

Debate in Press

RCP Challenges CPML To Defend their Line on China

For a few years now, the Communist Party Marxist-Leninist (CPML) has been the foremost spokesman for Chinese-style revisionism in the U.S. They have been consistent in supporting the line of the Chinese revisionists at every stage in their development, they have been shameless in parroting anything regardless how counter-revolutionary, and they were among the first in the world to eagerly embrace the new revisionist rulers in 1976—all of which earned them the personal congratulations of Hua Kuo-feng. Because the CPML occupies this dubious position of honor, the Revolutionary Communist Party, USA is hereby challenging the CPML to open debate in the hopes that the opposition of two lines will further clarify the vital questions of the developments in China before the revolutionary movement in the U.S.

This is not the first time that we have made such a debate challenge to the CPML. In fact, at one point the CPML even challenged the RCP to debate them on the question of the international situation, only to run for cover when we accepted their challenge! The reasons the CPML gave at that time for refusing to debate are almost as pathetic as the political line they can't defend. Originally, they tried to shift the focus of the debate to a discussion of the internal developments in China, knowing full well that at that time (early 1977) the RCP was still studying the situation there and that, besides, there were some people still in the Party's ranks who supported the Chinese revisionists. These people later split and are now wading in the swamp of CPML-style revisionism. Later they gave as a reason for refusing the fact that a public face-to-face debate would be a "circus," by which they meant that any audience would be overwhelmingly sympathetic to the RCP position. They then counter-proposed an exchange of articles in each other's

newspapers—once again trying to take advantage of the fact that the RCP had not yet spoken on some of the questions they would raise.

Well, CPML, these conditions of yours can be met. The RCP, USA has plenty to say about China, and the latest round of developments make us even more anxious for our lines to contend in public. Since it was you who suggested "an exchange of polemics... to be published in each other's press" (March 14, 1977) and since we now also publish a weekly newspaper, we feel such an arrangement would be fine indeed.

The length of articles, their frequency, and the period of time such an exchange would continue could all be easily negotiated. The subject of the exchange would be the developments in China and their worldwide significance. You would be free to say what you like, attack the "gang of four," repeat any of the fables of Teng Hsiao-ping, even "re-evaluate" Mao Tsetung in public. We would hope that you would use the opportunity to try to present a political defense of your positions, but if you find this impossible, we will print your insults and falsifications—drawing the line only at the most open police-type provocations.

All those who want to deal with the real political questions and are not satisfied with the superficial drivel combined with mudslinging which passes as "polemics" in *The Call* will welcome this proposal. If the CPML had the remotest confidence in their own line, or had anything but fear of the ability of others to sort out right and wrong, they could not fail to respond to such a proposal which would sharpen up before revolutionary-minded people some of the most vital questions being debated here and internationally.

Trial of Mao

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and policies at almost every critical juncture during the 30 years of People's China. For another, Yeh includes in this "collective wisdom" the "major documents of the Eighth Congress" of the Chinese Party which contain "guiding principles for socialist revolution and construction in our country." These major documents, delivered by Mao's sworn enemies Liu Shao-chi and Teng Hsiao-ping, were later summed up as revisionist during the Cultural Revolution.

These documents went straight against what Mao had said from 1949 on, that the main conflict in Chinese society was that between the working class and the capitalists (like Liu and Teng) and that "class struggle is the key link" to keep the revolution from being reversed. Instead, according to these revisionists, now the main thing was to develop production, and under that banner to fight against the working class and revolution. To sum up Yeh Chien-ying's major contribution to hocus-pocus and double talk: "Mao Tsetung Thought" is made up of everything that Mao Tsetung fought against tooth and nail down to his dying breath.

Personal Slander

Of course all this is just warm-up, "preliminary assessment" as Yeh put it, for more disgusting attacks yet to come—especially at the trial of the "gang of four." In fact this report itself gives a more official and refined sounding cover for some more crass and open attacks on Mao that have been going on in China for months now on a mounting scale.

Besides rehabilitating to honor nearly all of Mao's old foes—recently Liu Shao-chi, known as China's Khrushchev—these revisionists have written lots of so-called theoretical articles to prepare for attack. The articles' contents vary, but their themes are similar. For example, in July of this year, the Theoretical Group of the Shanghai Publishing Bureau printed an article titled "Reviewing History, Upholding Socialism." The main point of the article is expressed in the following passage: "Lin Piao and the 'Gang of Four' have destroyed the reputation of socialism. But the pseudo-socialism of Lin Piao-'Gang of Four' by no means dropped from the sky. Its existence calls for a particular climate and budding soil.... To simply heap all blame on Lin-'Four' is not being scientifically critical. Furthermore, it does nothing to solve the problem." In other words, Mao's post-liberation policies must be thoroughly repudiated in order

to help "solve the problem."

The dean of China's Military Academy, Xiao Ke, in an article titled "The Great Program of Building the Army," published in *Red Flag* (August '79), went one step further in laying ground for attacking Mao. In the last passage, where he discussed how to treat Mao and his thinking, Xiao Ke had this to say: "Why, then, are there mistakes in the theory created by and the policy formulated by the revolutionary leader?" After the author suggested four important reasons, fearing his arguments might not be enough, he blurted out, "Besides, (the revolutionary leader's) health is very important. Some in old age are often ill, and unable to grasp the real situation, especially under the circumstance where they are manipulated by traitors and therefore unable to have direct contact with the masses and with honest and loyal cadres. Plus the fact there is generally a deterioration in one's mental capacity in old age, one cannot make the same kind of deep analysis as in one's younger days. Therefore, it is quite unavoidable to have shortcomings, and mistakes cropping up here and there, affecting some policies and decisions."

So the ruling clique is attacking on two fronts. On one hand, it criticizes Mao's theory and practice, and in case one is not convinced, it throws in a bunch of disgusting personal attacks "senility," "illness," "lost touch with reality".... The Hua-Teng clique is using tactics it used three years ago against the "gang of four"—trashing its enemy with personal attacks. It is a vicious, low blow aimed at creating public opinion: Mao was senile, not in control of his mind. So why should anyone study or take seriously his theory? Or worse still, actually carry it out?

These are outright lies. Mao's thinking had always been consistently Marxist, and in fact constantly deepened from his early to later years. Not only had he not become senile, he raised Marxism-Leninism to new heights with his theory and practice of continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Actually, even the bourgeois politicians from foreign countries who saw Mao in his last years—right down to Henry Kissinger in his recent *Memoirs*—testify that although Mao was indeed very ill, his mind was extremely sharp. Desperate for slander, the Chinese revisionists, who slavishly copy these foreign capitalists on every other question, won't go along on this one.

Why A Trial?

But the question remains—why do these revisionists want to openly attack Mao—even to the point of the risky

business of bringing the Four to trial? The answer is simple. They have to. In order to really carry through the revisionist, capitalism-restoring program for China—a program which Mao fought for years—they have to remove every "legal" basis for the Chinese people to resist them.

Targeting the Four has been one step, but Mao himself must be openly tied in. That way when people raise up Mao's words to resist the current revisionism the answer will be clear—"Go ahead and raise Mao; we already tried him and found him guilty." Only in this way can the props of "legitimate" resistance be knocked out.

And the revisionists are worried about resistance. One official Chinese publication admitted openly "Many people have doubts on the Center's policy. Resistance is widespread.... Some people go so far as to say that the Center is leaning right and going revisionist." *Peking Review* has published several articles recently which refer to people "deeply influenced by the ultra-Left line who oppose the discussion, denouncing it as 'de-Maoization.'" (Sept. 28) Commanders of Military Regions recently warned their officers and men not to be "foolishly loyal" to leadership (Mao). In the September issue of *Red Flag* an article criticizes the masses for having "naive class feelings, making it difficult for them to accept the seek-truth-from-fact attitude toward revolutionary leaders and revolutionary theory..." For all these reasons, the ruling clique is anxious to swing down the fist this trial will represent.

There is another possible reason for "de-Maoization" too. Mao was the most implacable foe of Soviet revisionism. And something is in the wind. Dropping Mao, while not necessarily the same thing as making up with the Soviets, is certainly a necessary precondition as far as the Soviets are concerned. As the recent talks between the Soviet Union and China were opening up, Soviet revisionist leader Mikhail Suslov noted that Moscow "resolutely condemns the ideology and policy of Maoism as deeply hostile..." Shortly later, with Yeh's speech, the Chinese leadership took some major steps in removing the source of hostility. In addition to its assault on Mao, the tone of Yeh's speech is unprecedentedly lamb-like toward the Soviets. And in his major National Day address, Hua Kuo-feng refrained both from mentioning Mao and from the usual attacks on the Soviet Union, or even using the code-word "hegemonism." Of course dumping Mao doesn't mean that the bourgeois interests of the Chinese and Soviet rulers won't still clash, but the pull on China to come to heel under Soviet pressure is great indeed. And

some ruffled Soviet feathers are now being smoothed by the Chinese leaders' "de-Maoization."

Of course having a trial will not be all smooth sailing. Many of the current ruling revisionists must be sweating up a rain storm at what might come out. Only Teng Hsiao-ping and his buddies are really free and clear of potential fall-out. They've been open and bitter foes of Mao for years, and now that that is officially "fine" they're cool. Not so for those backstabbers to the proletariat and snakes in the grass who betrayed Mao in a more covered-up fashion. They might get caught in the cross-fire. Even Chairman Hua Kuo-feng might have to worry some. After all the scrap of paper he produced three years ago signed by Mao, which Hua then tried to present as an endorsement for usurping power in the coup, has markedly deflated in value. Now, to these revisionists, it reads more like an indictment than an admission ticket.

But Hua has proven himself able to bend over, twist and adapt himself to so many opportunist positions that while he may be wounded, he will probably survive. But others whom Hua has willingly sacrificed to save his own skin, may not be so lucky this time.

Even Yeh Chien-ying, who gave the recent major speech, seems to be a centrist force—a footdragger. This is not because he is a revolutionary, or pro-Mao, but apparently because he believes that all the potentially conflicting reactionary elements at the top of the Chinese hierarchy should avoid rocking the boat and avoid mutual blood-letting at all costs—lest the resulting "instability" might provide some opportunities for genuine revolutionaries.

Some pro-Teng Hong Kong publications which have been pushing for a trial of the Four for some time have made some not-too-subtle jabs at the 81 year old Yeh for footdragging. They've said that one of the factors holding things up on the trial is that some "comrades" are very old and get very tired going over all the material. In other words, "You old fart—stop blocking things or retire right now!"

The coming trial in China could have world-shaking repercussions. Though these revisionists are dishing up outrageous attacks on working class revolution and against the science of revolution, Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought, they are performing at least one service. Anyone who has been misled into thinking that Mao somehow had something in common with these Chinese revisionists can now be clear: Mao Tsetung Thought and revisionism have only one thing in common—they have been locked in a fierce and irreconcilable struggle for years and remain so right down to today. ■