

Letter to Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Copenhagen

Letter from CWC to the Chinese embassy in Copenhagen. The letter is directed to Comrade Ting Hao. He was chargé d'affaires a.i. at the embassy at the time.

Communist Working Circle

March 29, 1969

Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Copenhagen.

Dear Comrade Ting Hao,

On several occasions we have had the opportunity to exchange opinions with you concerning the present situation in the fully developed capitalist/imperialist countries of Western Europe, above all Denmark, of course.

On some of these occasions, notably last time in connection with our latest letter to the CC of the CPC, which you handed back to us, you have declared that there is a difference in viewpoint between the CPC and KAK – and each time we have protested, stressing that as far as we can see there is no such difference in viewpoint, but that there is a difference in the description of the objective facts, the concrete conditions to which our common viewpoint should be applied. It is obvious, however, that the appraisals resulting from the application of identical viewpoints will differ, when the pictures of the world, to which these identical viewpoints are applied, differ.

A concrete instance to explain in detail what we mean:

As mentioned in one of our, unanswered, letters to the CC of the CPC, Hsinhua once carried a report from Copenhagen in connection with a workers' demonstration in front of Parliament.

Hsinhua wrote that a specific action (against a group of ship-mates etc.) had "met with strong opposition from the masses of workers" in Denmark. It is obvious that when you apply our common viewpoint to this "fact", you get one appraisal of the situation in the Danish working class.

We watched the demonstration, comrades of ours took part in it, we followed developments at close hand. To us it was obvious that the action in question of

time government did not "meet with strong opposition from the masses of workers" in Denmark. It is obvious that when you apply our common viewpoint to this "fact", you get another appraisal of the situation in the Danish working class.

But - and this is what we want to stress - it is not a question of viewpoint, whether the action of the government at that time did or did not meet with strong opposition from the masses of workers. Either it did, or it did not. This is a measurable, objective fact. Hsinhua said that it did - we know for certain that it did not.

Please, grant us that much, that you acknowledge that we have not forgotten and are not ignoring the fact that in order to get a true picture of the situation to-day, you have to see the small things with a future in them, you have to find the typical, you have to see things in their development. We know that, and we are striving to apply the dialectical method in our study of reality. But actually this is beside the point we are making. For if - as we are one hundred percent convinced, because we studied things when they happened the action of the government did not meet with strong opposition from the masses of workers, then it simply did not, and there is no changing of that fact!

When Chairman Mao studied the peasants' movement in Hunan during the 'twenties, it was not his viewpoint that the peasants were revolting against the feudal lords. That was a fact, which could be measured, seen and heard. Chairman Mao applied his Marxist-Leninist viewpoint to that fact with his genius, and he worked out an appraisal and a theory. Other people applied other viewpoints to the same fact and worked out other appraisals and other theories. But the objective fact itself - that the peasants were revolting - was not contested. It was not a viewpoint whether they did revolt or they did not revolt.

When Engels declared that the English working class had become bourgeoisified, and that the workers were gladly taking their share of the colonial plunder and the superprofits, resulting from the English colonial and industrial monopoly at the time - when Engels declared that, he was not putting forward a viewpoint, he was stating a fact, a fact which could be measured, seen and heard. His viewpoint allowed him to see, why things were so, and how they would stop being so. He worked out an appraisal and a theory, applying his viewpoint to the facts!

Now, if Chairman Mao had been ignorant of the fact that the peasants were revolting, had he not known about it, because he did not go there, and because nobody told him about it - then he would have been unable to apply his Marxist-Leninist viewpoint to reality, to objective facts, to actual conditions. The result would have been a wrong appraisal of the situation in China and a wrong theory for the Chinese revolution at the time. But, of course, being Chairman Mao, he did go to Hunan in order to study objective facts and actual conditions, and that of course, in itself was part of his Marxist-Leninist viewpoints!

Now again, if Engels had not studied the situation in England and in the English working class, had he believed that the English workers were imbued with proletarian ideology and revolutionary enthusiasm - then he should have been unable to apply his Marxist viewpoint to objective facts, to actual conditions at the time, and his appraisal and his theory would have been wrong. But, of course, being Engels, he did study the situation, he did acquaint himself thoroughly with objective conditions, and that, of course, in itself was part of his Marxist viewpoints!

Chairman Mao personally studied the situation in Hunan during the 'twenties, He had direct experience, to use his own expression from "On Practice", Engels personally studied the situation in England at his time. He also had "direct experience".

As for the situation in the working class of capitalist/imperialist Western Europe today, Chairman Mao and the members of the Political Bureau of the CC of the CPC do not have direct experience, do they? They have "indirect experience", only. They themselves are not in a position to collect the many details, which form a picture of reality in this part of the world to-day.

They have to rely on others to get knowledge of the objective conditions of Western Europe to-day, to which, then, they can apply their viewpoint, Chairman Mao himself is also dependant on information given him by others.

Without such information about the objective facts and the actual conditions, Chairman Mao cannot work out an appraisal and a theory, can he? He cannot carry out investigation himself, but must rely on others to investigate for him, mustn't he?

This information is what we have been talking of the whole time - and nothing else. From our own personal direct experience we know that part of the information about Western Europe given by Hsinhua is wrong - and in our letter we expressed our anxiety as to what would be the appraisal of the situation in Western Europe to-day given by Chairman Mao and the Ninth National Congress of the CPC, if this appraisal was based on the "information" and the results of investigations, which we see in Hsinhua News Agency bulletin.

The "indirect experience", on which you build your appraisals and your theory must - as Chairman Mao points out in "On Practice" - be a scientific reflection of objective reality.

Much of that part of the "indirect experience" at the disposal of Chairman Mao and the Ninth National Congress, which we know of through Hsinhua and Peking Review is not a scientific reflection of objective reality. We know, of course, that Chairman Mao and the Ninth National Congress have a lot more of this "indirect experience", a lot more information on which to build their appraisals. That was why in our letter we wrote that if the Ninth National Congress should endorse that part of this information, which we have seen in Hsinhua, then the appraisal would be wrong! We did not write that the Ninth National Congress will

certainly make a wrong assessment of the situation in Western Europe – we wrote that the assessment would be wrong, if the Ninth National Congress bases its assessment on that kind of information concerning Western Europe, which we know to be at the disposal of the Congress.

We do not in any way understand how you can say that in so writing we are attacking Chairman Mao. How can it be called an insult to the CPC to point out that parts of the "indirect experience" and information Chairman Mao and the CPC leading bodies are getting concerning Western Europe are wrong and do not correspond to facts? Frankly speaking, we do not understand it all!

Dear Comrade Ting Hao,

You yourself were unhappy when we told you that a vice-director of the Chinese People's Association for Cultural Relations and Friendship with Other Countries had declared, that "if only the Danish society would rely on the workers, peasants and soldiers of Denmark", it would have a bright future. You yourself hastened to assure us that statements like that were not based on any information sent back home by your embassy.

We are certain that you are right. But it remains a fact that the vice-director did have this totally wrong idea of the situation in Denmark! Why did he have this wrong idea? Because of insufficient and wrong information concerning Denmark and Western Europe as a whole! Why else?

Now, if this vice-director reads in the Chinese press the same information concerning our part of the world as we read in Hsinhua - we do not blame him! He will be told about a heavily exploited and oppressed working class, about semi-starvation and privations among large parts of the working population, about surging revolutionary mass movements, and about a militant working class eagerly looking forward to socialism, will he not? Yes, he will! And on the basis of his own personal experience - and on the basis of the indirect experience of his elders concerning the practical contents of the words "exploited", "oppressed", "poverty", "revolutionary" etc, he is bound to form a picture of this part of the world, which is utterly and totally wrong. And then it is only natural for him to say the things he said.

And, moreover, it is part of his job to apply the correct tactics concerning the spreading of knowledge and understanding of China, of the great proletarian cultural revolution, of Mao Tse-tung's thought in this part of world. He most certainly cannot be expected to make a good job of it!

This is also what we meant when in the letter we wrote that it will be impossible to work out correct tactics without a correct knowledge of all the class forces in all countries.

Dear Comrade Ting Hao

You have stressed to us that the Chinese press is giving expression to the viewpoints of the Communist Party of China, of Chairman Mao.

The great proletarian cultural revolution has given ample proof that in Chinese journalist and press circles for a good many years representatives, and clever and very active representatives, of the bourgeois reactionary line were busy spreading their poison.

At a time when the official organs of the CC of the CPC are still talking of departments, where the enemy has not yet been thoroughly eradicated, how can you take it for granted that all these representatives have been dug out? How can you be so sure that there are not still people like that active in the Chinese journalistic and press circles?

In our discussions, and above, we have mentioned some facts which seem to us to indicate the possibility that such people are at large. Allow us to bring a few of them here:

In his speech at the Rumanian embassy in Peking on August 23rd, 1968 premier Chou Enlai said:

"We are convinced that the Czechoslovak people with its glorious revolutionary tradition will never submit to the Soviet revisionist military occupation, but are certain continuously to rise and to carry on the revolutionary struggle against the Soviet revisionist clique and the revisionist leading clique at home, ..."

In an article by "Commentator" in Renmin Ribao on the same day it says:

"The vicious conduct on the part of the Soviet revisionist renegade at this time has further educated the Soviet people, the Czechoslovak people and the revolutionary people all over the world. It has helped them more clearly to see the features of the Soviet revisionist clique and its pawns, and has given impetus to their awakening and their revolutionary struggle."

We agree with the description of the actual situation at that time and with the viewpoint concerning the prospects of developments contained in these passages.

On August 30th, 1968, in another article by "Commentator" in Renmin Ribao it says, however:

"At present the Czechoslovak people are intensifying their revolutionary struggle against modern revisionism in order to get rid of the Soviet revisionist renegade clique's military occupation and control, to oppose the threat and the intervention on the part of US imperialism and to overthrow the reactionary regime of the Czechoslovak revisionist renegade clique."

With this description of the political/ideological situation in Czechoslovakia in August 1968 we do not agree, and it runs counter to the appraisal given by Premier Chou En-lai just a week before!

Premier Chou En-lai and the first article by "Commentator" gave an apt description of what would invariably happen in Czechoslovakia in the future - the second article states that those things are already happening. They were n o t happening at the time!

Now - and we want to stress that once again – it is not a question of viewpoint whether in August, 1968, the students and workers of Czechoslovakia were fighting against the Dubcek clique for being revisionist and wanting to restore capitalism (free from Soviet revisionist supremacy), or whether in August, 1968, the Czechoslovak students and workers were fighting Soviet occupation because it had blocked the way to this independent restoration of capitalism in Czechoslovakia and of bourgeois freedom in Czechoslovakia. It is n o t a question of viewpoint, which of the two things the majority of those demonstrating were fighting for. It is a question of measurable facts!

In the many reports from Czechoslovakia after the Soviet occupation Hsinhua has been telling its readers that the young people demonstrating in the streets of Praha were fighting not only against the Soviet occupation (which, of course, they did!), and against the national betrayal committed by the Dubcek revisionist clique (which, to a certain extent, they also did), but also against Czechoslovak revisionist politics, f o r socialism! This last assertion was wrong!

Largely, the young people demonstrating in the streets of Praha against Soviet occupation and national betrayal, were exactly the same young people who a few months and weeks before the occupation demonstrated for Cisar, for an unbridled restoration of bourgeois "freedom" in Czechoslovakia. "Zeri i Popullit", organ of the Albanian Party of Labour, gave a very good description some months before August of just those young people. They did not change from counter-revolutionaries advocating "liberalisation" and "freedom" into ardent advocates of socialism and the proletarian dictatorship over night!

Whether the Czechoslovak broad masses are already n o w doing what Premier Chou En-lai correctly said they were bound to do in the future, or whether they are n o t doing it now, is decidedly not a question of viewpoint.

Either the masses of the Czechoslovak working people and youth are doing it, or they are not doing it. Either a few of them are doing it, working under extremely difficult conditions to make more people do it, or the broad masses are already doing it. These are measurable facts! Hsinhua indicates that the broad masses are doing it now. They are not! Direct experience from visits to Czechoslovakia tells us that they are not.

During the events in France of May-June, 1968, Hsinhua one day wrote:

"The masses of the workers are putting forward various slogans and raising various concrete demands. All this shows that they are spearheading their struggle against the monopolist capitalist system."

What slogans did the French workers put forward? What concrete demands did they raise? Hsinhua never once quoted one of them! From other sources and from eyewitnesses (comrades from our organisation) we learnt about these slogans and those concrete demands. They showed that the masses of the workers were n o t spearheading their struggle against the monopolist capitalist system. Again, it is not a question of viewpoint. Either the masses of the workers did so spearhead their struggle, or they did not. All concrete information and all direct experience tell us that they were not so spearheading their struggle.

Hsinhua sent out a photo from the yard of the Sorbonne University of Paris. It showed a picture of Chairman Mao put up on the wall, and the caption said, that the students of Sorbonne had put up this picture. One of our comrades took a photo himself at almost exactly the same place also showing the picture of Chairman Mao on the wall – and he told us that just a few yards away you could see black anarchist banners, pictures of Trotsky, of Che Guevara etc., and that the picture of Chairman Mao hung over the book-stand of the M-L revolutionary students' organisation.

Whether the picture of Chairman Mao had been put up by the students of Sorbonne University or by one group among them is not a matter of viewpoint. It is a measurable fact.

We absolutely refuse to believe that it is the viewpoint of Chairman Mao or of the CC of the CPC to give a wrong description of objective facts! But that is what Hsinhua did in the caption mentioned! We are absolutely certain that this is against the viewpoint of Chairman Mao, against Mao Tse-tung's thought! But it is a fact! In the English edition of Hsinhua News, which we read, Hsinhua never told its readers – and we do not know whether Hsinhua did tell its Chinese readers or not - that the students of Rome not only fought against "the decadent bourgeois system of education" last year, but that they also fought for bourgeois "freedoms" for the students against remnants of feudal and Catholic regulations. Slogans like "Free sex" and demands for the students' right to receive visitors of the other sex in their rooms in the dormitories also played a prominent part in the demonstrations.

Now please, we are not saying that these things (like "Free hash", a slogan to be seen at the walls of the universities of both France and Italy) were the only or the main contents of the students' demonstrations and struggles in Paris and Rome. We only maintain that you will get a wrong and one-sided idea of the situation – and hence a wrong appraisal of the significance of the struggle – if you do not include these facts in your description.

We flatly refuse to believe that it is the viewpoint of Chairman Mao or of the CC of the CPC to present only half the facts necessary to work out an appraisal!

We study the world with the sole purpose of changing it! You cannot change the world without studying it, conscientiously and in detail. This is what we are trying to do – and through descriptions like the above mentioned, Hsinhua is n o t helping us to do it. On the contrary!

Two recent instances:

Hsinhua reported that the people of West Berlin, in spite of police measures as strict as never before, launched mass demonstrations against US president Nixon during his recent visit to the city. This simply is not true. It is true that police measures were stricter than ever before, and it is true that in spite of this some few hundreds of students and other youth arranged small demonstrations in protest against Nixon's visit.

It is also fact on record – a fact n o t mentioned by Hsinhua – that Nixon was heartily applauded by some 6.000 workers of West Berlin at the Siemens factory, where he made a speech to them. There can be no doubt that these 6.000 workers had been carefully handpicked and screen[ed.] (?) - 30.000 workers employed by Siemens in West Berlin did not utter a single word of protest against Nixon's visit to the factory.

If you base your appraisal of the situation in West Berlin and in the West Berlin working class on the assumption that there were mass demonstrations against Nixon, this appraisal will naturally differ from the one you work out on the basis of the fact that there were small demonstrations – and again, it is n o t a matter of viewpoint whether there were mass demonstrations or there were small demonstrations. This is a question of measurable facts.

(To avoid any misunderstanding: The appraisal to be worked out on the basis of the fact that the demonstrations were small, and that the workers did n o t protest, will n o t be a pessimistic and negative one. But it will d i f f e r from the one worked out on the basis of wrong information.)

Hsinhua reported the Chinese press as having talked of "angry roars" from the American working class and the American people on the occasion of Nixon's taking over after Johnson. On earlier occasions Hsinhua has reported enthusiastic resolutions from Chinese organisations and rallies addressed to the "awakened, heroic American brothers" of the working class, whites and coloured alike.

As for as we know, Hsinhua did n o t report the fact that 90 percent of those Afro-Americans who did take part in the presidential elections November Last voted for Humphrey. (It is a significant fact, also, that the number of Afro-Americans taking part in the election dropped by 15 percent as compared with the last elections; but it is significant only to the degree of fifteen percent!)

We did not see Hsinhua report that what support the racialist southern presidential candidate Wallace got in the northern states, he got from white workers, mainly.

Engels wrote to Marx on November 13, 1863: "What do you say to the elections in the factory districts? Once again the proletariat has discredited itself terribly." (They elected Conservative candidates.)

The white workers voting for Wallace are n o t , yet, awakened they have once again discredited themselves, hasn't they? (And what about the rest of them, who voted for Humphrey?)

If you base your appraisal of the situation in the US and in the white US working class on the assumption there was mass anger against Nixon among the white workers, you get one result, one picture. If you base your appraisal on the fact that sizeable sections of these white workers in the industrial cities of the northern states voted for the still more openly reactionary, still more openly racist Wallace, you get another result, another picture. And it is not a viewpoint whether they voted for Wallace or they did not. It is a measurable fact. (You cannot seriously discuss the meaning and the significance of this fact, until you have recognised it as a fact, can you? You cannot apply the correct viewpoint to the actual conditions, until you have ascertained what these actual conditions are like, can you?)

Dear Comrade Ting Hao,

We do not know, we have no means of knowing, whether the people writing these things, and omitting these things from their reports are bad people doing evil things or good people making mistakes.

But we can give you a concrete incontestable instance of decidedly bad people at work somewhere. Here it is:

On April 23rd, 1968, about 1.000 dockers in London staged a demonstration in support of the racist Conservative politician Enoch Powell, and in open support of his proposal to send all coloured immigrants out of Great Britain again.

A photo from the demonstration appeared in the British press, e.g. in a bourgeois paper. The photo clearly showed a man marching at the head of the demonstration carrying a placard with the following words:

65.000 Dockers Back Powell

Back Britain, not Black Britain.

On October 23rd, 1968 "New China News" in Australia published this picture (which was also brought by the organ of the CP of New Zealand on the same day) and a caption, which said:

"The British Labour Party government has met with strong opposition among the British working class and the broad masses of other people for closely tailing behind U.S. imperialism and serving its policy of aggression. More than sixty thousand dockers in London recently staged a demonstration in front of the parliament against the government's reactionary home and foreign policies. Photo shows part of the demonstration."

There can not be the slightest doubt - it is the same photo, with just a couple of highly significant changes. The words "Back Powell" and "Back Britain, Not Black Britain" have been deleted from the placard, so that you see only half the words: "65.000 dockers". Another placard seen on the original photo, reading "Don't Knock Enock" has been completely cut away.

This can only be described in one way – deliberate fraud. Deliberate, because a brush has been applied to the photos and the person deleting the words supporting racism must have known what he or she was doing. A fraud for one simple reason: The "demonstration" by more than 60.000 dockers against the "government's reactionary policy", reported by New China News, simply never took place, at all, and the picture used as proof originally was a photo of a racist demonstration, staged by some 1.000 dockers!

Whether the racist demonstration took place, or the demonstration "reported" by New China News in Australia took place – this is most certainly not a matter of viewpoint. It is a measurable fact!

We refuse, we absolutely and flatly refuse to believe that it is the viewpoint of Chairman Mao and of the CC of the CPC that Hsinhua should send out false information about demonstrations, which never took place, and use fraud to give "proof". We firmly believe this practice to run diametrically counter to Mao Tse-tung's thought! But facts are facts, and Hsinhua did send out such false information! So, somewhere there must be people acting against Mao Tse-tung's thought in Chinese journalistic and press circles!

Now, if the delegates to the Ninth Congress, and if Chairman Mao himself, should in part base their appraisal of the situation in Great Britain and in the British working class on the so-called "fact" that 65.000 dockers once marched through London in protest against the Labour Party government's "reactionary home and foreign policies", his appraisal will naturally differ from the appraisal worked out, in parts on the basis of the fact that 1.000 dockers once marched through London in support of a proposal to throw all coloured immigrants out of the country again. You cannot deny it – the two appraisals will differ!

THIS IS WHAT WE MEAN! WE WANT THE NINTH NATIONAL CONGRESS OF THE CPC, WE WANT CHAIRMAN MAO TO HAVE CORRECT, FULL AND THRUTHFUL INFORMATION ON THE SITUATION IN OUR PART OF THE WORLD TO BASE THEIR APPRAISAL. WE WARN AGAINST THE INCORRECT, INSUFFICIENT AND FALS INFORMATION ON THIS SITUATION, WHICH WE READ IN HSIHUA NEWS AGENCY'S NEWS BULLETIN.

We sincerely hope tha this long explanation will help clear up the misunderstandings presently existing between us!

With fraternal greetings

K A K

Political Committee

(Gotfred Appel)