

A PROGRAMMATIC DOCUMENT OF THE GREAT  
PROLETARIAN CULTURAL REVOLUTION

[Following is a translation of an editorial in the Chinese-language periodical Hung-ch'i (Red Flag), No 10, Peiping, 10 Aug 1966, pp 10-13.]

At this crucial moment in the development of the great proletarian cultural revolution in our country, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party published the Decision Concerning the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. This document which was drawn up under the personal guidance of Comrade Mao Tse-tung summed up, in a scientific way, the experience in recent months of the mass movement of the great proletarian cultural revolution. It is the programme of China's great proletarian cultural revolution. The decision is bound to push the great proletarian cultural revolutionary movement to a new high.

The decision has correctly analysed the nature, situation and tasks of the great proletarian cultural revolution in our country and laid down the Party's principles and policies for the great revolution.

The decision says: "The great proletarian cultural revolution now unfolding is a great revolution that touches people to their very souls and constitutes a new stage in the development of the socialist revolution in our country, a deeper and more extensive stage."

Ten years ago when the socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production in our country was in the main completed, Comrade Mao Tse-tung already wisely pointed out: "The class struggle is by no means over. The class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, the class struggle between the different political forces, and the class struggle in the ideological field between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie will continue to be long and tortuous and at times will even become very acute. The proletariat seeks to transform the world according to its own world outlook, and so does the bourgeoisie. In this respect, the question of which will win out, socialism or capitalism, is still not really settled."

The great proletarian cultural revolution is to fully mobilize the masses and step by step settle this question of which is to win out in the

ideological field under the leadership of our Party.

This great cultural revolution is a struggle of the proletarian world outlook against the bourgeois world outlook, a struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie over the leadership in the ideological field.

All class struggles are political struggles. The present great cultural revolution is, in the final analysis, a life-and-death struggle between the socialist system and the capitalist system, a struggle in which one side wants to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat while the other side wants to turn the proletarian dictatorship into a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. It is an extremely fierce, extremely sharp and extremely deep-going class struggle, a struggle for the proletariat to prevent the restoration of capitalism, a struggle to prevent imperialism and modern revisionism from carrying out their subversive plots and "peaceful evolution" in our country. This is a struggle that affects the future of our great motherland.

The tasks of the present great proletarian cultural revolution are just as the decision points out, firstly, to struggle against and crush those persons in authority who are taking the capitalist road; secondly, to criticize and repudiate the reactionary bourgeois academic "authorities" and the ideology of the bourgeoisie and all other exploiting classes; and thirdly, to transform education, literature and art and all other parts of the superstructure that do not correspond to the socialist economic base.

At present, an excellent situation prevails in the great proletarian cultural revolution in our country. It is a reflection of throbbing prosperity in the political, economic and other spheres of our country. In this great cultural revolution, unprecedented in history, which is led by the Chinese Communist Party, new changes have taken place in the relationships among the various classes and the various political forces. Where the mass movement has really set going, it is vigorous and irresistible. The broad masses of workers, peasants and soldiers, revolutionary intellectuals and revolutionary cadres have plunged themselves into the torrential current of the revolution, and the reactionary bastions of the bourgeoisie have been shattered one after another. This is the main current of the great cultural revolution. But, it must be noted, resistance to the movement is at present still fairly strong and stubborn. Many places and units are still in a state of seemingly being aroused but not yet aroused, or in a relatively lukewarm state and the lid of the class struggle has not yet been completely lifted or has not been lifted at all. In some places and units, there have been zigzags and reverses. There, the persons in charge or those in charge of the work teams sent there have made an error on matters of orientation, an error of line. These persons in charge have organized counterattacks against the masses who put up big-character posters against them, or even have advanced such slogans as: opposition to the leaders of a unit or a work team means opposition to the Party's Central Committee, means opposition to the Party and socialism and means counter-revolution. They have spearheaded the struggle against the really revolutionary activists, rounded upon and attacked the revolutionary Left and suppressed the revolutionary mass movement. Of course, the great proletarian cultural

revolution is, after all, the general trend; it is irresistible. Once the masses have been fully aroused such resistance will crumble fast. After zigzags and reverses, the movement will proceed in an ever more vigorous and healthy manner.

Our Party's task is to dare to lead this great revolution and be good at leading it. The key of decisive importance to Party leadership is to put daring above everything else and boldly arouse the masses.

Like one's attitude towards other revolutionary movements, the fundamental criterion of whether one can or cannot lead this great proletarian cultural revolution lies in whether one does or does not dare to boldly arouse the masses.

The spirit running through this decision is to trust the masses, rely on them and respect their initiative. Cast out fear. Don't be afraid of full and frank expression of views and opinions, of big-character posters and great debates. Don't be afraid of disorder. All these fears boil down to one thing, that of being afraid of the masses. Any person who does not cast out fear cannot lead this revolutionary movement, and will even become an obstacle to the mass movement. Let the masses educate themselves, run their own affairs and rise to make revolution themselves in this great revolutionary movement. Let the masses learn in revolutionary struggle to distinguish between right and wrong and between correct and incorrect ways of doing things. Revolutionary order cannot be created by drawing up a set of restrictions in advance; rather, we must rely on the masses to establish it in accordance with their experience in struggle.

Chairman Mao has constantly taught us: "It has to be understood that the masses are the real heroes, while we ourselves are often childish and ignorant, and without this understanding it is impossible to acquire even the most rudimentary knowledge." Only by being pupils of the masses can we become the teachers of the masses. In the great proletarian cultural revolution, there are some comrades who have forgotten this. They inevitably blindly think themselves wise and do not believe that the masses are wise. Actually, it is only the broad masses who are really wise. The masses can teach us many things. We must listen to them, learn from and understand their experiences, desires and criticisms, gather these together, ascertain the sum total of what they require and then take this back to the masses as policy. Any leading personnel who does not go and learn from the masses will have no knowledge whatsoever.

In the great proletarian cultural revolution, many new things have emerged, such as the cultural revolutionary groups, committees, etc., which were not dreamt up by anyone and forced on the masses, but which were created by the masses themselves in the course of the cultural revolutionary movement. Chairman Mao and the Central Committee of the Party have summarized the experiences of the masses and in this decision have affirmed them as new things of great historic significance.

The appearance of these new things at first did not receive people's

attention, and they were even suppressed and attacked.

The attitude one takes towards new things represents one's attitude towards the masses, towards revolution and towards revolutionary mass movements.

Chairman Mao has penetratingly pointed out: "The people are filled with an immense enthusiasm for socialism. In a revolutionary period those who only know how to follow the routine paths cannot see this enthusiasm at all. They are blind. All is dark before them. At times they rant to a point of standing truth on its head and confusing black with white. Haven't we had enough of persons of that sort? Those who can only travel the well-trodden paths always underestimate the enthusiasm of the people. Let something new appear and they invariably disapprove, they rush to oppose it. Later, they admit defeat and do a bit of self-criticism. But the next time something new appears, they do the same things again -- and in the same sequence. This becomes their regular routine in regard to anything and everything new. That sort of person is always passive. He can never get going at a critical moment. Someone always has to give him a poke in the back before he will move forward."

There are very big dangers among some comrades who are bent on standing on a commanding height and divorcing themselves from the masses. On the political and ideological level, they lag far behind those previously unknown and those youngsters who have the courage to break through. Nevertheless, they regard themselves as nobles head and shoulders above the "lower orders." They are merely accustomed to monopolizing everything themselves, giving orders and reducing the masses to inactivity; they have invariably developed from standing aloof from and fearing the masses to opposing and suppressing them. They have always trembled before the revolutionary storm, not knowing what to do, and as soon as they recover from their fear, they impatiently try to pull the revolutionary movement back. Standing on the side of the reactionary bourgeoisie, they oppress the revolutionaries, put a damper on dissenting opinions and exercise the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

Experience has shown that the cultural revolutionary work in various units should be conducted by the masses there themselves, and must not be monopolized by the higher organizations. In general, the higher organizations should not send work teams of the cultural revolution. And the personnel appointed by the higher organizations to keep in contact with the various units should not pose as "imperial envoys," making a hullabaloo and spouting opinions "the moment they alight from the official carriage," and formulating preconceived ideas as soon as they hear one side's opinions. They should sincerely and earnestly contact the masses and identify themselves with the masses, seeing more, asking more, hearing more and thinking more.

How can the Party's leadership be realized in such an unprecedented mass movement -- the great cultural revolution? The Party organizations at all levels should take Mao Tse-tung's thought as their guide to action, conscientiously implement the correct line, principles and policies formulated

by the Party's Central Committee headed by Chairman Mao Tse-tung and resolutely resist the erroneous leadership that is detrimental to the revolution. To do this, it is necessary to share the same fate with the broad masses, to go through thick and thin with the masses, come from the masses and go back to the masses. Some comrades counterpose the Party's leadership against the practice of boldly arousing the masses. This is quite wrong.

If the masses are to be boldly aroused in the correct manner, the Party's policies must be put into the hands of the masses. The proclamation of this decision directly brings to the masses the Party's various policies concerning the great proletarian cultural revolution. This is all the more favorable for boldly arousing the masses.

In the course of the movement, it is necessary to let the masses thoroughly expose those bourgeois Rightists who have yet to expose themselves or who have not exposed themselves to the full, to criticize and repudiate them thoroughly and isolate them to the greatest possible extent. Thus, it is imperative that those within the Party who are in authority and are taking the capitalist road should first be identified, and that the utmost should be done to identify them without error and to unmask them completely.

The masses fully understand that it is necessary to make a vigorous effort to win over the middle elements who are wavering and are unclear about the cardinal issues of right and wrong. True, when the masses are aroused the big-character posters put up in the units where they work may refer to some of the middle elements by name; this is unavoidable. But if these big-character posters are not published in the press and they are allowed to put up big-character posters to defend themselves, no harm can come to them; instead, this can stir them into making progress. We believe that in the course of the movement some of the middle elements will change and join the ranks of the Left.

To rely on the Left is even more at one with arousing the masses on an extensive scale. Only by being good at discovering the Left, developing and expanding its ranks and firmly relying on the revolutionary Left can the most reactionary Rightists be thoroughly isolated, the middle elements won over and the majority united during the movement and the unity of more than 95 per cent of the cadres and more than 95 per cent of the masses be finally achieved by the end of the movement.

It is necessary in the course of the struggle to raise continuously the ideological and political level of the Left and help them study and apply Chairman Mao's works creatively. Only with a revolutionary contingent of the proletariat, that is, a staunch contingent of the Left, that is armed with Mao Tse-tung's thought and is extremely revolutionized and extremely militant, can victory be won in this great cultural revolution.

Long live the victory of the great proletarian cultural revolution under the invincible banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought!

CSO: 3530-D