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A CRITICISM OF THE UNITED SECRETARIAT MAJORITY
DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE "CULTURAL REVOLUTION"

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A CRITICISM OF THE UNITED SECRETARIAT MAJORITY
DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE "CULTURAL REVOLUTION"

By Kyoji Nishi

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The Chinese "cultural revolution" is not only of immense importance in the current international class struggle, requiring our International to clarify its position on it, but is also of vital significance to our existence as an independent leadership in the world proletarian movement. Inasmuch as the "pro-Peking" or "Maoist" Communist parties, with a powerful center in the People's Republic of China, now wield influence in the international revolutionary movement, helped by a pseudo leftist stand in struggles around the world, we face the possibility of the Fourth International losing its reason for being if we remain unarmed with a clear position and consistent policy on this.

The draft resolution proposed by the majority of the United Secretariat should have appeared much earlier, since it is a matter of great importance in the current world situation. Moreover, it lacks sufficient clarity to determine our political line. It is, so to speak, a mere centrist explanation of the situation in China.

I.

First of all, in dealing with the Mao-Lin faction's "cultural revolution," we must always make clear whether we offer it "critical support" or oppose it.

It is true that the draft takes a critical position toward the Mao faction which initiated and advanced the "cultural revolution." But it fails to oppose or fight against it in a clear way in face of the necessity felt by the Mao tendency to resort to purge measures in the course of the struggle. The draft resolution reads:

"The 'cultural revolution' constitutes objectively an attempt by the Mao faction to divert the social forces pushing in that direction [e.g., the direction of a political revolution] from an overthrow of the bureaucracy into a reform of the bureaucracy."

It is true that the Mao faction took advantage of the popular discontent with the bureaucracy to mobilize masses of the young generation against Liu Shao-chi and others in the "opposition." But

what was the basic course followed by the Mao faction in seeking to "reform" the bureaucracy? It was neither to grant concessions to the masses nor to moderate the bureaucratic repression. Actually they carried out their "reform" in order to reestablish bureaucratic rule under the dictatorial Mao faction, overthrowing a group of bureaucrats who had given way to the mass pressure, dared to force Mao aside, and partly adjusted Mao's autarchic policies.

In other words, the essential nature of the Mao-Lin "cultural revolution" is to be seen in the "reform" they sought of firmly establishing the bureaucratic dictatorship by crushing in the bud any attempt at creating an independent mass movement or any sign of a possible political revolution, though they certainly took advantage of the justified popular discontent. It is, therefore, very much out of focus to interpret the real nature of the "cultural revolution" as "an attempt...to divert the social forces pushing [in the direction of a political revolution] from an overthrow of the bureaucracy into a reform of the bureaucracy."

Apparently there are quite a few comrades who have been taken in by Mao Tse-tung's "leftist" or "revolutionary" slogans and who have been blinded by the fact that his faction succeeded in mobilizing large numbers of the young generation.

Here, however, we ought to recall some historical facts. The fascists, appealing to the discontented petty bourgeoisie who had been brought to the brink of ruin, successfully mobilized great masses. A recent instance of a similar nature was the antirevolutionary mass mobilizations in Indonesia in which the militarists made full use of discontented youth against the Sukarno government behind which stood the Stalinists.

We must not overlook the fact that the Mao faction, though they certainly managed to mobilize a considerable number of people, with the "Red Guards" serving as a spearhead, had to face persistent resistance on the part of the masses; above all the city workers, who certainly lacked an organized opposition leadership.

II.

Let us review a bit of the historical development of the situation in China up to the time in question.

After the "Hundred Flowers" campaign in 1956, the Peking bureaucracy,

frightened by the enormous outpouring of mass discontent, followed a policy of severe repression under guise of an "anti-rightist" campaign in which the bureaucracy mobilized considerable masses of people. Then Mao Tse-tung tried to break the existing deadlock with the "Great Leap Forward" and the "People's Communes." These movements were carried out with an enormous mass mobilization, creating among the masses the temporary illusion that the Peking leadership was of a revolutionary character. Even in our International some were to be found who gave almost unconditional "critical" (!) support to the "People's Communes" movement. The developments that followed -- economic disorder and the threat of famine -- showed clearly that the discontented peasantry replied to the movement with a slow-down on a broad scale. The seeming mass enthusiasm was only the surface reaction of the peasants of China to the movement imposed from above. The end result was a loss in economic balance that brought the country to the verge of catastrophe. Thus the economic policy imposed by bureaucratic decree proved to be a costly one. Far too little scientific planning went into it.

This outcome brought Peng Teh-huai and others to dare to challenge Mao Tse-tung at the Lushan conference in 1959. They tried to bring under control the bureaucratic "petty-bourgeois enthusiasm" that had been aroused by the Mao faction.

We do not know what stand Peng Teh-huai's group took on other important problems, above all, the Sino-Soviet dispute. Certainly, in an article published later, the Mao faction attacked Peng Teh-huai for having been praised by Khrushchev; but it should be noted that nowhere has Mao attacked either Liu Shao-chi or Peng Teh-huai for defending the Kremlin in the Sino-Soviet conflict. This is all the more important since some persons, influenced by the clamor against the opposition and the shower of epithets such as "the Chinese Khrushchev," "reformist," etc., are unconsciously inclined to attribute the "leftist" position in the dispute solely to the Mao-Liu faction and to conclude that the opposition holds a position similar to Khrushchev's. As a matter of fact, the leading figures on the Peking side of the Sino-Soviet dispute were among the now purged opposition group, although Mao himself stood at the head. These leading figures, as is well-known, were Lu Ting-yi, Peng Chen, Teng Hsiao-ping, and Liu Shao-chi himself.

In any case, the central issue at the Lushan conference was not the Sino-Soviet dispute but the campaigns involving the "Great Leap Forward" and the "People's Communes." Evidently the criticism made by Peng Teh-huai's group on this issue, despite its moderate and conciliatory style and tone, pointed toward a

basically correct course and direction. The conference marked the first time the split inside the bureaucracy found expression in a confrontation between Mao's faction and the opposition.

After that the Liu Shao-chi group elevated Mao, so to speak, onto a pedestal, gained supremacy in the state apparatus, and carried out the "adjustment policy." This was a policy of "concessions" to the masses aimed at saving the Chinese economy from possible collapse and reestablishing ties with the peasantry. For the bureaucracy it constituted the inevitable setback it had to suffer.

The Liu faction carried out this policy in fundamentally the same bureaucratic way practiced in the preceding period. They sought mainly to rescue the Peking bureaucracy from a fatal situation. They did their utmost to cover up the split inside the bureaucracy. Under the name of Maoism they pursued their course without any public self-criticism. Instead of organizing a democratic discussion among the masses, they advanced their policy of granting concessions and mitigating things from above without consulting the masses.

Their policy beyond dispute revealed their bureaucratic nature. It was an exact reflection of their position as an upper layer of the Peking bureaucracy even though they constituted an opposition within the regime. Thus this is one of the points which we must subject to sharp criticism. We must state that the Mao faction was able to make its comeback in the "cultural revolution" owing to the role played by the "party persons in authority," just as the draft resolution points out.

We must grant, however, that so far as the economic "adjustment policy" was concerned, the opposition had no other recourse. Truly it was a policy of making concessions to the masses. In contrast, the Mao faction arbitrarily refers to the opposition's policy in a piecemeal way and slanders the Liu group by claiming that the policy of making concessions signified taking the "capitalist road." The leaders of the Mao faction, however, have been utterly unable themselves to present any scientific analysis of these developments. In other words, the Mao faction has not assailed the Liu group because of its bureaucratic nature and its infringements of workers democracy but because of its concessions to the masses. Thus the assault leveled by the Mao faction against the Liu faction derives from a standpoint quite the opposite of ours, of Trotskyism.

The Mao faction has charged Peng Teh-huai and Liu Shao-chi with having "crazily opposed" Maoism. But what was

the nature of Mao Tse-tung's policy that led them to oppose it so vigorously? Wasn't it a policy that was proved wrong by history? Wasn't it a policy that whipped the masses into action and brought a half famine to the country during the "Great Leap Forward" and the "People's Communes"?

When Stalin in the Soviet Union of the thirties drove the first five-year plan forward by bureaucratic orders from above, imposing collectivization on the peasantry, he called for "liquidation of the kulaks," but brought about only an enormous imbalance in the national economy. Trotsky, unlike Liu Shao-chi (possibly), did not hesitate to oppose the bureaucratic Stalinist way of operating the economy. He firmly stood in opposition, not only after the policy proved wrong, but at the very beginning; and he offered a practical policy together with a theoretically consistent and scientific criticism.

Despite the dangerous loss of balance in the Soviet economy resulting from the first five-year plan, the Stalinists took the risk of repeating the experience in the second plan. Trotsky, armed with a detailed analysis of the realities, issued a warning:

"The Left Opposition in its own time was the first to demand the inauguration of the Five Year Plan. Now it is duty bound to say: It is necessary to put off the second Five Year Plan. Away with shrieking enthusiasm! Away with stock jobbing! There is no reconciling them with planned activity. Then, you are for retreat? Yes, for a temporary retreat. And what about the prestige of the infallible leadership? The fate of the dictatorship of the proletariat is more important than blown-up prestige." (Trotsky: Soviet Economy in Danger, p. 42.)

Today this criticism sounds as if it were directed against Mao Tse-tung's "Great Leap Forward." The Peking bureaucracy, above all the Mao faction, speaks constantly of "politics first," "spiritual incentives," "socialist education movement," and repeatedly insists on "taking firm hold of the revolution and promoting production." "Material incentives" and "economism" are held in supreme contempt. But what generates a revolutionary spirit? A scientific policy of building up the economy cannot be replaced by that sort of spirit, overlooking its objective foundation.

Unlike the Stalinists, Trotsky never dealt with the problem of building the Soviet economy separately from the world market or from the international class struggle; he emphasized the importance of scientifically analyzing the ob-

jective economic relations underlying the interlocking world struggles in order to build the economy in the Soviet Union. Repeatedly he insisted on recovering "measure and scale" in the management of the planned economy. And betterment of the standard of living of the masses remained his constant concern. Today Trotsky's insistent criticisms could, with but little modification, be brought against the policies of the Mao-Lin faction with telling effect.

Thus we see that Peng Teh-huai and some others at the Lushan conference dared, though hesitatingly, to criticize Peking's policies from a correct angle. And for that very reason they were purged from any sort of position enabling them to wield influence. Then the Liu Shao-chi faction tried to modify Mao Tse-tung's policy from the same angle as the purged critics though they did this in bureaucratic fashion.

It is, therefore, important for us to remember the principled criticism of the Peking bureaucracy made by Comrade Peng Shu-tse and many others of the Chinese section, strictly along Trotskyist lines, already at this stage of developments. (See: "A Criticism of the Various Views Supporting the Chinese Rural People's Communes -- What Our Attitude Should Be" by Peng Shu-tse, Sept., 1959. In SWP Discussion Bulletin, Vol. 21, No. 1, January 1960.)

III.

On the factional struggle inside the CCP leadership, the draft resolution submitted by the United Secretariat majority, before proceeding to criticize each of the chief factions, states:

"Neither of the chief factions contending for supremacy within the Chinese Communist bureaucracy is actually striving for socialist democracy or has a program of genuine revolutionary policies at home and abroad. By Marxist standards neither of the chief factions deserves political support against its rival. From the available information -- and it is admittedly scanty and inadequate -- neither faction can be judged to be more progressive than the other."

The question as to which of the two factions we should give "critical support" or which we should single out for main attack cannot be answered by determining which of the factions has followed a political line, registered by history, coming closest to ours. In reaching a judgment, our first concern must be the concrete problems now at issue.

What is the meaning of the words "Marxist standards" in the draft resolution? As a matter of fact, both factions

are revisionist according to "Marxist standards"; neither faction is Trotskyist, since they are of the Stalinist school. That, however, does not deprive Marxists of the right to give critical support to one or the other of two Stalinist factions struggling against each other. In the Sino-Soviet confrontation, if we went by "Marxist standards" in this sense of the term we could by no means support either side. But, of course, we must not approach the problem in that way.

Again let us quote from the draft resolution:

"As long as Liu's group retained supremacy it practiced the abominable customs of bureaucratic command learned in the school of Stalinism. Its doctrines and practices were indistinguishable from those of the previous period when Mao was in direct control."

This is correct. Though Liu's group made a few practical improvements in Mao's policy, they never criticized the preceding policy nor exercised any self-criticism. They never turned against the cult of Mao. They held fundamentally the same doctrines as the Mao group. This criticism of the Liu group in the draft resolution, therefore, is absolutely essential.

The necessity to make such a criticism, however, should never lead us to conclude, bearing in mind the confrontation of their political lines, that we must reject supporting one of the factions and attacking the other. We conclude only that we must never give any political support to the doctrines of either group.

Another part of the draft reads:

"While the Mao faction has issued calls for rebellion and appeals to the initiative of the masses, its deeds do not harmonize with its words. Mao's objective was to regain supremacy for his faction and line in the bureaucracy, not overthrow the bureaucracy. This explains why he followed the Stalinist methods of slander, physical violence and the fostering of cultism in his struggle and strictly limited his appeals to the masses. Whenever and wherever any segment of the people, whether among the youth, the proletariat, the peasantry or the intellectuals, has showed signs of slipping away from domination and direction by Mao to act on its own account, it has been restrained and called to order, sometimes by repressive measures."

Certainly, the Mao faction called for "rebellion," and insisted on the slogan of "boldly rouse the masses." The first impression is that they called for mass struggle against the bureaucracy.

But here close examination of the facts is required. In accordance with what line and against whom did the Mao faction call for the masses to "rebel"? Clearly the call for rebellion was directed against the "party persons in authority who are taking the capitalist road." The Mao faction called for struggle against Liu Shao-chi, Teng Hsiao-ping, Peng Teh-huai, and others. In other words, those who had resisted Mao Tse-tung's directives, revised his policies, opposed his ultraleftist adventurism, and adopted the policy of retreat and adjustment -- these were the people selected as the targets of attack and assault. They were the ones accused of "taking the capitalist road." From the beginning, therefore, no "rebellion" at all was allowed against Mao Tse-tung and Lin Piao themselves. Their banner of "boldly rouse the masses" was very clear from the start: "What stand does one take to Maoism, whether one accepts or denies, whether one defends or opposes, whether one cherishes or confronts -- these are the watershed and touchstone to distinguish real revolution from false revolution, revolution from counterrevolution, Marxism-Leninism from revisionism..." (Liberation Army Daily.)

So, if we make a precise analysis of their words, we can see that their deeds fit rather harmoniously with their words even from the beginning, despite a tremendous amount of demagogy. Besides, in the opening stage, when the Liu Shao-chi group had a rather free hand in the central bodies of the state, the Mao faction did not call for mass "rebellion" from below. Mao and Lin first gained control of the central machine of the Liberation Army, and then at the end of 1965 they began to move mainly in the culture and propaganda section of the party leadership as well as the party machinery in Peking. From the end of 1965 through the beginning of 1966 they mounted threatening attacks, mainly through the Liberation Army Daily and some Shanghai newspapers, against the intellectuals inside the culture and propaganda machine or under its influence.

We are not in position to confirm the rumored mobilization of army troops to disrupt the Peking party committee and dismiss Peng Chen, Lu Ting-yi, Lo Jui-ching, Yang Shang-kun, and others. But mysterious talk of a February coup and a subsequent official denial are enough for us to suspect some kind of frame-up committed by the Mao faction.

It was only after the Mao-Lin faction got hold of the culture and propaganda machine and gained control of Peking, depriving the Liu "opposition" of every means to express their views and organize nationally, that the Mao group issued their call for mass rebellion, and

mobilized the Red Guards so as to purge the opposition. It was not at all accidental that the Mao faction started their factional struggle under the name of the "great cultural revolution," since the culture and propaganda machine of the party was the very first target. It was started in this sector of the party in order to deprive the opposition of the means to speak out.

Therefore, as Comrade Peng Shu-tse pointed out, it is a serious misunderstanding of the situation to say, as the 1967 resolution of the International Executive Committee did: "As for Mao's opponents, such as Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-ping, who held and who still hold considerable means of making known their political line had they so desired, their silence on this subject compels us to be relatively cautious concerning the contents of their policies."

It is true that the Liu Shao-chi group, when they were in control of the party and had considerable leeway, never attempted any public self-criticism or criticism of the sectarianism of the Mao faction. Moreover, it is possible since then that they hesitated to make their political line known to the workers internationally, perhaps out of bureaucratic faithfulness to party discipline even in the difficult situations that came about later. But at least we can see with little difficulty that since the so-called plenary session of the Central Committee in 1966, they have been deprived of every single means to make known their political line, except, for whatever it may be worth, through hints and allusions in the process of "self-criticism."

Little observation is needed to see that the Mao-Lin faction has never assailed the opposition for not clearly expressing their opinions. Attacks without fail would have taken place had they remained silent within the party. Consequently the real reason why no attacks were made on this point is quite apparent. The Liu group has not refrained from expressing their opinions; the Mao-Lin faction has denied the opposition every possibility of speaking out and has blocked their way to the masses.

If in this situation we simply say that neither faction "deserves any political support," then, objectively, we put ourselves in the position of abetting the Mao faction in its destructive deeds against the masses. Consequently, is there any choice open to us but to direct the heaviest fire against the Mao faction which has completely suppressed proletarian democracy, not to mention what it has done with regard to the cult of Mao?

IV.

Now it still seems difficult to draw a clear line between the two factions in foreign policy.

In the Sino-Soviet dispute, as mentioned above in part II, many of the important members of the opposition were leading figures on the Chinese side, and there is no reason at all to suspect them of wanting to compromise with the Kremlin. Even in the most slanderous attacks, the Mao faction has not presented a single bit of evidence showing the "Chinese Khrushchev" to have been an ally of the Kremlin.

On the other hand it is not unlikely with regard to the problem of a united front with the Soviet Union against imperialism, above all in providing support to the Vietnamese revolution, that the opposition took a more flexible stand and that the Mao faction represented the worst kind of sectarianism. And it is needless to say that this remains the most important question in the international class struggle today. As already pointed out by Comrade Peng and generally accepted, Lo Jui-ching's confrontation with Lin Piao is another confirmation of this assumption. Moreover we know that Mao's attitude in his discussion with representatives of the Japan Communist Party proved him to be the one responsible for the Chinese sectarianism in this problem.

As was pointed out much earlier by Comrade Yamanishi, Peking's rejection of a united front against imperialism, for which the Mao faction itself was responsible, had its historical precedent in Stalin-Thälmann's ultimatumistic policy in the struggle against Hitler in Germany in the thirties. On the basis of no more than this, we must excoriate the Mao-Lin faction.

When we look at the varying shades of sectarianism to be seen in the radical student and youth movement today, and note the role played by Maoism in this, our International is duty bound to take a firm principled stand and in the interest of the international struggle refuse to follow the prevailing inclination.

We do not know what differences might have existed within the Peking bureaucracy over the problem of the underdeveloped countries and the national bourgeoisie. It is probable that a serious confrontation occurred over the counter-revolution in Indonesia. But this can only be guesswork, which is best avoided.

As for the Peking policy of collaborating with the national bourgeoisie of the underdeveloped countries in order to

advance the bureaucracy's own nationalist interests, we can name some figures bearing considerable responsibility for this course even in the current opposition. For instance, Peng Chen who publicly lauded Sukarno-Aidit's NASAKOM in Indonesia. With regard to this, not only Chou En-lai but the whole Peking leadership, including Mao Tse-tung himself, shared the same responsibility for the fulsome hailing of Aidit's policies. Moreover, the notorious "intermediate-zone theory" is Mao's own invention, as he has stated. Consequently it is quite natural that the "party persons in authority" have not been assailed once for the disastrous defeat in Indonesia save for silly heckling over Liu Shao-chi and Wang Kuang-mei's diplomatic mission.

Taking advantage of the opportunity, I should like to venture my personal opinion on the question of Indonesia. In my opinion, it is too optimistic a view to conclude that the conversion of the PKI leadership to Maoist leftism, following the defeat, represents a conversion to a revolutionary program. Although it is only a surmise lacking sufficient proof, I am afraid that what they have adopted closely resembles the Stalinist line of ultraleftist insurrection following the defeat of the second Chinese revolution. To me it looks like a zigzag course, now in the phase of the ultraleftist strategy of guerrilla warfare.

Finally, the draft resolution should include a sufficient criticism of the disastrous policy which the Mao faction has been following in the field of culture and art.

V.

It is now quite clear that we must above all struggle against the Mao-Lin faction's dictatorial course in defense of the rights of the opposition. To be taken in by an apparently correct expression of the justified mass discontent, and to permit what is an isolated phenomenon in the context to prejudice our judgment would reveal failure to grasp the direction in which the gigantic struggle is moving.

Generally in an enormous class struggle, a considerable proportion of the masses lend themselves, through goodwill, to being exploited by the reactionaries. Yet the fact that the Mao faction encountered great resistance among the city workers despite the mass mobilization backed by the army and with complete control of the propaganda machine, the fact that the masses mobilized by the Mao faction differentiated internally to such a degree as to lead to armed struggles, and the fact that these situations compelled the faction to compromise with the masses to a certain extent, suggest the

bureaucratic and reactionary nature of the "great cultural revolution" and nothing else.

It is, then, necessary for us to take our stand on the side of the masses, who, although lacking any leadership worth mentioning, could not help but resist the oppression inflicted on them by the high-handed Mao group. We must expose the reactionary nature of the Mao faction before the international proletariat, and firmly establish a political line of struggle against it.

VI.

The draft resolution submitted by the majority of the United Secretariat is, as a whole, unduly conciliatory to the Peking bureaucracy, above all the Mao faction. It states:

"The leadership of the Chinese CP, educated in the Stalinist school, has always accepted the theory of 'building socialism in one country.' However, in the fifties, the importance of the help which the other workers states could give to the economic growth and the military defense of the People's Republic of China, made the dangerous implications of that theory inside China less important than in the USSR in the late twenties and the thirties (its international implications detrimental to world revolution continued to manifest themselves even then). The reversal of the Maoist leadership to a policy of 'self-reliance' and large-scale economic autarchy and self-sufficiency is only a rationalization of the consequences of the Kremlin's blockade and the tremendous burden imposed on China by the need to develop its own nuclear weapons, given the refusal of the Soviet bureaucracy to assist it on this field."

Certainly this is a possible explanation. In the final analysis, it is also possible to say that Stalin's theory of "building socialism in one country" was only a rationalization of the isolation of the Soviet Union internationally owing to the setback of the European revolution in the twenties. But it is against the Kremlin's economic blockade of China and exclusive possession of nuclear weapons that we must counter our internationalist line. The Peking bureaucracy, in opposition to this, takes a nationalist line stemming from their bureaucratic position. Even though primary responsibility rests with the Kremlin, why should we offer excuses for the Peking bureaucracy?

The draft resolution emphasizes that the "cultural revolution" has urged "acceptance of the concept of political revolution in the bureaucratized workers states." This is true, not at all be-

cause the Mao faction arrived at such a position through its "theory," but because of the objective fact that Stalinist bureaucratic rule plunged into a crisis, leading to serious splits within its own regime. The "acceptance of the concept of political revolution" started with the concessions made by Khrushchev and other bureaucrats in the USSR, and was brought to public attention on a world scale by, among other things, the great Hungarian revolution. (It is worth recalling that Peking played the worst role in smothering the Hungarian revolution.) The Sino-Soviet dispute further advanced this process. But there are no grounds for identifying Peking's criticisms of Moscow, which are positive and valid in many points, with the Mao faction's attack against the opposition. It is just the opposite, constituting nothing but an aspect of the Mao cult, the counterpart today of defending Stalin which is the negative side of the Chinese stand in the Sino-Soviet dispute advanced by the Mao faction in the most vigorous way.

The masses struggling for a political revolution in Czechoslovakia and other East European countries are demanding workers democracy as their first goal. They hardly expect any ideological support from the Mao faction. Judging from the fear displayed by Mao Tse-tung over the Hungarian revolution, Peking's opposition to the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia should be rated as merely a posture assumed for diplomatic reasons. The Mao faction has bureaucratically distorted the concepts of political revolution and permanent revolution, and is utilizing them to further the purge of the opposition and to fortify its dictatorial policies.

In its conclusion, the draft resolution states:

"The experience of the 'cultural revolution' offers fresh evidence that also in China, the bureaucracy cannot be removed by reforms. It will have to be removed from power by the new vanguard of genuine revolutionaries now in the process of formation in China...."

This is correct. But the draft resolution, as a whole, seems to draw this conclusion because a political revolution by bureaucratic means, so to speak, proved impossible, as shown by the course of the Mao faction during the "cultural revolution." The fact is that a genuine political revolution has proved to be all the more necessary, because the Mao faction, as has been clearly shown, when faced with a crisis within their own bureaucratic machine are ready to resort to every illegal and violent means to defend their narrow dictatorship even at the cost of sacrificing a greater part of the

bureaucracy.

"The new vanguard of genuine revolutionaries now in the process of formation in China" will, therefore, be trained and formed amid the struggle against the purge. The vanguard of revolutionaries will emerge only in a united struggle with the opposition in defense of their legitimate rights. The foundation for the platform of such a struggle has been formulated explicitly in "An Open Letter to the Members of the Chinese Communist Party" by Comrade Peng Shu-tse. [See World Outlook, March 24, 1967, p. 322.]

VII.

For some time, Comrade Livio Maitan and other members of the United Secretariat hesitated to take a definite stand on the Chinese question, excusing themselves for "lack of information." As a matter of fact, lack of information never prevented us from analyzing the Chinese situation and drawing necessary conclusions. And yet it is true that many people were misled by insufficiency of information and by the one-sided hand-outs of the Mao faction.

What is the source of this "lack of information"? The Mao faction's repression of the opposition. Consequently it is self-evident that our first task is to fight energetically in defense of the opposition's right to speak out against their repression by Mao. Naturally, discomfiture over the "lack of information" makes this all the more imperative.

In the Soviet Union in the late twenties, the Trotskyists of the Left Opposition were deprived by the Stalinist bureaucrats of almost all opportunity to make their struggle against the Stalin group known to the workers internationally. The Stalin group supplied revolutionaries throughout the world only with demagogy and lies. The result was that the profound struggle that was to determine the destiny of the first workers state and affect the fate of the world revolution in subsequent decades remained hidden from the international proletariat. Thus partisans of the world revolution were deprived of any means to intervene significantly in the struggle in the USSR.

The enormous struggle being fought out in China is of incalculable importance not only to the Asian revolution but to the world as a whole from now on out. Thus it is inexcusable for us as Trotskyists to take an ambiguous stand on the question, pointing to the "lack of information." It is our duty, from every angle, to intervene vigorously against the repressive Mao dictatorship.

If so many Chinese revolutionaries,

denied any opportunity to voice their opinions, are liquidated, and if even minor economic demands raised by the masses are unreasonably suppressed because they run counter to Mao's will, then we Trotskyists must never abstain from helping them to defend their legitimate rights.

Of course, I am not saying that Liu Shao-chi, Teng Hsiao-ping, and the others are great revolutionaries. They do not at all qualify for comparison with Trotsky. But what has been the fate of Chinese militants who have remained faithful to the revolution, and the leftist revolutionaries whose names are not known to us? There are probably revolutionaries, too, among the people deceived by the Mao faction. We know quite well what the Maoists insist upon as the criterion in distinguishing whether one belongs to the "revolution" or the "counterrevolution" -- it is the degree to which one has been "absolutely faithful to Chairman Mao or not." It is quite natural that the more revolutionary-minded a militant is and the more independent his attitude is toward the bureaucratic authority, the more he is inclined to resist a criterion of that sort.

For the Chinese Trotskyist revolutionaries, no other way is open for intervention in the struggle than participation in a united struggle in defense of the opposition's rights against the baneful Mao faction and its repressive measures, however Stalinist Liu Shao-chi and Peng Teh-huai may be.

VIII.

Additional Explanation

In the above I have insisted that we should defend the opposition in the stand it has taken during the course of struggle in the "cultural revolution" started by the Mao faction.

Comrade Peng Shu-tse appeals emphatically for critical support to the "Liu Shao-chi faction" as the central core of the opposition, saying:

"Je crois seulement qu'à l'heure actuelle et du fait même du caractère très tranche de la situation délibérément créée par Mao Tse-toung, Liu Shaoqi ne peut pas ne pas être le porte-drapeau de tous les opposants et que les opposants le savent." ("La révolution culturelle chinoise et la rivalité entre Mao Tse-

toung et Liu Shaoqi vues par Peng Shuzhi; une interview de Claude Cadart, 1967.)*

* "I merely think that at the present time, owing to the very sharp character of the situation deliberately created by Mao Tse-tung that Liu Shao-chi cannot help but be the standard-bearer for all the opponents and that the opponents know it." ("The Chinese Cultural Revolution and the Rivalry Between Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-chi as Seen by Peng Shu-tse; an Interview by Claude Cadart, 1967.")

The reason I am not prepared to "support the Liu Shao-chi faction" but just support the opposition in general, is that I have reservations as to whether Liu Shao-chi is capable of being a reliable center of the opposition which is currently not united.

The following points have entered into my reservations:

1. I am inclined to believe that Liu Shao-chi hopes to restore relations between his faction and Peng Teh-huai's. It still remains obscure, however, what the relation between the two groups was when Liu gained the dominating position after the divestiture of Peng and Huang's group at the Lushan conference.

2. For a short period after Peng Chen, Lu Ting-yi, and others had been purged in March-April, 1966, Liu Shao-chi, as he made clear in his "self-criticism," superintended the central party body in Peking. Consequently the question arises as to the attitude Liu took toward the purge of the Peng Chen group, and also whether he took any action capable of gaining the confidence of Peng, Lu, and others.

Judging from the papers of the Red Guards, Teng Hsiao-ping can never become the symbolic figure of the opposition. But the case is different with Liu Shao-chi, who has sought to take the attitude of at least not betraying the opposition.

Still I have ventured to reserve agreeing to the slogan of "critical support to the Liu Shao-chi faction" because of the reason indicated above. This, of course, involves a difference of only secondary importance with Comrade Peng Shu-tse's view.

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