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[PEOPLE'S DAILY Commentator's 20 March article: "The Great Historical Merits of the Revolutionary Mass Movement"]

[Text] Peking--To have a correct attitude toward the masses and the mass movement is a basic question concerning one's proletarian world outlook and Mao Tse-tung's thought. In the extremely profound, great proletarian cultural revolution, every revolutionary cadre regardless of his rank should consciously accept this rigorous test in the mass movement.

The class struggle in society and the struggle between the two lines in the party are bound to be reflected profoundly in our cadre ranks. The majority of our cadres are good or relatively good and resolutely stand on the side of Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line. However, because they have long been poisoned by the bourgeois reactionary line dished up by the handful of capitalist-roaders within the party, some cadres believe that they have been engaged in building socialism. In fact, they have been engaged in building capitalism. The great historical merits of the great proletarian cultural revolution and the great historical merits of the mass movement of criticism and repudiation lie in helping these cadres draw a clear line between the socialist road of Chairman Mao and the phony socialist but genuinely capitalist road pursued by China's Khrushchev which is designed to deceive the people. They help the cadres draw a clear line between Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line and the bourgeois reactionary line of China's Khrushchev.

What should we do if our cadres become infected with a serious political disease? We should allow the mass movement "to give the patients a good stimulus and tell them, 'You are ill'; this will surprise the patients and they will sweat thoroughly; we will then give them good treatment." It is precisely the mighty power of the strong east wind of the mass revolutionary movement that has cured and is curing the political and ideological maladies of some cadres.

Cadres of our Communist Party should adopt a correct attitude toward criticism from the masses. They are obliged to accept criticism from the masses; they absolutely have no right to refuse this criticism.

There are two attitudes for cadres to adopt toward mistakes. The first is a willingness to correctly and conscientiously conduct self-criticism and listen to criticism from the masses, thereby winning the understanding and confidence of the masses. The majority of our cadres have adopted this attitude. The other is to refuse to make corrections, venting one's resentment and dissatisfaction toward mass criticism, being cocky when the opportunity permits, and completely negating the mass movement. Such people, having committed mistakes but refusing to correct them, are bound to lose their revolutionary spirit and go astray.

The great proletarian cultural revolution is a great and profound socialist revolution touching people's souls. It is a socialist revolution developed to an entirely new stage. Though called the great proletarian cultural revolution, it is actually a great political and ideological revolution. It is quite obvious now that many cadres are not ideologically prepared for this great revolution. Old ideas inevitably emerge from the minds under favorable conditions. Thus, mistakes are unavoidable; ideological reversals cannot be avoided.

Such reversals cause no harm. They merely enable our cadres to temper, improve, gain experience, and draw lessons. In this way they remold their world outlook more effectively. At the same time, from such reversals, the proletarian revolutionaries and the revolutionary masses learn that there are twists and turns and that there is no easy sailing on the road of revolution.

All cadres must free themselves from the fetters of self-interest, hold the 700 million [Chinese] people and the several billion [world] people in their minds, think of preventing the restoration of capitalism, consider the noble ideal of emancipating all mankind, maintain their revolutionary vigor, have faith in and rely on the masses, be small pupils of the masses, closely follow Chairman Mao, the great teacher of the proletariat, and carry the revolution through to the end.