

CREATIVELY STUDY AND APPLY CHAIRMAN MAO'S WRITINGS,
CORRECTLY HANDLE CONTRADICTIONS AMONG THE PEOPLE

Following is a translation of an article by the Detachment for Propagating Mao Tse-tung's Thought of PLA Units in Peking and Units Directly Under the Air Force published in the Chinese-language periodical Hung-ch'i (Red Flag), Peking, No. 10, 21 June 1967, pages 44-48./

In accordance with Chairman Mao's great directive that "the People's Liberation Army should support the broad masses of the Left," we made our way into the North China Metal Structure Plant on 13 February this year.

A grave struggle between the two classes and the two lines had for a long time been in existence in this plant. During the great proletarian cultural revolution, the class struggle was even more acute and salient. In order to safeguard their reactionary rule, a handful of those in authority taking the capitalist road in the plant obstinately carried out the bourgeois reactionary line. They hit a great many in order to protect a handful. They introduced White Terror and ruthlessly suppressed the revolutionary masses and the revolutionary cadres who brought their problems to light.

However, the proletarian revolutionaries refused to be cowed. They cleared one obstacle after another and formed their own revolutionary organization -- the Red Rebels. Guided by Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line, they united the broad revolutionary masses and the revolutionary cadres. On 14 January, they seized back power usurped by a handful of those in authority taking the capitalist road in the plant.

However, the class enemies are not reconciled to take their defeat lying down. They instigated an incident for the purpose of recapturing power, incited the masses to fight against the masses on a large scale, and created serious antagonism between the deceived masses and the Red Rebels.

It was under such a situation that our Detachment for Propagating Mao Tse-tung's Thought made our way into the plant.

Have Faith in and Rely on the Masses, Let the Masses Liberate Themselves

We followed Chairman Mao's teaching that "you must place politics in command, go among the masses and stay with them, and make a greater success of the great proletarian cultural revolution." We went deep among the masses, established wide contact with the masses of the organizations of various factions, found out what they had in mind, and listened to their views. We especially listened humbly to their critical views and seriously considered same.

When we first arrived at the plant, because we had not a clear idea of the situation and had not expressly made known our attitude, some persons with an ulterior object in view spread rumors and slanders to deceive the public and to provoke our relationship with the revolutionary masses. Because of this, some comrades of the Red Rebels misunderstood us and were rather indifferent toward us. We expressed no dissatisfaction over this, but took the initiative to get in touch with them and humbly listen to their views. After spending more than 20 days to investigate things in real earnest, we were of the opinion that seen in the light of the general orientation of the struggle and of the key problems in the struggle between the two lines in the plant, the Red Rebels was the organization of the revolutionary Left, and we openly expressed our firm support for them in the whole plant.

Chairman Mao said: "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." In our work, we bore in mind at all times Chairman Mao's teaching, and guarded against monopoly or substitution and self-righteousness. After we worked over a period of time, the Red Rebels and the broad revolutionary masses developed a deep class affection for us. When they came across problems in work, they were always fond of seeking our advice. At that time, we did not try to impose our own view on them. Instead, we first creatively study and apply Chairman Mao's writings with problems in mind together with them, and solved their problems in conjunction with their own comprehension. The masses were allowed to educate and liberate themselves.

The process of knowing and supporting the proletarian revolutionaries is also a process of learning from the broad revolutionary masses. We have come to understand deeply that the broad revolutionary masses boundlessly cherish Chairman Mao, our great leader, and intensely hate the handful of top persons in authority taking the capitalist road within the party. The broad revolutionary masses most warmly cherish and respect the People's Liberation Army personally built and trained by Chairman Mao. We must have faith in the masses, rely on them and learn humbly from them before we can guard against belying Chairman Mao's teaching and the trust of the broad revolutionary masses in us.

Help the Proletarian Revolutionaries Distinguish Between Two Kinds of Contradiction of Different Character

Because of the provocation of a handful of those in authority taking the capitalist road within the plant, the antagonism between the proletarian revolutionaries and the masses of the conservative organizations was very serious. In their everyday contact, they either ignored each other or denounced each other. They used whatever words that could vent their spleen, and carried out whatever things that were most infuriating to the opposite side. This seriously affected the formation of a great revolutionary alliance in the whole plant.

Chairman Mao taught us: "The only way to settle questions of an ideological nature of controversial issues among the people is by the democratic method, the method of discussion, of criticism, of persuasion and education, and not by the method of coercion or repression."

A handful of those in authority taking the capitalist road in the plant manipulated the conservative organizations, and regarded them as tools for their own protection. We were of the opinion that the mistakes of the conservative organizations must be thoroughly exposed, criticized and repudiated. However, because the masses of the conservative organizations had been deceived by the bourgeois reactionary line, their contradiction with the proletarian revolutionaries belonged to contradictions among the people. They were our class brothers, and they warmly cherished Chairman Mao and the Communist Party. On the basis of the guideline of "unity/criticism/unity," we should show deep class affection for these class brothers who had taken the wrong side and had gone astray for the time being in the great cultural revolution. Through conducting painstaking and delicate politico-ideological work, we should enlighten their class consciousness and help them return to the side of Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line, but should not strike blows at them or oust them just because they had made mistakes.

But some proletarian revolutionaries failed to understand this view of ours at first, and they even alleged that we were in favor of "reconciliation" and "compromise." The chief reason was that because they had been persecuted, encircled and attacked and struggled against by the bourgeois reactionary line on many occasions in the past, for a time they were unable to see the difference between the masses of the conservative organizations and the handful of those in authority taking the capitalist road within the party who manipulated such conservative organizations. They also adopted an antagonistic attitude toward the deceived masses. This mentality of theirs was entirely understandable.

In order to handle correctly the contradiction between the proletarian revolutionaries and the masses of the conservative organizations, such antagonism must first of all be eliminated. This required us to make a success of our work with the proletarian revolutionaries because now that theirs was the organization in power, they formed the principal aspect of the contradiction, and every utterance or deed of theirs would affect the masses of the

conservative organizations to some extent. If the proletarian revolutionaries did not settle this question ideologically, they could not make a success of politico-ideological work for the masses of the conservative organizations, and unite the great majority of the masses.

In light of the situation of the struggle between the two lines in the plant, we were full of enthusiasm, and we creatively studied and applied Chairman Mao's writings together with the proletarian revolutionaries. When any question arose, we look for the answer from Chairman Mao's writings together with the revolutionary masses.

We studied together with the proletarian revolutionaries Chairman Mao's illustrious article "On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People." We strictly differentiated the two kinds of contradiction of different character and correctly handled contradictions among the people.

The great majority of the proletarian revolutionaries in the plant are from poor and lower middle peasant families. Some of them once worked as hired farmhands and led the life of a beggar. They wept bitterly when they talked about the wicked old society. Through conducting class education, we helped them understand that the great majority of the comrades in the conservative organizations were ordinary workers and their own class brothers. They stood on the wrong side in the great cultural revolution because they had momentarily been deceived by the bourgeois reactionary line and fallen prey to a handful of those in authority taking the capitalist road within the party. As the contradiction between the revolutionaries and the deceived masses came under contradictions among the people, it should be dealt with according to Chairman Mao's directive concerning the correct handling of contradictions among the people.

The proletarian revolutionaries gradually changed their attitude and they said: "When our own class brothers have swallowed a few mouthfuls of water in the stormy class struggle, we should give them a hand, and should never press them down."

Meanwhile, in view of the fact that some comrades sometimes did not carry out work according to party policies in the class struggle and gave no thought to the living ideas of struggle strategy, we also studied together with them Chairman Mao's directive that "policy and tactics are the life of the party." By way of study and practice, we made them understand that they must carry out work according to Chairman Mao's instructions and the general and specific policies of the party before they could make a success of the great proletarian cultural revolution.

They have rectified the erroneous ideas that "so long as we dare to blaze trails we can make a success of the revolution" and that "so long as our general orientation is correct, it does not matter for us to make some mistakes." They have come to learn that should they blaze trails on the basis of their own feelings, they might go astray; that one can head from

one victory to another only when they do things according to the thought of Mao Tse-tung; and that making remarks to vent one's spleen is unfavorable to uniting the deceived masses and to the revolution. They have paid attention to presenting fact, appealing to reason and reasoning people into compliance, and have raised the level of the struggle.

Win Over and Unite Our Own Class Brothers

The process of our creative study and application of Chairman Mao's writings together with the proletarian revolutionaries is also the process of making use of Mao Tse-tung's thought together with them to educate and win over the deceived masses.

There are but a few persons in our detachment for propagating the thought of Mao Tse-tung. It is not possible to depend merely on a few persons to make a success of politico-ideological work among the masses of the conservative organizations. What is important is that the workers among the proletarian revolutionaries should be aroused to work together with us. They work together, study together and live together with the masses of the conservative organizations, and their understanding of the living thought of each person is of greater advantage to shooting the arrow of ideological work at the target. In this way, the working masses also can be helped to make creative study and application of Chairman Mao's writings in a better way in actual struggle and the thought of Mao Tse-tung strike solid root in the plant.

A variety of difficulties and twists and turns will necessarily be encountered in the process ranging from knowing a problem ideologically to solving that problem in practice. Some comrades among the proletarian revolutionaries close their ears to critical views, especially those improper ones. Very often, their conversation with the masses of the conservative organizations ends abruptly due to disagreement. The masses of the conservative organizations have various kinds of erroneous understanding which cannot be changed for the time being. We adopt a painstaking and delicate method of work, study Chairman Mao's writings together with them, and set the example ourselves. When they do a good job, we opportunely help them sum up and popularize their experience and arouse everybody to carry out ideological work.

The reason that the masses of the conservative organizations refuse to change their way of thinking is that they are deceived by the bourgeois reactionary line and they fail to see clearly the general orientation of the struggle. Instead of casting their eyes on the essence or mainstream of a question, they lay hold of and cling to some improper statements and deeds of the proletarian revolutionaries. In view of this, we stand with the Red Rebels and use a host of facts to expose thoroughly the offenses of a handful of those in authority taking the capitalist road within the plant, and criticize and repudiate the danger of the bourgeois reactionary line.

Meanwhile, we make use of various means to study together with the masses of the conservative organizations Chairman Mao's directives on clearly distinguishing the two kinds of contradiction of different character. We help them understand that the contradiction between them and a handful of those in authority taking the capitalist road within the plant is a contradiction between ourselves and the enemy, while the contradiction between them and the proletarian revolutionaries is one among the people. They have been poisoned by "self-cultivation" and fooled by those in authority taking the capitalist road, and have gone astray from the general orientation of the struggle. Now, they should turn their heads and direct the spearhead of struggle at a handful of those in authority taking the capitalist road within the party, but should not find fault with some improper statements and deeds of the proletarian revolutionaries.

At the same time, the proletarian revolutionaries threw open the door to rectification, and openly rectified whatever work that had not been carried out according to policies in the past. When some workers among the proletarian revolutionaries chatted with the deceived class brothers and told their sad stories in the old society, they embraced each other and wept bitterly saying: "We are two gourds of bitterness growing on the same vine, but the bourgeois reactionary line has separated us from each other. Now we must unite and make revolution!"

Some of the masses in the conservative organizations have fallen prey to the pernicious influence of the reactionary "pedigree theory," and they describe all workers of undesirable family background and those who have committed mistakes as "monsters and demons." Together with the proletarian revolutionaries, we propagate Chairman Mao's class line, and help these comrades understand that while they should pay great attention to class origin, they also should not lay sole emphasis on origin. Youths from families of exploiting classes should be differentiated from elements of exploiting classes. They should be welcomed to join the revolution and helped to reform themselves in the revolutionary struggle. We should not discriminate against them, edge them out, or forbid them to make revolution. As to the workers who have committed mistakes, so long as they are willing to correct their mistakes, we should support their revolutionary actions.

Meanwhile, the proletarian revolutionaries have also clarified a host of facts through conducting conversational activities on a wide front. Some revolutionary comrades who have known persecution proceed from general interests and take the initiative to win over the deceived masses who had encircled and attacked them in the past.

There is a young factory girl who was by origin an urban pauper and had led the life of a beggar. During the great cultural revolution, because she fought firmly against a handful of those in authority taking the capitalist road within the plant, she was slandered as one of capitalist origin, coming under the category of "monsters and demons." Some of the masses who did not understand the true situation encircled and attacked her and struggled

against her. After studying Chairman Mao's writings, this young factory girl patiently worked to win over the masses of the conservative organizations one by one. She helped some deceived comrades to sharpen their eyes and see through the conspiracies and tricks of the class enemies.

Some of the masses in the conservative organizations have gone astray in the movement because they put self-interest above everything else. Some individuals with an eye on personal advancement have also served as the pawns of a handful of those in authority taking the capitalist road within the party. In view of this, we study the "three old articles" together with the masses of the conservative organizations and helped them make an ideological examination of the root cause of their mistakes and overcome self-interest in their minds. The Red Rebels also use a host of facts to expose the criminal activities of a handful of those in authority taking the capitalist road within the plant to carry out capitalist restoration there. They point out that should this road be taken, the plant and the country would change political color.

The masses of the conservative organizations begin to see that the handful of those in authority taking the capitalist road within the plant are the sworn enemies of the working class. Confronted by a powerful enemy, we must clearly distinguish the enemy from ourselves, fight fiercely against self-interest, and become proletarian revolutionaries. Some persons suddenly saw light and said: "But for the great cultural revolution, we really would have slipped into the quagmire of revisionism without our knowing it."

To be sure, the resistance to our endeavor to make the masses who have taken the wrong side return to Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line is by no means small. When some of the masses begin to see their own mistakes, some other people will exert pressure on them, denounce them as "traitors" and instigate their family dependents to drag their legs from behind. Some are ill affected. We actively educate and patiently wait for those who have been poisoned more deeply by the bourgeois reactionary line. With an eye on these living ideas, we study the pertinent quotations from Chairman Mao together with them, and help them raise their understanding. As regards those who have changed, the proletarian revolutionaries express their warm welcome through wall posters and broadcasts. Because of this, quite a number of the deceived masses have announced their decision to withdraw from the conservative organizations, firmly stand on the side of Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line, and closely follow Chairman Mao to make revolution.

Nursed with the thought of Mao Tse-tung, the Red Rebels have quickly grown up in struggle. They set strict requirements for themselves in the politico-ideological sphere and in work. They eradicate self-interest to make way for public interest, and are impartial and unselfish. The revolutionaries take the lead in criticizing those comrades among the Red Rebels who do not abide by labor discipline, and they also cite the good persons among the masses of the conservative organizations and their good deeds in

production and work. Under the banner of "grasping the revolution and stimulating production," they strengthen their unity with the deceived masses, and make joint effort with them to bring success to production. Simultaneously with this, they also show concern for the livelihood of the deceived class brothers.

There was a worker belonging to a conservative organization who was sick and was sent to hospital. Because it was necessary to perform an operation on him, many persons among the Red Rebels went to the hospital of their own accord to donate their blood. That worker was so moved that warm tears ran down his face. This case has also educated the broad masses of the whole plant, and is of assistance to eliminating antagonism among the masses.

* * *

Comrade Lin Piao, the closest comrade-in-arms of Chairman Mao, pointed out: "The thought of Mao Tse-tung is the guiding principle for all kinds of work in the whole party, the whole army and the whole country." In accordance with Comrade Lin Piao's directive, we used Chairman Mao's writings as weapon to differentiate and support the proletarian revolutionaries and educate the deceived working masses in the North China Metal Structure Plant, and have reaped prompt results in this regard. As a result of the efforts of revolutionary masses in the plant and of our work, the conservative organizations have disintegrated, and the ranks of the proletarian revolutionaries have grown in size and strength, and gained absolute dominance. At present, the revolutionary situation is very favorable, and production is rising continuously in the whole plant.

When we left the plant, the workers said: "Of all kinds of support and assistance, your bringing us the thought of Mao Tse-tung is the greatest form of support and assistance." They also said: "You have given us assistance which is fundamental and hits the mark." These appraisals of the working comrades give us greater faith in the boundless power of Mao Tse-tung's thought. We shall even more steadfastly hold high the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought in all kinds of work, and use the thought of Mao Tse-tung to guide every action of ours.

CSO: 3530-D