Communists, revolted against the general desertion of the Chinese revolution. They had known no year without fighting since. In Manchuria, where the People's Army sprang from the guerrilla bands formed in 1931 to fight the Japanese, they had been trained in a fourteen-year combat against one of the militarily most skilful armies in the world. They drew on a rich personal, as well as theoretical, knowledge of war. They were chosen for their skill in battle and their ability to lead and organise. They lived similar lives to their men and off duty were their social equals, no more. Consequently they were both respected and liked.

In the Kuomintang army, while some officers knew war and were efficient, they all came from a class opposed to and despising that of their men. Most, if not all, were place seekers. They cared nothing for self-conscious discipline among their men. The

only discipline they knew was based on fear and brutal punishment.

But the chief strength of a people's army lies not in its own organisation and morale, however important those may be, but in its relation to its base, to the people from which it springs. Both share a common political purpose, but in China every endeavour was made to build a community of interest at every level of relations. "Our army is among the people like a fish in the sea", was a popular saying or, as Peng Teh-huai, Vice-Commander-in-Chief, once put it, "The people should be the foundation, the fortress and the Great Wall of our war." Every soldier, as part of his training, learnt the "Eight Points to Remember" which were the basis of soldier-peasant co-operation in everyday contact: "Clean up before leaving. . . . Return anything you borrow. . . . Repay anything you have damaged. . . . Be courteous. . . . Don't rob prisoners." They not only learnt them, they were expected to and did carry them out. Army methods of fighting were designed to protect peasant lives and crops and, after 1941, the army undertook to grow part of its own food to lighten the burden on the people. Always, if soldiers were not fighting, they were expected to help the peasants with harvesting and other work on the land. In all these ways, big and little, the Army and the people were one.

Kuomintang officers had no conception of such relations. Many had warlord or fascist outlooks. Their methods of warfare showed a brutal indifference to the interests of simple people. In mid-1947, for example, Kuomintang army officers, using forced labour of peasants, cut eleven breaches in the banks of the Grand Canal in North China to create floods to bar the advance of the People's Army on Tientsin. The result was a flood which covered over 200 square miles of peasant farms and villages. Hundreds of thousands were deprived of their means of life and left to starve. Such methods, frequently used, did not endear the Kuomintang to the Chinese people.

Because of common interests and military necessity, and because the democratic way of tackling problems is to draw in the mass of the people to solve them, the People's Army, as one of its chief tasks, stimulated popular self-defence organisations wherever

it went. The Chief of Staff of the New Fourth Army had, in the war against Japan, put the point of military necessity: "From the standpoint of the Army, the chief aim of mass work is to maintain the existence of the Army itself. Without mass organisations no army can be developed or extended. . . . The New Fourth Army is more deficient in the point of arms than any other army participating in this war and consequently we especially depend on the strength and support of the masses in opposing forces with superior mechanization. Our mass work is inseparable from our military work." But he went further: "The organisation of the people is the guarantee both of victory and of democracy after the war is over." The people were roused not only out of military necessity but so that they could become the rulers of their country.

Chiang, by contrast, being concerned with bolstering his dictatorship, so far from wishing to arouse the people was concerned to hold them down more securely. Opposition parties were suppressed and their papers banned, leading democrats assassinated or arrested, and every sign of popular political thought and activity put down. Even if the people in Chiang's areas were partly taken in with his anti-Communist propaganda, his terror spread a dull apathy over the land, and the only ones who profited from it were the black marketeers.

The People's Army developed initiative and fought inertia; Chiang suppressed initiative and fostered inertia. The result was that the People's Army flourished, while Chiang dug his own grave. The People's Army could yield position after position and still maintain its strength. Chiang's army, faced with defeat, began to go to pieces and had no reserves to draw upon. The course of the war was thus in large degree determined by the differing structure and purposes of the two opposing armies.

The opening Kuomintang offensives were planned to establish railway connections between their forces in Central China and those in North China and to expand the area in Manchuria held by the Kuomintang. The aim was to secure all the railways and big towns, to isolate the Communists in scattered patches of the countryside, and then to mop them up piecemeal. The counter-strategy of the People's Army was to exchange places for men. They surrendered Kalgan in 1946; Yen-an, their capital, in early

1947; and many other towns. But in the first year of war they inflicted one million casualties in killed and captured on the Kuomintang Army. Their own losses in killed were four-fifths of the Kuomintang and in captured only one-thirtieth. And, if they surrendered hundreds of miles of railway, they allowed no regular through communications between Central and North China. Either they continued to hold some key stretches or they constantly raided and broke up the railways.

To replace his losses Chiang intensified his conscription policies, thus increasing unrest in his rear. His replacements, poorly trained, were not up to the standard of those lost and his advances compelled him to use great numbers of men to defend communications instead of at the battle front. His advances therefore slowed down and by the spring of 1947 it was clear that the Kuomintang was exhausting itself. The crack army of Hu Tsung-nan, one of Chiang's leading generals, which had taken Yen-an in March, 1947, suffered a sharp defeat in April, losing a whole brigade. A few days later five Kuomintang brigades were destroyed in Honan. Predicting that in a few months the Kuomintang armies would be forced on the defensive, the *New China News Agency* in North Shensi declared: "The turning point of the war in the North-West is simultaneously the turning point of the situation over the whole of China. General Hu's forces are the last trump card of Chiang Kai-shek."

By the autumn of 1947 the Kuomintang forces were pretty well held. If they were still able to advance on this or that front they lost just as much or more ground elsewhere.

Thus the second year of the war, from July 1947 to July 1948, saw the Kuomintang pass from the offensive to the defensive, and the People's Army from the defensive to the offensive. The war had entered its second stage. By mid-1948 all Manchuria, save for a few towns and a coastal strip, had been liberated; most of the towns surrendered earlier in Shantung had been re-liberated; and in their 1948 spring offensive the People's Army had marched into Central China and reached the Yangtze north of Hankow. The whole of Chiang's regime was beginning to crumble. During this second year the Kuomintang lost 1,500,000 men killed, captured, or surrendered.

In the third year of war, the People's Army developed their offensive further in the assault on the great cities they had formerly avoided. In October and November, Changchun and Mukden, the two largest cities of Manchuria, surrendered. These victories were significant not only because they gave the People's Army a secure and stable base in Manchuria, but also because whole Kuomintang armies under the highest ranking generals gave themselves up with little fighting. It was now obvious that American aid, however great, could only delay and not avert Chiang's final defeat; nor, with the fate of their own first efforts at direct intervention fresh in mind and the fate of Japan's hopeless struggle against the Liberated Areas before them, dare the American militarists intervene openly with their own troops.

By the beginning of 1949 Peiping and Tientsin had been liberated and the People's Army, having freed the bulk of North China, was preparing to cross the Yangtze and liberate the South.

Once again in the crucible of war it had been shown that faith in the people is stronger than faith in big battalions and superior arms.

## CHAPTER THREE

### SERFS OF FORTY CENTURIES

*"It is the common sense of a primary school student that eighty per cent of China's population are peasants. . . . Therefore the problem of the peasantry becomes the fundamental problem of China's revolution; and the force of the peasantry, the main force of China's revolution."*

—MAO TSE-TUNG, *New Democracy*.

"FLOOD and famine in China", run the newspaper headlines almost every year. "Help China Now", say the relief appeals. Pity by the bucketful has been shed on the Chinese peasant. He has been treated with contempt, feared, called the "Yellow Peril", but nothing has been done to help him change his condition of poverty.

In no country in the world do peasants and landworkers form a larger part of the population than in China. Over four in five of all China's 450 millions live on the land. This is the world's greatest mass of peasants. And no section of people anywhere live in greater poverty.

Those who have idealised their patient endurance have called them "farmers of forty centuries". It would be truer to say serfs.

In all China till recently they carried on their backs a class of landlords. The great landlords exploited from fifty to several thousand peasants. They were the rulers of China, totalling in the 1920s some 30,000 families. Their great land holdings were to be found chiefly in South China, where estates of over 3,000 acres were fairly common, and in Manchuria where, ranging up to 400,000 acres, they have been compared with the former great junker estates of East Prussia. The small landlords or gentry were far more numerous. In the 1920s there were from 200,000 to 300,000 small landlord families. They owned estates of from seven to a hundred acres and exploited from three to fifty peasants. They were the backbone of landlordism, of the bureaucracy, and

of the Kuomintang army. This prevalence of small landlordism is one of the peculiar features of Eastern agriculture. For if a peasant family can eke out an existence on forty per cent of the produce of a farm of two and a half acres, a landlord family can live fairly comfortably on sixty per cent of the produce of a seven-acre estate worked by three tenants.

Allied to the landlords in many respects were the rich peasants who either worked far more land than the average peasant, using hired labour, or else worked some land themselves and rented out the rest.

Big landlords, small landlords, and rich peasants were the exploiting classes of the countryside and all in addition engaged in money-lending. Together they formed about 10 per cent of the rural population and owned about three-quarters of the cultivated land.

The middle peasants were those who worked their own land of some two or three acres in extent. They did not exploit others, and were not themselves directly exploited. But through taxation and levies, through interest to moneylenders and the manipulation of the prices of the things they bought and sold, they did experience indirect exploitation of a very heavy kind.

Poor peasants, the majority of the rural population, might own a bit of land and rent another bit. Some were entirely without land and rented it all. On the land rented they paid from 40 to 60 per cent of the produce as rent, sometimes as much as 80 per cent. In some parts of China, in the South and in Manchuria, the peasants were true serfs bound to the land by the terms of their tenure and owing labour service. Everywhere their life was all toil and poverty until disease or famine or flood carried them off.

At the bottom of the scale were the labourers, some possessing tiny plots of land but hiring themselves out mostly to others, the rest completely landless. The latter wandered about working for what they could get, ready to be brigands, soldiers, or sell themselves for a little food.

No society is static, and in China in recent years, society has been turbulent. The fundamental factor has been that no peasant family, save that of the rich peasant, has been able to

pay its way. No peasant family can live entirely on the produce of the land, it must sell a part of the produce to buy such necessities as tools, clothes, medicines, household goods, and replacements of animals that die. A hundred years ago many got much of this money from selling the produce of home industries. But this became increasingly difficult with the flooding of markets by factory-made cloth and silk.

At the same time the dangers of flood and famine have been increased by the deterioration of the great irrigation systems of China. The central government was responsible for the upkeep of these great waterworks, but expenditure upon them was the first thing to be cut in the nineteenth century in an effort to meet the cost of resisting foreign invasion and the indemnities imposed upon China by the victorious Powers. They have never received proper attention since.

Thus flood, famine, war, the world depression, the annihilation of peasant handicrafts, the exactions of warlords, government levies and inflation all drove the peasant to the moneylender, "the indispensable basis of rural life in the East", as he has been called. Once in his hands the peasant had little chance of getting out. R. H. Tawney (*Land and Labour in China*) has recorded that, "Interest at 40 to 80 per cent (per year) is said to be common, interest at 150 to 200 per cent is not unknown." In the Yangtze delta interest at 50 per cent a month was common. Failure to pay interest meant confiscation of land, and much land thus passed from peasants who could not meet their interest obligations to the estates of moneylenders.

An investigation into one village in the 1930s showed that the middle peasants with an average income of £15 per year were falling into debt at a rate of 15s. a year, while tenant peasants with an average income of £4 10s. per year were increasing their debts at the rate of £3 10s. per year. Professor Fei Hsiao-tung, one of the keenest of Chinese social investigators, wrote: "The essential problem in Chinese villages, putting it in its simplest terms, is that the income of the villagers has been reduced to such an extent that it is not sufficient even to meet the expenditure in securing the minimum requisites of livelihood. It is the hunger of the people that is the real issue in China" (*Village Life in China*).

On top of landlord and usurer exploitation, the peasant had to carry a burden of foreign exploitation. In addition to indemnities all sorts of foreign loans had been pressed on China. Sometimes used for railway building, with exorbitant profits for Western contractors and financiers, they were in many cases simply squandered. But the Chinese had to pay interest on the whole, and that interest was usually secured on some tax such as customs or salt, which ultimately bore largely on the peasants.

The peasant's income was also diminished by the buying policies of foreign monopolies. Foreign companies were always anxious to turn Chinese peasants to growing cash crops over which they had the monopoly of purchase. In the provinces of Shantung and Honan in the 1920s the British and American Tobacco Company, for example, working in agreement with the local landlords, persuaded many peasants to grow tobacco instead of grain and offered good prices. But once the peasants had changed to tobacco the price came down quickly and, since they were too poor to buy the seed necessary to change back to food-growing again, they were completely at the mercy of the company, having to accept whatever price was offered to them. Japanese companies developed cotton-growing in Manchuria and North China along similar lines.

The agreements established from time to time between various imperialists for the division of China into trade areas—the Japanese in Manchuria, the British in Central and South China, the French in the South-West—established the supremacy of a small group of foreign companies in a certain area and thus facilitated this manipulation of prices.

In such practices there was a considerable tie between the foreign companies and the Chinese merchants, called compradores, who acted as their agents. Such agents were often moneylenders and landlords at the same time; in every case they had a web of connections with Chinese landlords and also were connected with foreign banks in China, depending on them to finance their transactions. Thus in the last hundred years had grown up a system whereby, through the Chinese moneylender-landlord-merchant, the vampire foreign banks drank their measure of the blood and sweat of the poverty-stricken Chinese peasant.

Confronted with the increasing poverty of the people of China and the consequent decline in their profits, these foreign exploiters, like the Japanese in the 1930s and the Americans in the 1940s, tried to maintain and increase those profits by extending the area of China over which they had a monopoly.

This double exploitation of the peasants by landlords and foreign imperialists, as the preamble to the Agrarian Programme of the Liberated Areas states, lay at the root of China's "being invaded and oppressed, its poverty and backwardness, and are the basic obstacles to our country's democratisation, industrialisation, independence, unity, strength, and popularity". Tinkering could not mend this system. It had to be wiped out and a fresh start made.

During the war against Japan, to ease the burden of the peasants, the Chinese Communist Party had advocated, and secured the adoption in the Liberated Areas, of a measure of rent reduction. After the Kuomintang began civil war, however, there was no longer any point in delaying land division and, in fact, that was necessary in order to win victory. In Manchuria especially the peasants were anxious to break up the big estates. The usual procedure at this time was for the peasants of a village to call a "settling of accounts" meeting attended by the landlord if he so desired, who could defend himself. These meetings decided how much of the landlord's land was to be divided and whether there was to be any compensation. This was the period of "half-baked reform", so called because the landlords were still left with large land-holdings and all their stores, animals, and implements, and were thus still the richest and most powerful individuals in the villages.

From the point of view of the peasants this was unsatisfactory since, though they now had more land, they had often to go humbly to the former landlord for grain to plant it and animals and ploughs to work it. Politically the situation was dangerous since Kuomintang agents were trying to organise the landlords for disruptive purposes. Moreover many landlords had dodged land division by various fakes; while the rich peasants, the petty exploiters of the countryside, had not been touched. For all these reasons the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party decided in 1947 to establish the land division movement on

a firm and clear foundation and on 10 October of that year they issued the "Basic Programme of the Chinese Agrarian Law", which has now, with some variations, been passed into law by all the Liberated Areas.

The object of the programme was "to wipe out the agrarian system of feudal and semi-feudal exploitation and to establish a system of 'land to the tillers'". Landlordism was to be entirely abolished. In future, while land remained private property to be bought and sold, it was to belong to those who actually worked it. Any need for renting out land, as in the case of widows and orphans who could not work it themselves, was to be strictly supervised and regulated by law.

As nearly as possible land was to be divided equally between all the inhabitants of a village, young and old, male and female. Thus the class of rich peasants was also abolished. Since, however, the reform was to be carried out in alliance with the middle peasants, local exceptions could and should be made allowing the middle peasants a little more than village average. Women were to receive equal holdings with men and were thus provided with an economic basis for their newly won political freedom.

All debts to landlords, usurers, and rich peasants were to be cancelled. All the surplus animals, houses, implements, foodstuffs, etc., of landlords and rich peasants were to be confiscated and divided. Thus in material things all the families in a village were put on an equal footing.

All forests, great waterworks, large mines, extensive pasture and waste lands, together with historic sites, libraries, and antiquities released from private ownership by the reform, were to pass into the hands of the Liberated Area governments.

Control of the reform was placed in the hands of meetings of all village peasants and the committees elected by them, and the peasant congresses and committees of the counties, provinces, and areas. The Programme specially guaranteed the right of freedom of speech and criticism by all at such meetings to ensure that every objection was brought out and discussed; and provided that in association with the general peasant meetings and committees, leagues of landless labourers and poor peasants should provide a special driving force in the reform.

The Communist Party foresaw that such a revolution in the countryside could not be effected at once and without difficulty. In old liberated areas the peasants had already much experience and self-confidence. In newly liberated areas the peasants still had to win that self-confidence, and the programme envisaged that reform there would cover a period of several months, requiring a campaign that would avoid both the mistake of laxity in dealing with landlords and rich peasants, and the mistake of leftist hurry and the antagonising of middle peasants.

A Canadian anthropologist who, with her husband, was attached to a land reform team in Honan province has written a letter about these campaigns:

"The work-team is the instrument for effecting the Agrarian Law (which was adopted with qualifications and additions by this Border Region Government as the result of their 85-day conference on the matter).

"The team we are attached to is not typical, but on the other hand it's a key team for propaganda purposes. All its experiences, successful and otherwise, are carefully recorded and publicised in the local newspaper for study and discussion by other work-teams and villages in general throughout this Border Region. . . . The work is planned with all the care of a military operation. There is an H.Q., field H.Q.s, and combat units. We're with one of the combat units. The strategy is to muster strength at a point to make a break-through and, once the break-through is made, to radiate to the satellite villages around. . . . The job in the satellite villages is quite different from that in the central village, because the villages here are so close and there are so many interrelations that what happens in the central village is quickly known to those around. Success in the strategic village therefore makes reform in the others a relatively quick matter. The team then picks a new break-through point. Naturally the work in later strategic villages is simplified—in the first place the team has gained experience and in the second, because of the 'softening-up' process performed by the press and word-of-mouth reports . . .

"The operation includes first the discovering and organising of the 'poor peasants'. On their arrival here the work-team

members spent a day or two in a preliminary search for the 'poor peasants' and having discovered a few, moved into their homes to live and eat. . . . All those classified as 'poor' have been organised into a league, which has by now organised a new peasant union (we attended the inauguration today). The Poor Peasant League and the newly formed Peasant Union will hold village elections for a new village government based on universal suffrage. This new government together with the Poor Peasant League and the Peasant Union will actually carry out the reform (not the work-team).

"At the same time the 'reorganisation and purification' of the Communist Party is being carried on in the village. During the war, while there was danger of the enemy over-running an area, membership was secret. But now in all areas, except in the fighting zone, membership has been made public. We attended the village meeting at which the names of the Communist Party members were announced. The members are now before the village 'masses' for appraisal."

This appraisal of Communist Party members was an integral part of the reform movement and all local members had to appear before the peasant meetings. If any charges against them were proved, they were reprimanded or expelled by the Party.

In Manchuria and parts of North China which had never been penetrated by the Kuomintang advance the reform was pretty well complete by the spring of 1948, and the harvest of that year showed the first results of reform. On 29 October the New China News Agency reported that "Liberated Manchuria is bringing in bumper crops of kaoliang, soya bean, flax, and rice from the first autumn harvest since the great agrarian reform". Some districts had increased crop yields by as much as twenty per cent. Despite some drought and pest trouble a heavier harvest was general throughout the Liberated Areas.

Among the chief reasons for this was the new incentive given to the peasants to produce. Now his crop was his own, and work had a new pleasure and zest in it. With the sharing of the landlord's possessions, the peasants' tools were better than before. Did he need credit? Then credit was to be had from government agencies without interest or at very low rates. Did he need advice

about crops or plant diseases? Then there were government agencies and scientists to help him. Were animals and tools still too few? All right, pool them, said the best of the peasants. Working together we can plough all the village land in half the time it takes each to do our own. Pool the labour and implements at harvest time and we will bring it all in before it can be damaged by bad weather. So, together with the reform, went the formation of "Mutual Aid Teams" and "Labour Exchange Corps", which contain within them the seeds of new great advances for Chinese agriculture.

The new system will have to stand stern trials. It must feed both the people of the countryside and the growing towns better than before; provide for the army and for the people of areas devastated by the retreating Kuomintang. A surplus must be set aside in case of flood and famine, which will not be eliminated until the whole of Chinese agriculture and water control is put on a scientific basis and built up anew. Finally the new system must end China's dependence on food imports from abroad.

It is a sign of China's degradation in the modern world that, though the largest agricultural nation, she has had in recent times to import food every year. The reason has not been overpopulation, as some allege, for China still has great areas undeveloped. The reason is the grinding exploitation and neglect which has been steadily destroying Chinese agriculture. That deterioration will not be made good in a day, nor in a year. It is this need to import food which is calculated by the imperialists to be one of their chief tools in upsetting the new China.

They will not succeed. Experience in Russia and the People's Democracies in Eastern Europe shows that the ending of exploitation in agriculture releases immense force which can solve all food problems. Landlordism will not return to China. The old feudal order is dead. The agrarian reform is the first foundation of New China. There is arising a new village, a new countryside, and a new order of society based on this revolution. The new peasants will defend their land, and the new system will end past dependence on imports. The first autumn harvest in Manchuria spells victory. The serfs of forty centuries are now, and will remain, free men.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### COMRADE CHANG, ENGINEER

*"China has millions of industrial workers, and tens of millions of handicraft workers, without whom China cannot exist, because they are the producers of the industrial economy, because they are the leaders of the revolution and are the most revolutionary elements."*

—MAO TSE-TUNG, *New Democracy*.

"INACTIVITY", once wrote a famous *Daily Telegraph* correspondent in China, "is the bedrock of the nation. . . . By inactivity is meant the sort of spiritual apathy which springs from unvarying conditions." Everything, he said, not connected with agriculture "is counted as superficial and transitory and not possessing the characteristics of permanence." To Putnam Weale such spiritual apathy, with its indifference to economic progress, seemed wholly admirable.

Professor Tawney once put the same matter rather differently. "The Chinese iron industry", he wrote in the 1930s, "has the longest continuous history in the world, and had mastered the art of making cast iron some fifteen hundred years before that of Europe; but nearly half of the pig iron produced (today) is made in charcoal furnaces, with bellows worked by hand or water power."

China possesses rich resources of coal and iron, of special metals and water power. The ingenuity and skill of her workers have often been praised. Many of our modern industries owe much to past Chinese inventions and discoveries. Yet today China has fewer factories than Czechoslovakia or even Mexico. What are the reasons?

The growth of capitalist industry in China has been blocked by feudal and bureaucratic obstruction, by the lack of an internal market, by foreign competition and opposition, and by the continual presence of an easier avenue to wealth through money-

lending. "Spiritual apathy", where it has existed, has been far more effect than cause.

When money loaned to peasants could earn interest at 100 per cent a year secured on the land, what was the sense of investing it in risky factories where, with luck, it might earn 10 or 15 per cent? So rich men in China went into banking and usury and left industry largely alone.

Nor were foreign capitalists interested in Chinese manufactures. Building railways with foreign capital and materials was good business. Exporting Chinese ores and raw materials was good business too. But to build up Chinese industry was entirely contrary to business principles. The ideal was to take materials from China for the supply of Japanese, British, and American industries, and sell finished products to China in return. And Chinese tariff walls were kept forcibly low to enable this to be done.

Should any Chinese, despite all obstacles, actually build a factory and begin producing goods, then who would buy them? The wealthy landlords who preferred the superior products of foreign industry? Or the poverty-stricken peasants who could not make ends meet?

In Manchuria, during their years of occupation, the Japanese developed some coal and iron mining for the supply of Japanese industry, and built some factories, machine-shops, and a steel works for military purposes. Elsewhere in China, save for textile factories in the main coastal towns, and a few government-owned arsenals, machine-shops, and mines that supplied the army and railways, there was almost nothing in the way of modern industry. What little industry did exist was chiefly owned by four wealthy families who also controlled the government, the Kuomintang, and the four large government banks. These families were the Soongs (T. V. Soong, banker, Finance Minister, Prime Minister, Governor of Kwangtung, etc., and his sisters Madame Chiang and Madame Kung), the Kungs (an old North China pawnbroking and banking family; H. H. Kung, banker, Finance Minister, etc.), the Chiangs (Chiang Kai-shek, etc.), and the Chens (two brothers, sons of the Central China banker who had started Chiang on his career; to them Chiang had given control of the Kuomintang).

When Chinese Communists speak of the throttling power of "bureaucratic capital" on China's economic life they mean primarily the power and possessions of these four families. They have centralised all things in their hands and they are hated not only by the workers and peasants but also by the small Chinese industrialists (the "national capitalists") whose development they have blocked.

Because of the backwardness of industry, Chang, the Chinese worker, was usually employed not in a factory but in transport—as a coolie to carry goods on his back, to carry sedan chairs for the wealthy, to pull carts and rickshaws, to handle boats on the canals and rivers. Some say nearly twenty per cent of the population was engaged in transport in one way or another. Indeed human carrying power was far more important than animal, steam, or petrol power.

Workers in manufacture included both the craftsmen in traditional trades and the factory employees in the big cities. These latter worked up to twelve and fourteen hours a day for pay often under a shilling a day. To make up the family budget children had often to be sent to work in the factory too. In the dying handicrafts the condition of the worker was no better; apprenticeship systems were onerous and gave the master the right of corporal punishment. Pay was as low or lower than in the factories and hours as long or longer. The great cities were therefore the breeding ground of revolution. To their working quarters belonged the great glories of the revolutionary nineteen-twenties.

As for the scientists, trained abroad in the latest knowledge and technique, unless on their return they received some favoured university or government job, their talents and training were left to waste. They succeeded to their father's estates, secured a position in the civil service totally unrelated to their training, or went into "business", that is into trading.

Since China was so industrially backward, the socialisation of industry was not and could not be an immediate demand of the workers and their party. There was no industry to socialise. The task was rather to form a state under their own leadership which would stimulate the maximum building of industry, whether public or private, and secure decent conditions for all workers,

works committees in all plants, and public ownership of key sectors of the economy. This has been achieved in New China.

The first stimulation of industry comes directly from the agrarian reform. Now the peasants have grain to sell and therefore money to buy industrial products. There is a great demand for agricultural implements, for clothes, for household goods. The demand is insatiable. The second stimulation is government planning.

Every effort has been made in the fighting to limit the damage to existing factories. The value of besieging a city until the garrison surrendered has been both in lessening casualties and lessening damage to industry. In every large city in the days just before liberation the workers stood guard over their factories and machines to protect them against looting and sabotage. After liberation, the task has been to restart these factories and the local markets.

Tsinan, for example, the capital of Shantung province, was liberated in September 1948 and immediately administered by a Military Control Committee which restored peace and order, rounded up the scattered Kuomintang soldiers and protected the inhabitants and buildings, including foreign missions and property, from looting by Kuomintang deserters and disaffected elements. Within five days a provisional democratic municipal government had been chosen and had taken over from the Military Committee. One of its first acts was to organise a municipal trading concern to bring foodstuffs into the city from the countryside and to encourage the peasants to set up their usual stalls in the town for the sale of fresh produce. Liberated Area currency replaced the old Kuomintang dollar and within a few days prices of rice and pork and other foodstuffs had dropped by one half or more. The municipality took over the branches of the Kuomintang banking houses and made them into a municipal bank. Smaller local banks were allowed to continue operations. With food and financial problems on their way to solution, the municipality then turned to the job of helping the factories to restart, seeing that they were supplied with the necessary fuel, raw materials, power, and credit. Within a few weeks all Tsinan was busily at work in a way it had never been before.

The restarting of existing industries is, however, but the first step. The next is planning to restore and expand them. As yet only in Manchuria has planning on a large scale been possible; there a first one-year plan was carried out in 1948. But in the new united North China Liberated Area, formed in 1948, planning is also under way and plans have been prepared for 1949 following a conference of all concerned. The newly formed State-owned People's Bank of China, the central bank of New China formed by amalgamating all the confiscated Kuomintang banks in North China, will be a powerful support for these plans. Its notes are the currency of New China.

The possibilities of planning in Manchuria are great. Manchurian resources include the Far East's largest coalfield, three-quarters of the timber in China and half her railways, in addition to iron, gold, and other minerals, fisheries, and fertile agricultural lands. These resources, little developed as yet, promise much. Industry, though scanty, is further advanced than elsewhere in China and in 1940 over half China's coal and more than two-thirds of her iron were produced in Manchuria which, in addition, possesses one of the Far East's largest steel plants. The 1948 Plan was made possible by the liberation of most of Manchuria and the completion, more or less, of the agrarian reform. It was drawn up at the end of 1947 by a conference of representatives of all interested groups. The main emphasis was on agriculture and it called for increases in the production of foodstuffs, livestock, and agricultural raw materials, aid to new settlers and peasant home industries, the expansion of publicly owned farms and of all forms of co-operatives. The sown area was to be expanded by bringing waste land into cultivation, and by this and other improvements the object was to raise grain production by one million tons. The production of cotton, flax, sugar-beet, and tobacco was also to be increased. In the rural areas co-operatives were encouraged to develop salt distilling, hunting and such simple industries and activities. Guidance and assistance to the peasants under the plan was given by financial measures such as tax reduction for ploughing waste land, general credits for agricultural improvement, and special credits to encourage special crops, e.g. cotton.

The railways, telephone and telegraph systems, postal services, and power stations and grids, all State-owned, were to be reconstructed. The target for coal (all the large pits were State-owned) was fixed at 4 million tons for the year. But the miners smashed all records and by the autumn it was clear that the year's output would be nearer 5,500,000 tons. Targets were also set for iron ore, gold, copper, tungsten, mica, and other minerals which also came under public ownership. The chief machine-shops of Manchuria, established by the Japanese, had been attached to the railways, munition works, and mines, mostly for repair work. These machine-shops were to be used to help repair work in private factories and they were set the task of advancing from the repair of machines and the manufacture of spare parts to the actual manufacture of small machines. In addition the government was to establish four textile mills in North Manchuria which previously had none and, though production in State-owned linen, woollen, shoe and clothing factories, set the pace and standard of production in the light industries. The textile mills in North Manchuria were erected in record time.

The State, through the supply of credits, raw materials, coal, and electric power, and through the repair of machines, was to give every assistance to private factories. Since the reactions of private capitalists could not be easily foreseen, the plan did not say much about them; but in fact, once they appreciated that they were to be assisted and once they realised the tremendous market that was opening to them, they became very busy. In Harbin, the chief city of Manchuria, for example, the number of private factories, workshops, and stores doubled between April 1947 and April 1948. The North China Liberated Area, in order to expand production more quickly, as one of its first acts requested all small capitalists oppressed by the big four Kuomintang families to come to North China with what capital, machines and technicians they could, where they would be given every encouragement to set up in business.

The Liberated Area governments make a distinction between the industrial capitalist, who, they say, is at least in present conditions helping to increase production, and the merchant and trader who merely moves goods from one place to another and

can and often does engage in black-market and other illegal transactions. With goods of all kinds so short, profiteering is a great danger. This was met in the Manchurian plan by the rationing of essentials; by price control of a definite range of goods (in ways not dissimilar to ours in Britain); by the control of trade; by government trading, wholesale and retail; and by the promotion of consumer's co-operatives. Merchants engaged in illegal practices were to be dealt with severely, those engaged in legitimate trade were to be assisted in matters of communication and transport; but consumer's co-operatives, which cut the middlemen's profits, were to be especially helped.

For the fulfilment of the plan the government relied on four instruments. First, it owned large and key sectors of the economy itself. Second, it could control others by regulation. Third, it could direct production considerably through financial measures. And fourth and finally, it relied on the new attitude to labour among the workers.

The financial measures in industry were not dissimilar from those in agriculture mentioned earlier. The Central Committee of the Communist Party, after discussion, announced the general lines that the governments should follow in their tax policies in a speech of one of its members in April 1948. The first principle was that industry should be taxed more lightly than commerce and trade. The second that industries providing necessities were to be taxed more lightly than those making luxuries. The third that the multitude of taxes and levies and extortions formerly enforced by the Kuomintang were to be replaced by a simple, clear, unified tax.\*

In addition to this encouragement of essential industries by lighter taxation, the government also encouraged them by credits and priorities in the supply of raw materials, power, etc.

But what the New Democratic governments most relied on was the response and initiative of the workers.

To workers whose whole lives had been spent trying to dodge and to lessen the exploitation of Japanese or Kuomintang masters, and whose whole attitude to work had been coloured by the

\* The Kuomintang paper *Ta Kung Pao* in June 1947 estimated, for example, that cotton in Kuomintang China was taxed 17 times before it was made into cloth.

struggle against those masters, a new attitude did not come easily. Yet they well understood that, even if as yet the whole of industry did not belong to them, they were now the leading class in China, the revolution was theirs, the future belonged to them and their children, and upon their efforts more than anything else depended the success of the revolution.

This was the initial incentive, and they could see the political benefits on every side. Their unions were free; they had the vote; they had their own papers; their work, formerly despised, was now the most honoured; and, through joint production committees, they had a say in factory affairs.

But all this was not enough. As the Communist Party put it, "initiative cannot be continuously stimulated or maintained if it relies merely on political incentives". What was needed was a correct wages system which both stimulated production and translated the benefits of New Democracy into better living for the workers.

Many mistakes had been made. In some factories wages went up too high. The result was that the products were so costly that few could buy them. Elsewhere the salaries of managers and technicians were cut to the average wage level in the factory. They lost interest in production and production fell. Or else the workers' wages were held down to old levels and the workers lost interest.

To clear up all these difficulties the Communist Party, in its April 1948 statement, came out clearly in favour of adjusted piece-work wages related both to the need for increased production and the need for giving the worker an increased return for increased production.\* Actual rates were to be fixed by joint consultation in the factories and with the trade unions. In addition, workers were to be rewarded for inventions and could be elected by their mates for the special honour of "Labour Hero".

Hours of work, the factory plan of production, and the system of awards in the factory were to be similarly discussed. Such joint discussion would ensure that all difficulties about calculating the new piece-rates and seeing that there was no attempt to defraud the worker would be overcome.

\* For more on the wage system, see Chapter Five

The results of the new political incentive and the new wage incentive can already be seen in coal mining, which in the first year in Manchuria is 40 per cent over plan, and in the exhibitions of industrial inventions made by the workers which have been held in many cities.

Chang, the former coolie, now knows that he is China's future and that New China is his. He is no longer a despised beast of burden but a technician, an engineer, a mechanic who is moulding with his hands and brain not only ploughs and machine parts, but a new China and a new world.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### WE, THE PEOPLE

*"The people, and only the people, is the motivating force of creation."*

—MAO TSE-TUNG, *New Democracy*.

FEAR of the people has been the major motive of Kuomintang rule. From that moment in 1927 when Chiang Kai-shek sought his personal power in the slaughter of the workers of Shanghai he has been haunted by the spectre of those dead. Except for one brief period in the war against Japan, no popular movements were permitted. The universities were riddled with spies. The press censorship before 1937 and after 1945 suppressed even papers of the mildest liberalism. Police were everywhere to prevent meetings and congregations of the people. Strikers faced death. Secret police agents wormed themselves into all bodies, clubs, and churches, shadowed all suspected of independent thought, and arrested on suspicion. Jails and concentration camps were full. Torture was common. Repression and more repression was the motto of the Kuomintang.

During the slightly lighter repression of the years of war against Japan two progressive bodies did manage to exist in Kuomintang China. They were tolerated as show pieces to impress China's wartime allies, due to be suppressed immediately the Kuomintang was free to return to its civil war policies. They were the Democratic League and the Chinese Association of Labour.

The former was a union of some half-a-dozen small parties that banded together for self-protection against the Kuomintang. Later, some of its right-wing members deserted. Others, who would not succumb to Kuomintang threats and blandishments, were assassinated in 1945 and 1946. In 1947 the whole organisation was banned. Many members had already gone to the Liberated Areas, now others went into exile in Hongkong. There, together with other refugees from Chiang's terror who had formed

the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee, they declared their acceptance of the leadership of the Communist Party in the Chinese revolution.

The Chinese Association of Labour, which had been formed in the 1930's in order that the Kuomintang could send a "Chinese workers' representative" to the International Labour Office meetings, during the war years began to win a certain independence. While secretaries of affiliated unions continued to be government appointees, workers secured the right to elect members of committees. Immediately after the war, the Kuomintang Ministry of Social-Affairs, which supervised the trade unions, began to re-establish its control. Police seized the union offices. Union leaders and committee men were arrested. New "unions" were established under police supervision. The Chairman of the Association, though a member of the Kuomintang, was first threatened with arrest and then, when he fled to Hongkong for safety, an attempt was made by Kuomintang agents to kill him. He declared, "Free trade unionism is the target for a general attack. Liberal leaders fear for their lives. . . . The forces of reaction are turned against us." Coming to Europe to attend the meetings of the W.F.T.U., of whose executive he was a member, he returned not to Kuomintang China but to the Liberated Areas.

Thus the two main attempts to form open popular organisations in Kuomintang China were smashed. Chiang's China became the complete petrified police state, overrun by secret police. Yet for all the verbal fury in Britain and America against "police states" in countries where they were not to be found, this police state, which did most cruelly exist, was financed and supported by American loans and arms, its police trained in American methods and equipped with special American small arms, and its secret police co-ordinated with the work in China of the Office of Strategic Services, the spy organisation of the American Army.

The Liberated Areas, however, lived because people's organisations flourished. The whole purpose of those areas was that common men and women might rule their own country. Where and how could they learn to rule save in their own organisations?

Wherever the People's Armies went, wherever the Communists went, they aroused the people to the need for and the possibility

of forming organisations of their own. In the war against Japan these sprang up all over North China—Peasant National Salvation Associations, Workers National Salvation Associations, and Salvation Associations of women and youth. These organisations, open to all, were run by their members, their committees elected by vote, discussion free, congresses held wherever sufficient areas were liberated from the Japanese. They were the training ground of democrats. The Chinese had never known anything like it before.

Today those organisations, in new forms, are more flourishing than ever.

The Peasants Unions and the Leagues of Poor Peasants have put through the agrarian reform, tasting the real meaning of people's power in the possession of fields and animals of which they formerly scarce dared dream.

Chinese women, ground down with labour and child-bearing in conditions of superstition and unbelievable poverty, till recently regarded almost as the servants of their husbands, now own land, vote, and take their part in government. Their Democratic Women's Union is a leading member of the World Democratic Federation of Women. Greedily they make use of all opportunities to learn to read and write, learning from teachers at their women's meetings, learning from their children who can now all go to school. In their meetings they discuss, at first nervously, then more confidently, subjects previously regarded as the affairs of men—or of gods. They learn of politics—and of modern hygiene. New China means not only new houses, but also new and enlightened homes.

"Big Sister Tsai", President of the Women's Union, embodies the struggles and triumph of modern Chinese women in her person. One of the first Chinese women to study abroad (in France after the last war) she came back to join the 1924-27 revolution as a women's organiser. Unlike many of her co-workers she was neither intimidated nor discouraged by the defeat of the revolution. She went to the Soviet area in South Kiangsi and was one of the few women who joined in the "Long March" of the Chinese Red Army from Kiangsi to the North-West. In the war against Japan she gave herself to the organisation of women's National Salvation Associations.

The Youth Federation of the Liberated Areas is at once a means of self-expression and a training ground for health, for service and for a full life. Its members learn in sport, in lectures, in acting, in the pursuit of knowledge, and in the self-government of their own clubs and societies.

Scientists, artists, and writers, regarded with suspicion and even contempt in Kuomintang China, deprived of possibilities of working out their ideas, at best experiencing discouragement, at worst imprisonment and death, are now finding themselves in a society with which they can be at one, in which they can joyously express what their fellows are feeling and striving for. Many intellectuals at first regarded the Liberated Areas with some fear and suspicion, unable to understand how they could live and work in a country where not the wealthy but the workers and peasants ruled. Now the best of China's university teachers and scientists welcome New China wholeheartedly and are anxious to serve it.

The formation of the Natural Science Society in the Liberated Areas in 1948 was a new step forward for science and for China. Through it Chinese scientists have opportunity for co-operating to win new knowledge and for spreading present knowledge throughout the land. The result will be a great advance for science as 450 millions gradually cast off superstitions and join in the rational pursuit of knowledge, and a great advance for China as scientific knowledge is gradually converted into better harvests, higher output, lessened labour, increased health and prosperity, and a rational and humanitarian attitude to life.

Most important of the popular organisations are those of the workers—the trade unions.

"The Chinese workers", said a Communist Party speaker at the All-China Trade Union Congress in August 1948, "must direct events in both the Liberated Areas and in the Kuomintang-controlled areas. The working class is the only developing class and it alone is sufficiently concentrated, resolute, and disciplined to carry forward the revolution for the establishment of a New Democratic People's Republic."

The All-China Federation of Labour, formed in the 1920s and scattered and smashed by Chiang's repression, was reconstituted by this Congress, the first All-China Congress since the one

that met in secret in 1929. The triumphal decorating of Harbin, where it met, with red flags was the hallmark of New China.

It was attended by over 500 delegates from the unions of the Liberated Areas and the illegal unions of the Kuomintang area. The latter delegates had been elected and sent at great risk. Together they represented 2,800,000 organised workers of whom some 2 million were in the unions of the Liberated Areas. These had grown rapidly since 1945, and 85 per cent of the industrial workers were now in them.\*

The first task before the delegates, the re-creation of trade union unity in China, was an inspiring one and the All-China Federation of Labour was reborn amid the cheers of all from north and south, from liberated and unliberated China, from the Chinese Association of Labour and the Communist-led unions. This federation would never again be broken.

The second task was no less inspiring. Congress drew up a declaration of workers' rights such as had been but a distant vision in old China. Many of these rights were already in operation in the Liberated Areas and the idea was to codify and develop them for the whole area. The result was a worker's charter more advanced in several respects than anything known in Britain.

There was to be equal pay for equal work and confinement pay and time off for mothers. All factories were to be subject to government inspection for safety and hygiene. Joint production committees were to be established in all factories, whether public or private, with equal representation of workers and management. They had wide powers, including the inspection of all accounts and profit figures. Hours during the civil war period were to be limited from 8 to 10 per day, a great reduction from the 12 or 14 or even 16 hours customary in Kuomintang China. Including overtime, no working day was to be longer than 12 hours and an 8-hour day was looked forward to in the future. A minimum wage for China was to be established on the basis of what was sufficient to maintain two persons and to be adjusted to the cost

\* Trade unions in New China are organised on industrial lines, the basic unit being the factory branch which is open to all who work in the factory and has its elected committee. All union branches in a town also elect delegates to the local trades council, just as the industrial unions affiliate to the General Labour Federation of the Liberated Area within which they work.

of living so that nominal and real wages coincided. Beyond the minimum, wages were to be fixed by collective agreement in each industry in the form of piece rates (as far as possible) for all levels of workers, taking into account responsibility, skill, and output. Disputes were to be settled by negotiation, conciliation, and arbitration. A sum equal to 6 per cent of the factory pay roll was to be handed to the unions for welfare services. Each factory was to have its own free clinic and consumers' co-operative to assist its workers. Congress decided that unions should establish workers' clubs providing facilities for rest and recreation and for cultural, training, and educational purposes. It was keen that workers should rapidly be able to take over managerial positions. Already in the railway repair shops of Harbin, for example, seventeen out of the twenty-four departmental heads were workers.

In the Kuomintang areas, Congress decided that the tasks of workers were to keep their organisations intact, to build up anti-Chiang feeling among every section of the people, and to preserve factories and machines from Kuomintang destruction so that they could be handed over intact to the advancing People's Army.

Finally Congress set out the general political role of the working class, the victory of "the New Democratic Revolution of the great masses of the people, led by the working class, against imperialism, feudalism, and bureaucratic capitalism". They were to see that the offensives of the People's Army were backed up with a production offensive on an equal scale which would provide the Army with all it needed and, at the same time, raise the living standards of the people. They had to ensure the success of planning, to see that public enterprises were run on democratic and business-like lines, and train large numbers of technical and managerial workers. As the leading class of the revolution and of New China, the workers had to unite around a united working class, the peasants, the independent artisans, professional people, intellectuals, the national or liberal capitalists and all patriots. The understanding of these tasks, Congress declared, would give guidance to workers in their daily duties in the factories.

Congress elected a new All-China executive including such figures as Liu Ning-I, who as delegate to the Council of the W.F.T.U. is known to many British trade unionists, Chu Hsueh-

fan, the Chairman of the Chinese Association of Labour; and Li Li-san, one of the veteran members of the Chinese Communist Party.

Democracy does not come by mere voting. To be real it must invade every area of economic, political, and social life. In these organisations the Chinese people are learning to handle the great power that is now theirs and, from the bottom up, they are building their New Democracy. It is strong because these organisations enlist the whole strength and talent of the people, are ever awaking and developing fresh talents. Mistakes have been made, but Mao Tse-tung once said, "The important thing is to be good at learning." And in these organisations scores of millions are learning every day, learning through theory and learning through the practice of democracy.

## CHAPTER SIX

# TOILING AND THINKING, RULING AND BUILDING

*"Therefore, no matter under whatever conditions, the proletariat, the peasants, the intelligentsia and other petit-bourgeois elements of China are the basic forces that determine the destiny of the country. The above classes, some of which have been awakened already, while others are in the process of awakening, will inevitably become the basic part in the constitution of the power and the nation in the Democratic Republic of China. The Democratic Republic of China which we are aiming to construct can now only be ruled by an alliance of all anti-imperialist and anti-feudal people. It is a Republic of New Democracy."*

—MAO TSE-TUNG, *New Democracy*.

OLD CHINA was a case of split personality. There were those who exploited and those who toiled. Those who exploited did not toil, but prided themselves that they could think. They boasted that their principle was that "those who think must govern those who toil". Yet those who ruled were less than men, since toil was beneath them. And those who were ruled were prevented from becoming men since thought and self-government were denied them. China was stagnant.

Today those who toil, rule. They think, they discuss, they consciously plan and work together to improve the conditions of their lives. They are whole men. This is New Democracy.

From one of the most reactionary political systems, China now leaps forward to one of the most progressive.

Mao said: "The various national politics of the world may be fundamentally classified into the following three categories, states ruled by the bourgeoisie, states ruled by the proletariat, and states ruled by several revolutionary classes . . . The third form is the transitional form in the revolutionary colonial and semi-colonial countries. . . . So long as the colonial and semi-colonial countries are revolutionary in character, their national and governmental

structures must be fundamentally the same, i.e. they must be countries of New Democracy, jointly ruled by several anti-imperialist classes." This revolutionary alliance, he stressed elsewhere, must be "led wholly or partially by the proletariat".

The first political foundation of New Democracy is votes for all at 18. The people choose their governments, local and central. But, as British and even more American practice has shown, voting rights alone are no guarantee of vital, living democracy. Other things must be added.

The second political foundation of New Democracy is that the whole State structure is built from the bottom up and not from the top down. It is "the democratic revolution in the rural villages", the transfer of power to local councils of townsmen and of peasants, that is the basis of the new structure. These local councils are not beset around and starved of vitality by *ultra vires* prohibitions, but are encouraged to do all they can for the welfare of the people to whom they are responsible. This side of the revolution brings home to people that now, for the first time, they are responsible for their own future.

Above the base of elected local councils is a pyramid of elected councils and governments: the district (or county) councils and governments, the provincial councils and governments, and the elected councils and governments of the various Liberated Areas.

These first two foundations are structural. The third concerns purpose, and is even more essential. Governments and States in the modern world and through history have, have had, and can have only one of two purposes. The first is to exploit, and maintain a system of exploitation. Such were China's governments throughout history. The second is to provide the conditions for a good and full life for all ordinary men and women. This second purpose animates the councils of governments of New China, not only because they are chosen by, composed of, and responsible to ordinary people, but because they see clearly what their role is. Hence their pre-occupation with economic matters, for in the building up of prosperity for the working man and woman lies the solution to the problem of providing the conditions for a good life. Today, all over the world, there is talk of planning. Some, as did the Nazis, plan for war. Some plan to keep profits high.

In New China they plan for peace and the welfare of the people. It is a question of purpose.

Democratic in structure and purpose, the new governments are no less democratic in their activities. Is an important problem under consideration? Then all are encouraged to join in the discussion and the search for a solution. Legislation springs not from the bright thoughts of some conceited legislator, but from the hard experience of the masses and their attempts to find a solution. Thus the Programme of Agrarian Reform did not precede the movement, but resulted from a year's experience of searching for the way to go. Democracy cannot flourish without discussion. But it is not discussion in the plush and leather seats of West End clubs that is meant, but discussion in field and factory.

One can conceivably have an elected government inspired by high purposes and yet run the danger of being choked by bureaucracy if the executive and administrative activities of that government are not also democratically run. To those trained in the bourgeois democratic conceptions that spring from the English revolution and the theories of Montesquieu, it has been the main concern to see that legislation is brought under elected control while the executive has been regarded chiefly as an enemy. So the possibilities and methods of building a popular administration have been left largely unexplored. Fortunately in Britain practice has been a little in advance of theory, but this has concerned only the topmost rungs of the executive, and still today to most Britishers the idea of a popular and democratic administration in which all participate is inconceivable.

Yet in New China it has been attained. The villages have no police force, "their functions being carried out by the self-defence militia, an armed body of the villagers themselves, with an elected commander. They are subject to the control of the elected village government", wrote one foreign visitor. What greater blow at bureaucracy could there be than that? The elected councils and their governments combine legislative and administrative power, and in their work as administrators no less than in their work as legislators they depend on the mass of the people. The Agrarian Law is executed by the peasants themselves, the workers in industry help formulate and execute the

industrial plans. The whole structure works, as Israel Epstein, the foreign visitor quoted above, observed, "with a minimum of regulation".

The revolutionary alliance of classes is not mere theory, but is carried out in practice in the composition of the new councils and governments. Thus the Congress (Area Parliament) of the North China Liberated Area, "represents", as one member said, "and unites workers, peasants, independent artisans, and intellectuals, the liberal bourgeoisie and enlightened members of the (former) landed gentry, the National Minorities and all democratic forces in North China which oppose Chiang and American imperialism."

This Congress, which first met in 1948, is composed of 587 delegates representing 45 million people: 384 of these delegates were elected by the People's Councils of 279 counties ("hsiens" or districts) and ten cities: 172 delegates were elected by trade unions, professional and commercial organisations, women's and cultural societies, etc.: 31 delegates were appointed by the governments of the two former North China Liberated Areas (united by this Congress into one area) to ensure that the enlightened gentry and all progressive industrial, commercial, and cultural circles were represented.

Congress elected a North China People's Government of twenty-seven members, any ten delegates having the right to nominate a member for election to the government. Of those elected nine held responsible positions in the Communist Party. Six were university professors or lecturers who, appointed by the Kuomintang, had continued at their posts in the Liberated Areas. One was a former Kuomintang army commander, another a member of Madame Sun Yat-sen's National Salvation Association, another a leading trade unionist, yet another an official from a former private electricity company. There were also non-party representatives from the two former areas, some of whom had been Kuomintang officials. Two of the twenty-seven were women.

This North China Congress and the government chosen by it, though both provisional and restricted to North China, were a prelude to and a miniature of the future All-China People's Representative Congress. So stated Tung Pi-wu, one of the grand

old men of Chinese Communism, in his opening address. Congress inaugurated, he said, "the century of the common man for China" and showed that a revolutionary régime was being set up "which in general outline is not dissimilar from that which exists in some Eastern European countries".\*

Looking forward to the All-China People's Congress and the Coalition Government that would be chosen by it, the Chinese Communist Party, on May Day 1948, had called on "all democratic parties and groups, all popular organisations and enlightened social leaders to call speedily a Political Consultative Congress to discuss and convene a People's Representative Assembly for the establishment of a democratic coalition Government". This call had been welcomed by the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee, composed of old Kuomintang members like Marshal Li Tsi-chen and Madame Liao Chung-kai whom Chiang had driven from China; by the Democratic League; and by eminent figures like Kuo Mo-jo, the writer and historian. Before his death, Marshal Feng Yu-hsiang, the "Christian General", had also supported the declaration.

The calling of such a Consultative Congress was one of the eight fundamental points set out by Mao Tse-tung in his statement of peace terms in January 1948. At the moment of victory, the Chinese Communist Party was seeking to discuss with all democrats this great momentous step forward for China.

Until that Congress has met and prepared a constitution many parts of the political structure of New China will remain provisional and will vary in detail in various areas. Yet together with the form and purpose of the new political structure, the main functions of the New Democratic governments are also clear. These arise directly from the central purpose of providing the conditions for a good and full life to workers, peasants, intellectuals, and other ordinary people.

\* Important differences do of course exist. According to Georgi Dimitrov, General Secretary of the Bulgarian Communist Party, at that Party's Fifth Congress: "The Soviet regime and the people's democratic regime (in Bulgaria) are two forms of one and the same power — the power of the working-class in alliance with the working people of town and village. These two régimes are two forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat." (*Daily Worker*, 30 December 1948.) These countries are therefore a stage further advanced than China.

Victory over the reactionary forces in China is the prime requirement for creating those conditions. The military side of that victory is in the hands of the People's Army which is not controlled by the Area governments but by the Communist Party, and will necessarily remain so until a national coalition government is formed. While the great Area governments like those of Manchuria and North China work closely with the army command in their areas, their military task is that of supply and assisting army recruitment.

Therefore the chief function of these governments is the increase of production and the planning that entails, in order to supply the army and simultaneously raise the living standards of the people and press ahead with industrialisation.

Together with production, the governments are concerned with the distribution of consumers' goods and food. Consumers' goods still reach the public largely through private stalls, pedlars, shops, and merchants, but the governments are encouraging consumers' co-operatives everywhere and also have their own publicly owned trading organisations. These are usually owned by the municipalities, and the municipalities are also largely responsible for the local rationing system. Foreign trade is the responsibility of the Area governments, especially in Manchuria. By rationing, price control, and through co-operative and public trading organisations the governments seek to keep prices down and to ensure the equitable distribution of goods.

Though scarcities still exist, Alan Winnington, the first British correspondent permanently in the Liberated Areas, has described the results of two years of democratic rule in the large city of Harbin (*Daily Worker*, 5 November, 1948):

"Today, a walk through Harbin is enough to convince even a sceptical observer that life has been transformed.

"Harbin's trams are running again, the omnibus fleet is growing, taxis ply for hire, street lighting is adequate, new shops are opening every day, there are plenty of cigarettes, some beer and spirits, cinemas, packed theatres.

"You will see no underfed people in your walk. A few beggars are to be seen, invariably outside a temple or one of the numerous churches. You will see no prostitutes: the system of

selling girl children has been stopped and such past deals have no legal validity now.

"There are no queues. The people know that their ration, at the controlled price, will be available, and extra supplies, if they want and can afford them, at higher prices on the open market.

"Shopping in Harbin is a more placid, less anxious affair than it is in London or Paris.

"Staple foods—kaoliang, millet, maize corn, green vegetables, cooking oil, soya, and potatoes—are plentiful and cheap. Meat, eggs, milk, poultry, and other dairy products are dearer, but are there in sufficient quantities to make any Europeans envious. . . .

"Generally, in wartime, the living standards of the people go down; here they are rising."

The Liberated Area governments are no less successful in providing social services.

In Kuomintang China, apart from some schools, social services were almost non-existent, save on paper. Now clinics are being opened on a mass scale in the factories, the villages, the schools, and the towns. Doctors and nurses cannot be trained fast enough: the demand is enormous. Municipal and local government hospitals are being built and modern medicine is penetrating the most backward districts.

The main concentration of effort, however, is upon education, for success in this is essential to success in every other field.

From October 1947 to October 1948 the number of primary schools in Manchuria increased by three-quarters (72.4 per cent) and the number of children attending doubled. Never before did more than a fraction of children of primary school age attend school. Now the children are crowding in and reports from all parts of Manchuria speak of attendances of 80 or 90 per cent or more of the child population. The fullest use is also made of the schools in the evenings and holidays and at all possible times in the battle against illiteracy among parents, for in Kuomintang China 80 per cent or more of the whole population, and 95 per cent of women were illiterate.

Secondary schools are expanding similarly, and both primary and secondary schools are free. In the secondary schools, in the

normal schools for training teachers, and in the universities, in addition to free educational services, scholarships and subsidies help the children of poor parents. In 1948, some quarter of the total of 60,000 pupils attending secondary schools in Liberated Manchuria came from peasant families, a figure unthinkable in old China. Yet the measure of 60,000 secondary school pupils out of a population as large as Britain's shows how greatly the secondary schools have still to be expanded.

Teachers' training schools are receiving special attention, for upon them depends the supply of teachers to the rapidly expanding primary schools. Every one is welcomed in them, including sons and daughters of landlord families who are willing to help in the new school system. As a temporary measure and in order to encourage the sons and daughters of working class and peasant families to take up teaching, entrance standards have been lowered. But once the primary and secondary schools are properly functioning, it will be possible to demand a higher standard from the entrants to the normal schools than ever before.

A dozen universities, colleges, and institutes are busily at work in Manchuria today and, in order to expand higher technical and scientific education, a new North-East Institute of Science was opened in 1948. The demand for technicians and scientists, doctors and educational specialists is so great that the existing institutions cannot cope with it except by assisting in the creation of new universities, colleges and institutes.

These higher educational institutions are producing a new type of intelligentsia to serve the New China, scientific in outlook and imbued with the spirit of democratic responsibility. They find their places in the new nationalised industries of mining, railways and banking; in the development of scientific research; in the new hospitals and health services; in forestry and agriculture; and in educational work.

The judicial side of government is still in the process of growth. In old China the judges in the higher courts were State-appointed officials whose task it was to uphold the dictatorship of the Kuomintang, while the courts of first instance were held by the county ("hsien") magistrate, also a government-appointed official, responsible at best to no one but his superiors, and who

was at once governor, judge, and head of the local police. Now, the higher judges are elected by the Liberated Area Congresses and the county magistrate by the county council. The courts of old China were instruments of oppression, dealing in mysteries—things to be feared and avoided by all simple people. The courts of New China are instruments of liberation, composed of men the people know and trust, who conduct affairs in a way all can know and understand. They are places where a man can be sure of a fair trial. And the punishment of the guilty gives these a chance to redeem themselves instead of turning them, as often as not, into confirmed criminals. Torturing, which was common in Kuomintang prisons, has been entirely abolished.

With traitors and spies the new courts deal sternly, for they know that the forces of reaction, both within and without China desire nothing better than the disruption of New China from within. Kuomintang and American agents have been and are being sent to Liberated Areas for just this purpose. The new courts have therefore a duty of great vigilance, but even here, if they think there is any hope of redemption, they give the spy or traitor a chance.

Underpinning the whole system of New Democracy are the rights enjoyed by all citizens, rights previously not known in China. Some important rights, like the right to work, are only fully realisable in a Socialist state. Others, like the right to maintenance in old age or the right to education can only be realised in China with the success of economic planning. But other rights are already fully established and practised.

The right to vote is fundamental, and every encouragement is given to the voters by voting devices that do not need literacy and by explaining the full value of what is so new to them. The right to free speech is not only recognised, but peasants and workers, brought up in the atmosphere of centuries-long oppression, are encouraged to express themselves. In the army and in civil life it is one of the main duties of a Chinese Communist to help his fellows break down their fears of speaking out fully and freely. The right to a free press is ensured by placing paper and printing presses at the disposal of the people and their organisations. Never before in China did so many newspapers flourish.

In Manchuria thirty big dailies are published in the towns, and a multitude of papers are edited in the county towns and rural areas. People are avaricious to read and avaricious to express themselves in print. Some of the town papers have between 3,000 and 4,000 worker and peasant correspondents who send in news and articles on local life. The papers not only serve the people, but are made by them. Each Field Army has its own newspaper. Almost every industry has its paper contributed to largely by the workers. There are trade union and co-operative papers and periodicals, and periodicals of literary, cultural, and scientific groups. The right to a free press is not in the hands of Lord Dash, millionaire, but in the hands of Chang in the foundries and Chang in the fields.

Mao has proudly and truly declared: "The most important freedoms of the people are the freedoms of speech, publication, assembly, association, thinking, belief and body. In all China only the people in the Liberated Areas enjoy such freedoms."

The freedoms which the Chinese people themselves enjoy in New China, they also extend to the non-Chinese people who live with them. So far, the Liberated Areas have had dealings mostly with the Mongols of Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. The relations worked out with them are a guide to later contact with the Turkic-speaking peoples of Sinkiang, the Mahommedans of Kansu, and the Miaos, Thais, and other tribal peoples of South-West China.

In May 1947 the people of the Liberated Areas of Inner Mongolia set up their own Inner Mongolian People's Representative Assembly, the first democratic assembly ever to meet in Inner Mongolia. The territory that it rules lies south of the Mongolian People's Republic and includes not only the former Inner Mongolia of Kuomintang China but also those parts of Manchuria and Jehol which are inhabited by Mongols. In the past the Mongols were a colonial people, ruled by autocratic princes who were puppets either of the Kuomintang or the Japanese. They were being steadily exterminated by disease; crushed by taxes and by debts to Chinese and Japanese usurers; and their lands were being taken from them piecemeal. Now feudal and usurious exploitation have been ended.

The Autonomous Government of the Mongols, with the assistance of the Liberated Area governments and the Chinese Communist Party, ensures that the goods they have to sell to the Liberated Areas fetch fair prices and that the goods they buy are not over-charged. Each banner (tribe) is setting up its own hospital. The old taxes have been abolished, and a new uniform tax, easy to understand and by no means heavy, has taken their place. The government has established the rights of freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, religion, and habeas corpus. In some settled areas an agrarian reform programme has been carried out, but most of the tribes are still nomadic and it is not expected that they should carry out an equal distribution of either animals or land as yet.

Mongol units, especially of cavalry, have long been fighting with the Chinese People's Liberation Army. With the formation of the Autonomous Area an Inner Mongolian Army was organised and, in November 1947, all Mongolian units in the Liberated Areas were brought into it to form the Inner Mongolian People's Defence Army, fighting alongside the Chinese People's Army in "a common defence of the rights of national minorities". When this army held its first parade in Wangyehmiao, the provisional capital of the Area, the crowds roared with joy to see the gallop past of their own cavalry units. Now the Mongols of Inner Mongolia, so long oppressed, had their own army.

These then are the foundation, the form, and the purpose of the New Democracy. They produce and are animated by a new spirit and a new attitude to life. This is their strength. Mao has said, "problems can never be solved with a vain, self-assertive attitude"; what is required is "a scientific attitude and a spirit of responsibility". This scientific attitude and spirit of responsibility, and the willingness to learn and to co-operate which flows from them have amazed or inspired, according to the depth of their own political, social and psychological understanding, all outside observers.

Listen to a Chinese Christian who studied in a Japanese puppet university, was imprisoned by the Japanese Military Police, and then released:

"I went home and hoped to teach in the primary school,

waiting for circumstances to change. But the Communist political workers heard of me and invited me to go to their Middle School, which was called the Anti-Japanese Middle School. Since then I have taught for two and a half years there.

"Some of the things we had discussed earlier helped me to break down my prejudices against Communists, but at first I did not have any interest in their work. Gradually I found their higher workers are very kind, humble, and polite. Many new methods have been invented, the students have gradually attained self-control and democracy. I am sure that China's new education will most probably go in their direction. As I compare these things with education in the (Kuomintang) cities, I find that there the Universities and Middle Schools are very old-fashioned, wasting the students' lifetime, energy, and money. The change in the Communist region is a challenge to the whole of China." (*The Christian News-Letter*, London, 1947, No. 291.)

Professor William Band, now of Liverpool University, who spent many months in the Liberated Areas after escaping from the Japanese in Peiping and who saw much of the People's Army and its medical workers, wrote: "The spirit of these men and boys in fighting a war on two fronts—against the Japanese on the one hand and sickness on the other—both with utterly inadequate equipment, is beyond praise. . . . Ingenuity and resourcefulness, courage and cheerful patience are almost their only weapon. Theirs is the true patriotism—love of the common people of the country—upon which alone true international peace can be built."

Today that Army has other weapons too and is in all respects better equipped, but its spirit is the same. It is the spirit of all New China. Patient and resourceful, courageous, kind and humble, inspired with patriotism and the spirit of responsibility, the people of New China, led by the Communist Party from which they have learnt by example so many of those qualities, are now laying a second foundation stone of world peace, just as the Russian people laid theirs in 1917.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CHINA'S BEST WEAPON

*"For a whole century the catastrophe-beridden Chinese people have been groping for the truth in the struggle for national salvation. Many of the best of her sons have joined the struggle and sacrificed themselves, advancing over the dead bodies of their fallen comrades. This is worthy of commemoration in tears and lyrics. It was only after the first world war and the October Revolution in Russia that we found Marxism-Leninism, the best weapon for our national liberation. The Chinese Communist Party is the proposer, propagandist, and organiser in the use of this weapon. The marriage between the general truth of Marxism-Leninism and the concrete practice of the Chinese Revolution has changed the face of the latter."*

—MAO TSE-TUNG, *How to Change the Way of Study.*

*"A room should be constantly dusted or it will be covered with dust. Our face should be regularly washed or it will be dirty. This is also true of the ideology of our comrades and the work of our Party, which should also be constantly cleaned. 'A running stream does not smell and a door-hinge will not be moth-eaten' mean that germs and worms are dispersed by continuous movement."*

—MAO TSE-TUNG, *On Coalition Government.*

THIRTEEN men were in a room. They were discussing the Chinese revolution, the recent Russian revolution, and what to do. It was in Shanghai in 1921. They had come from the little Communist groups formed the year before in Shanghai, Peking, Hankow, and in Hunan. Among the founders of those groups were Mao Tse-tung and Tung Pi-wu. The thirteen delegates, not all of them Communists, decided to form a new party and call it the Communist Party.

The new party was a strange mixture. Some members were anarchists, others Christian Socialists, others temporarily attached to the Communist movement solely out of emotional excitement.

Yet at that first Congress was begun the forging of the instrument which has put an end to the hundred years of Chinese catastrophe.

The small party, seemingly lost in so large a nation, was immediately beset by internal difficulties. Some anarchists broke away, others captured Party branches. Feeble hangers-on, the emotional excitement of youth passing, drifted away. Yet the Party grew, and by June 1927 numbered 60,000, although half of these were very recent recruits. But the policy of weakly compromising with the shaky elements in the Kuomintang and damping down the agrarian revolution disarmed the Party in the face of Chiang Kai-shek's counter-revolution and, by the end of the year, the membership numbered only 10,000. Thousands had been slaughtered by Chiang and his followers.

Those staunch ten thousand have saved China; and today, with over 3 million members, the Chinese Communist Party is a mighty force and the acknowledged leader of the nation.

This Party did not arise out of a vacuum, but out of China's revolutionary history. Mao has said in *New Democracy*:

"What we are carrying on now is the first step of the Chinese revolution. This first step may be said to have begun in the days of the Opium War in 1840, i.e. from the time when Chinese society commenced to change from its original feudal form. During this period, we had the Taiping Revolution, the Sino-French War, the Sino-Japanese War, the Reform Movement of 1898, the 1911 Revolution, the May 4th Movement, the May 30th Movement, the Northern Expedition, the Agrarian Revolution, the December 9th Movement, and the present Anti-Japanese War. All the above movements, to speak from a certain point of view, were for the accomplishment of the first step of China's revolution. They were movements of the Chinese people in different periods and in different degrees to realise such a step—to oppose imperialism and feudalism and to struggle for the establishment of an independent democratic society."\*

The first eighty years of the Chinese revolution were devoted to trying to create a Chinese bourgeois state on the lines of the

\* There is as yet no authorised English translation of Mao's writings and speeches. The quotations in this book are taken from the English translations at present available. These are frequently poor, and I hope in the versions given here the English has been sometimes improved without the meaning being weakened.

nineteenth century French Republic or the United States. But in 1919, under the inspiration of the Russian Revolution, which brought new life and hope to Chinese revolutionaries, a new period began. The Versailles Conference, which ended the First World War, had decided to hand parts of China to Japan and thus further her partition and enslavement. On 4 May, 15,000 students marched on the Foreign Legations in Peking demanding justice for China. This was the signal for student and working-class demonstrations and strikes in all the large cities of China. Out of that movement emerged the Communist Party, the Chinese trade union movement, and a new intelligentsia allied with the workers. Their task was henceforth to carry out the bourgeois democratic revolution in a new way and "wholly or partially" under the leadership of the industrial working class.

The Chinese Communist Party is a blend of the century-old revolutionary experience of China and the revolutionary science worked out by Marx, Lenin and Stalin. Marxism is the finest product of human science and revolutionary practice. The laws of social movement which it has discovered are of general applicability. Inspired by the success of the Russian Revolution, the best members of the Chinese working class and intelligentsia began, after 1919, to study the discoveries of modern social science, just as they were studying modern physical and medical science. In order to utilise this social science they came together and founded the Communist Party.

The light thrown by Marxism on the Chinese situation revealed three things: that China's revolution would now take place in a world situation made new by the Russian Revolution; that China's internal situation had been changed since the 1840s by the formation of a new industrial working class; and that the immediate task for that class was to join with others in the fight against imperialism and feudalism in order to open the road to Socialism.

These new features required a new programme for the accomplishment of the first stage of the Chinese Revolution, but it took twenty years of hard experience and struggle to work it out fully, especially the part about the leading role of the working class. In its most complete form this new programme is found in Mao's

great work on *New Democracy* in which he draws considerably and consciously upon earlier revolutionary programmes, binds their good elements into new and more advanced proposals, and illuminates old mistakes.

The experiences of 1924-7, reinforced again in the war against Japan, had revealed the mistake of relying on the Chinese bourgeoisie. Weak as a class because imperialism had never permitted more than a tiny growth of Chinese industry, they also wobbled in policy between opposition to imperialism and opposition to the peasants and workers. A revolutionary alliance under their leadership was doomed to splits, divisions, and disaster.\*

Similarly experience in the Kiangsi Soviet after 1927 had shown that a policy based solely upon the alliance of workers and poor peasants could not muster sufficient strength to accomplish the revolution. For it ignored large groups of petty bourgeoisie, such as the middle peasants and artisans, which could be won for the revolution and had to be won if it were to succeed. It ignored, too, the national capitalists who could also be brought into the revolutionary alliance, though never in a leading position.

Thus the Chinese Party won through to the concept formulated by Mao in 1940:

"Although in its social character the first stage of the first step of this colonial and semi-colonial revolution is still fundamentally bourgeois-democratic, and its objective demands are to clear the obstacles in the way of the development of capitalism, yet this kind of revolution is no longer the old type led solely by the bourgeois class and aiming merely at the establishment of a capitalist society or a country under the dictatorship of the bourgeois class, but a new type led wholly or partially by the proletariat and aiming at the establishment of a New Democratic

\* See Mao Tse-tung's article commemorating the 31st anniversary of the October Revolution in *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy*, November 1948: "During more than one hundred years since Marxism came into being, it was only when there emerged the example of the Russian Bolshevik Party which led the October Revolution, and has led socialist reconstruction and the defeat of fascist aggression, that a new type of revolutionary party was established and developed throughout the world. The whole picture of the world revolution has undergone a change since the appearance of such parties. . . . The Communist Party of China is one such party, which has been established and developed with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as its model. The whole picture of the revolution in China has changed since the appearance of the Communist Party of China."

society or a country ruled by the alliance of several revolutionary classes in its first stage."

The basic forces of that alliance were "the proletariat, the peasants, the intelligentsia, and other petit-bourgeois elements". To try to jump this step, and to demand Socialism before the defeat of imperialism and feudalism, was "empty verbiage" or worse, since it could weaken the alliance.

New Democracy not only differs from the old bourgeois democracy because of the leadership of the working class, but also in the measures carried out. The first economic demand of the old democratic movement, land reform, is carried out thoroughly and completely so that feudalism is entirely and not just partially destroyed, while new co-operative forms of agriculture are encouraged. The second demand of the old movement, that capitalist industry be encouraged, is also carried out; but, as Mao said (quoting the 1924 programme of the Kuomintang), "big banks, big industries and big business shall be run" by the New Democratic State. New measures for strengthening trade unions, limiting working hours, improving working conditions, and giving workers a share in management are also enforced. Nor does New Democracy permit the anarchy of individual capitalist production but introduces planning for popular welfare and further progress. And, while the right to vote and other freedoms are just as prominent if not more so, they are, as we have seen, carried out in such a thorough way that they become real rights and not mere formalities.

Clear as to the role of the workers in the revolution and its own role as the party of the Chinese working class, the Communist Party has been able to point the way through all the tortuous twists of modern Chinese politics. It rallied the nation in the fight against Japan, and has no less rallied it in the fight against American imperialism. It has defeated intrigues from all quarters. Through its clarity and consistency and because its members have acted courageously and trustworthily, the Party has grown and won popular confidence.

In the military sphere it has adapted old tactics of mobile and guerrilla warfare, evolved new ones, and worked out a general strategy so admirably suited to Chinese conditions that the cream

of the Japanese army was fought to a standstill by soldiers who started off with nothing more than one rifle to every three men.

In the economic sphere it has hammered out policies which have already broken the growing deterioration of the Chinese economy and which, in a relatively short space of time, will enable China to become an industrial country.

In all these spheres it has taken the best that Chinese tradition has had to offer. Chu Teh once said about mobile warfare, "I found my best textbooks in the Chinese classics, especially an old novel, *The Three Kingdoms*, written nearly a thousand years ago." In all these spheres they have no less taken the best that modern social science has to offer them. And in taking and using this knowledge to guide them they have enriched it and developed various aspects of it.\*

This is especially so with regard to culture, to which Chinese Marxists have devoted much attention. In 1942 Mao gave a talk on cultural questions to a group of writers and artists in which he defined the importance of cultural work. "In our struggle", he said, "there are a number of fronts of which two are most basic: the cultural front and the military front. . . We must have a special cultural army, as such cultural troops are indispensable in the task of uniting ourselves and defeating the enemy."

He said again, "The majority of intellectuals in the Liberated Areas are fine people. Their defects and even mistakes can, in the course of time, be corrected during their work. They are the precious capital of the people's cause and should be esteemed as such."

The task of intellectuals, as Mao sees it, is to create a new Chinese culture, corresponding to and based upon New Democracy, a culture of the workers and all classes in the revolutionary alliance. They must also overthrow the reactionary feudal and imperialist "slave ideology" cultures of the past. "Without the overthrow of these reactionary cultures, new culture can never be established."

The new culture is national, scientific, and popular, drawing

\* Miss Anna Louise Strong's pamphlet *The Thought of Mao Tse-tung* puts Mao's contribution to Marxism in an incorrect way. This pamphlet cannot be taken as a reliable guide to Mao's thought.

all that is best from old Chinese culture and from foreign culture. It is closely linked with the new Socialist culture of the world. All these materials are digested into a new whole and made available to all.

"China should absorb abundantly the progressive culture of foreign nations as raw materials for her own cultural food. . . . What we find useful today we must absorb not only from the present Socialist or New Democratic cultures of other nations, but also from the old cultures, e.g. from the cultures of the various capitalist countries in the period of the Enlightenment. These foreign materials we must treat as we treat our food. We submit our food to the mouth for chewing and to the stomach for digestion, add to it saliva, pepsin, and other secretions of the intestines to separate it into essence and residue, and then absorb the essence and pass off the residue. In a somewhat similar manner, we should subject our cultural materials to the process of digestion and should never absorb anything indiscriminately. . . .

"The long, long period of China's feudalism created some brilliant culture in ancient times. To find out the process of development of the ancient culture, throw away its feudal residue, and absorb its democratic essence is a necessary condition for developing the new national culture and raising national self-confidence. But this should never be indiscriminate absorption. We must separate the rotten elements of the ancient feudal ruling-class culture from the good popular culture or from those elements that are more or less democratic and revolutionary in character. Our present new politics and new economy are developed from our old politics and old economy, and so is our new culture from the old culture; therefore we must respect our own history and should not be isolated from it."

In building the new culture intellectuals have to answer three main questions clearly, or they will be wasting their energies and achieving a poor or even a harmful result. First there is the problem of position; they must stand with the workers against the landlords and foreign imperialists. Second, there is the problem of attitude, of what to praise and what to condemn; enemies (the landlords and imperialists) must be condemned, friends (the petty bourgeois classes in the revolutionary alliance) both praised and

criticised, and all that is good and forward-striving among "ourselves" (the Chinese workers and their Communist Party) must be praised and encouraged. Third, the problem of audience. For whom should literature and art be created? For workers, peasants, soldiers, and the petty bourgeoisie. The problem of audience, says Mao, is fundamental. Culture must be popularised, and only in the process of popularisation can the question of refinement, of quality, be answered. Popularisation and refinement are interlinked, but popularisation comes first.

The artist needs both political and artistic standards:

"There are two criteria in art and literary criticism, one is political and the other is technical. . . . We reject not only abstract and unchanging political standards, but also abstract and unchanging artistic standards. Every class society, and every class within society, has its varying political and artistic standards. . . . But no matter what class or society, political standards come first and artistic standards second. . . . We demand that politics be united with art, that content be united with form, that revolutionary political content be united with the highest possible artistic style. Artistic products which lack artistic value, no matter how politically progressive, are without power. Thus we condemn both artistic products with reactionary content, and artistic products with merely the style of placards and slogans which have only content, but no form. In the sphere of literature and art we must fight on these two battle lines."

It is not easy for intellectuals to win this new outlook for themselves. It can only be won in ideological and emotional struggle. "The ideas and emotions of our cultural workers should be merged with the ideas and emotions of workers, peasants and soldiers." This will require "a long and even painful process of tempering". For example, writers who have grown up fiercely critical of the old order, sometimes find it difficult to praise the new, so accustomed are they to criticising everything. In the New China there is a dark as well as a bright side, but the important thing for writers is to portray the bright and encourage its further development. To continue to criticise everything is to reveal oneself a prisoner of the past.

The leadership which the Communist Party has won in all

spheres owes much to its educational methods. The Chinese Communist Party is resolutely opposed to dogmatism, and Party education is directed to the use of Marxism as a tool, a practical weapon of struggle. "Marxism-Leninism", said Mao, "has neither good looks nor magic, it is only very useful." Dogmas, however, are less useful than cow-dung, since dung can at least be burnt as fuel. The opposite to teaching dogmas is teaching Marxism, in Stalin's words, as "a guide to action". In *Readjusting Some Wayward Tendencies in the Conception of Study*, Mao wrote:

"Even if a man has read ten thousand copies of the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and has read every copy a thousand times until he can recite every word in them, he still cannot be a Marxist-Leninist. What kind of theoreticians do we require? They must be able to interpret correctly every practical problem arising from Chinese history and revolution, able to interpret scientifically and theoretically all the questions arising from the economic, political, military, and cultural problems of China, based on the Marxist-Leninist standpoint, viewpoint, and method."

Mao condemns the use of Party jargon as ugly, stingy, and harmful both to the individual and the revolution, and as a form of subjectivism and sectarianism. Sectarianism is the divorcing of the Party from the people, and of individuals and sections within the Party from one another. The opposite is the unification of all sections of the Party and the unification of all classes who are in the revolutionary alliance.

"Many of our comrades like to boast in front of non-members, look down on others, and are unwilling to recognise the merits of others; these are all manifestations of sectarian tendencies. These comrades, having read a little Marxism-Leninism, instead of becoming more humble, have become more proud."

And further:

"Our comrades must know this simple truth: in the ratio between Party members and the rest of the people, the former is for ever in the minority. Even if the number of Chinese Communists reaches the huge number of four and a half million, yet there is only one Party member to every hundred Chinese. Ninety-nine per cent are non-members, so on what grounds can we refuse co-operation with people outside? . . . If our Party members are

not in close unity with non-Party cadres and people we shall never be able to vanquish our enemy or gain victory in our revolution."

Underlying both these weaknesses of jargon and sectarianism is a subjective attitude, i.e. the placing of one's own wishes and desires above the necessities of the objective situation. "Under this attitude, one does not study systematically and minutely the surrounding environment, but, relying on one's own subjective enthusiasm, one has only a fleeting glimpse of the present physiognomy of China. . . . One studies aimlessly and abstractly. . . . One studies theory for theory's sake, Marxism-Leninism for Marxism-Leninism, and not for the sake of solving any theoretical or tactical problem that arises from the Chinese Revolution."

Some comrades show this subjective attitude by inflating the importance of book knowledge, because they happen to possess that. Others by inflating the importance of practical knowledge, because they happen to possess that. But objectively both theoretical and practical knowledge are necessary for the success of the Chinese Revolution. "Thus we see there are two kinds of incomplete knowledge. One is ready-made book knowledge which, even though it is Marxist-Leninist, can become empty and without content. The other belongs to the perceptive sphere and to the part and not the whole, and has not been developed into common, rational knowledge. Both are partial knowledge. It is only by the blending of the two that comparatively complete knowledge can be created."

All Communist Party work is, in one aspect, education. It is the study of the transformation of societies and individuals in the process of transforming them.

Individuals can be transformed by precept, by example, and by praise and criticism. Teaching by example is more powerful than teaching by precept, and therefore good examples should be sought out and praised. This is the practice of the Chinese Party. Likewise they possess a rational attitude to criticism.

What is the function of criticism within the Party? Its first function is to expose mistakes so that they may be avoided in future; its second is to help comrades to develop. To use criticism uncritically and generally is destructive. It is essential to know the purpose one has in criticism, and to use constructive

and helpful methods. Mao concludes his *Readjustment of Wayward Tendencies* by saying:

"There are two principles we must bear in mind when we oppose subjectivism, sectarianism, and 'Party Jargon'. The first principle is 'Make an example of the past so that we may be more careful in the future', while the second is 'cure and save the patient'. We must expose all errors committed previously, analysing them and criticising them scientifically and showing no favour to friends, so that all will be more careful in their work hereafter and do it better. That is the meaning of the first principle. But the exposure and criticism of errors, like the doctor's treatment of his patient, is done with the purpose of curing the disease and not killing the patient. Any person who has committed errors, no matter how serious and numerous, should be welcomed and be treated so that he may still become a good comrade, provided he does not hide his mistakes, or persist in justifying his errors, until he is beyond help. To attempt to cure him at one stroke or by beating him all over is no way to solve the problem. The really effective way to cure the disease in thought and political conception is 'to cure and save the patient' and not rough handling."

Even a little grumbling and letting off of steam does good at times, while resentment of and opposition to criticism is often bad. "One of the gravest defects in our methods of work", said Mao in *Our Task in 1945*, "is that some people are used to being dogmatic and overbearing. They are not well versed in encouraging others to criticise and discuss, or working in a democratic way. . . . Any one, as long as he is not an enemy or does not attack with malicious intent, should be allowed to speak—and it does not matter if he is wrong. It is the duty of leaders of all ranks to listen to others. The following principles should be observed: first, say what is in your mind and without reservation; second, the speaker is not to be blamed, while the listener should take note. If the principle that the speaker is not to be blamed, which is real and not fictitious, is lacking, then the full effect of the first principle cannot be attained."

Of course the Chinese Communist Party purges itself of undesirable members or it would not be as strong as it is. But the

emphasis of Party life is upon the development of the zest and initiative which flows from a democratic and scientific method of work. In one of his earliest works (*The New Stage*, 1938) Mao wrote of the need for Party members to possess, "initiative, a responsible spirit, activeness in work, boldly raising any question and opinion, criticising any defects, and having a supervisory function over the leading organs and leading cadres".

Chinese Communist Party members know that the Party leadership is responsible to them and they are responsible, not to the leadership, but to the people. They condemn, in the words of a local Party committee chairman, whose letter to his friends after a Party school received wide publicity throughout Liberated China, those who "when they work have their eyes not looking downward, facing the people, but looking upward, turning back from the people, and are only responsible to the Party and the upper ranks".

"Looking downward, facing the people", for the people and responsible to the people, this could almost be the motto of the Chinese Communist Party in its years of struggle, explaining the earthiness and simplicity of Mao's speeches and writings, the humility and approachability of Chu Teh, and the sense of comradeship which is an essential part of the personality of leading Chinese comrades whom one has met. In the years of struggle, which means individual struggle for each member of the Party—"a long and even painful process of tempering"—dialectical materialism, a scientific and responsible attitude, have become part of themselves.

An overseas Chinese editor, visiting the Liberated Areas last year, wrote that he had seen "not the New China of my dreams, but a new, real China that is even greater and more lovely".

Of course there is poverty, terrible poverty, in New China and it will be there for a long time to come. But it is becoming less and less each year. Of course there is dirt, disease, and ignorance. But culture is increasing and dirt lessening year by year. Of course mistakes are made, and there are defects on every side. (And in the years ahead foreign correspondents of capitalist papers will play these up.) No Chinese Communist and no friend of

China would hide the dark side, they would only wish to work for its more speedy elimination.

But he would be a fool or a knave who did not see the magnificent bright side. In New China brightness is the main thing and is spreading to every nook and corner of the land. It is a new China, a thing of beauty and of happiness, which will blossom into at present unbelievable splendour. In the creation of that splendour, the Chinese Communists press forward. It is the justification of their patient endurance of hardship, of all their labours, of their martyred dead.

Their Party is China's national party and it will see that the tale of Chinese catastrophe is over. The Communists, tried and tempered and trusted by the people, will see that this Chinese revolution shall never fail. And they look forward to the time when their present New Democracy will itself be transformed into Socialist China.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### CARRY THE REVOLUTION THROUGH

*"The true patriotism of the masses of the people of all countries does not stand in contradiction to proletarian internationalism but is inseparably bound up with it. True patriotism is a warm love for one's own Motherland, one's own people, language and literature, and the finest traditions of one's own nation that have been handed down through the ages. Such patriotism is quite distinct from pompous, selfish, anti-foreign bourgeois nationalism; and it is also quite distinct from the narrow 'Chinese Wall' attitude, the isolationist outlook, the sectarianism, parochialism and other national prejudices of the small peasant, which are a reflection of a backward, parochial, agrarian system. True patriotism respects the equality of other nationalities and at the same time strives for the realisation of the finest ideals of mankind within its own country. It advocates warm unity with the peoples of all other countries."*

—LIU SHAO-CHI (Member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China),  
*On Nationalism and Internationalism.*

*"China's revolution is a magnificent part of the world revolution."*

—MAO TSE-TUNG, *New Democracy.*

"TAMELESS resolve which laughed at misery" has conquered. Out of the determination of millions New China is born. "The hunger of the people," that curse of old China, is now becoming a thing of the past;

"And Science and her sister Poesy,

Shall clothe in light the fields and cities of the free."

A new hope is born which makes old China young—a hope of food, of peace, of friendship and prosperity.

New China, this lusty infant, born in fierce struggle, has still to fight hard for its place in the world. Supported by friends—the Soviet Union and all progressive peoples—it must still contend with those who hate it.

Defeated in open combat on the battlefields of civil war, the enemies of China have gone over to political struggle, open and underground.

Their first manœuvre, in the opening months of 1949, was to try to save themselves by fake peace talks. They hoped thereby to win a breathing spell to recuperate their forces and prepare for further struggle. Alternately they wished, if they could not gain time in this way, at least to negotiate such "peace" terms as would allow reactionary elements to survive in strength and rot New China from within.

But the Chinese Communist Party was not caught napping. Its eight peace terms, announced on 14 January, included the punishment of all leading Kuomintang members as war criminals; the abolition of the illegal Kuomintang rule; the reorganisation of all reactionary armies on a democratic basis; the confiscation of bureaucratic capital; agrarian reform; and the calling of the Political Consultative Council, excluding reactionary elements, to establish a democratic coalition government. These made it clear that the Chinese Communist Party and the people of China were out to destroy Chinese reaction and not to parley with it. The terms were incisive and emphatic. The Chinese Communist Party would not bargain China's Revolution away.

Nor will the second plan of Chinese and foreign reaction for the destruction of New China, though harder to counter, fare any better. This plan aims at the formation of a new anti-Communist movement in China, by fanning and fomenting discontent which, it is hoped, will ultimately enable imperialism to retrieve the day.

Said Professor Fairbank of Harvard University in a symposium on China in the *New York Star* on 21 November, 1948:

"We should leave American representatives in China and try to maintain contact with the Communist Areas as long as possible. Chinese Communists, inheriting the Kuomintang mess, are certain to face big problems and must either seek our co-operation or, more probably, give us an excellent opportunity to support anti-Communist movements."

Enemies of New China hope that shortage of food, cloth, oil and machinery will either drive the new government into their

hands or else give them the possibility of accomplishing its destruction.

In the first phase of China's struggle for freedom the man with the rifle was the saviour of his country. In the second phase it will be the man with the hoe, with the pick, and with the spanner—and the man who defends his newly won freedom against traitors.

“Carrying the revolution through to the end means using revolutionary methods to wipe out firmly, thoroughly, and completely all reactionary forces. This means overthrowing the reactionary rule of the Kuomintang throughout the country, establishing a Republic of the people's democratic dictatorship, and establishing a State under the leadership of the proletariat with an alliance of the workers and peasants as its main force.”\*

In these struggles the Chinese people will need tameless resolve no less than in the past. They will need the hope of a brighter future no less. But there will be this difference, that the hope will be in daily realisation all around them.

Nor does the victory of China's revolution mean fresh hope to the Chinese people only, but throughout the whole of Asia.

The upheavals of war and the attempts of the Western Powers to re-establish the old imperialist regimes have shaken all South-East Asia into life. America tries to establish a new hegemony over the area. Britain, battling against the people of Malaya, tries to preserve her grip. The Nehru clique in India tries to bolster up the tottering structure of imperialism. But the call of New China is more powerful than all these, and, like the workers and peasants of China, the peoples of South-East Asia cry to their would-be masters and exploiters: “Get out and stay out!” And, though the cost be great, out they will go.

To the whole world, New China no less brings a message of hope. The peace front, led by the Soviet Union, is joined by another mighty nation. Those who plan war have lost five billion dollars and the innumerable military bases they sought in China. Those who plan peace have won the support of the most populous nation in the world. The war-makers are the weaker, the peace-makers are the stronger. Could anything more joyful have happened to a war-weary world?

\* *New China News Agency, New Year Editorial, 1949.*

To Britain the victory of the Chinese people spells not only securer peace but, if we make use of the opportunity, food and trade. New China has edible oils, soya beans, peanuts for margarine, fur and wool for sale. It wants cloth, oil and capital goods. Sheffield and Birmingham are already worrying about the tightening world competition in steel goods. Men and women all over Britain demand more food, and are concerned about the increasing signs of a coming depression. What about New China? We need its food exports. It needs our steel exports. New China can mean prosperity not only for Comrade Chang but also for Mr. and Mrs. Smith.

Speaking in the House of Commons in January 1948 Major Vernon, Labour M.P. for Dulwich, said:

"What is the British policy to be in this state of affairs? Clearly, it should be a policy of friendship and trade with the Liberated Areas, as they are called. . . . There are vast quantities of food available at the moment, and there are enormous potentialities for the export of food in the Northern regions of China. In exchange they want not the goods which are difficult for us to produce, but very simple manufactured goods such as tools, hardware, fabrics, cotton and so on. It is really in Britain's interest, commercial and financial, that trade should be established as soon as possible with the Liberated Areas of China."

Since these words were spoken more than a year has gone by, and has been wasted by the British Government. Though the People's Liberation Army has pressed on, freeing area after area, almost nothing has been done to open trade relations with New China. In Britain this ration or that ration has been cut. The reactionary allies of the present British Government, like Peron in the Argentine, show no scruples about defaulting on their food contracts if it suits their advantage. Yet the real friends of the British people, who could and would send us food and buy our products are ignored, like New China, or treated coolly and with hostility.

With imperialist exploitation ended, equal trade can begin and flourish, with immense benefit to all. How great is the demand of New China for all kinds of goods can be illustrated by the consumption of cotton goods, which, before the war, was

32 lbs. a year a head in the United States and only 3 lbs. a year a head in China. If in New China consumption can be raised to a third of that of the United States in a few years, how great will be the additional world consumption of textiles and how great the demand for cotton machinery?

More food, trade, prosperity—New China brings these to its own and other peoples. It does so because it puts human relations on a more co-operative basis. Exploitation is not ended in New China, but its imperialist and feudal forms are. And the forces of co-operation are at last on top, pressing on to the final elimination of exploitation, lighting “the lamp of hope o’er man’s bewildered lot”.

New millions now “speak the wisdom once they could not think”. It is not just the Chinese people who have stepped forward, but the whole of humanity which has won a new round in the struggle against reaction. We who have lived to see this are the prouder and the greater because of it. In all lands, drawing new strength from Chinese advances, the common people will march forward the bolder and more vigorously to end the misery that man’s exploitation has brought to man, and to build a world where the saying that “all men are brothers” is neither a mirage nor a vision, but a reality.

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