January Storm Decreed Criminal by Revisionists

The 1967 January Storm, the most famous mass uprising during China's Cultural Revolution, was officially denounced as "counter-revolutionary" by the Shanghai Municipal People's Congress (December 24, 1979, China's Liberation Daily Newspaper). The revisionists declared that all those who took part in the uprising could be criminally prosecuted by "severe legal action." It's clear the reversal of the verdict on the January Storm is a great step in preparing public opinion for the upcoming political trial of the Gang of Four, actually a trial of Mao's revolutionary line and Mao himself. The storm was led by Chiang Chun-chiao, Yao Wen-yuan, and Wang Hong-wei, three of the four, and was hailed by Mao: "This is one class overthrowing another. This is a great revolution."

Its not surprising the January Storm and the Cultural Revolution still freak out the revisionists. Vice-Premier Yeh Chien-ying, recently called the Cultural Revolution "an appalling catastrophe," for these revisionists, it certainly was. January 1967, hundreds of thousands of workers in Shanghai, joined by students, as well as peasants from surrounding areas, overthrew the Liu Shiao-chi—Teng Hsiao-ping revisionist headquarters. Mao called on people all over China to learn from them and overthrow the bourgeoisie—"those in power taking the capitalist road."—in the same way.

This was a great historic advance, even internationally, for, as Mao said of the whole Cultural Revolution, "In the past we waged struggles in the rural areas, in factories, in the cultural field, and we carried out the socialist education movement. But all this failed to solve the problem because we did not find a form, a method, to arouse the broad masses to expose our dark aspect openly, in an all-around way and from below." The January Storm was just such a step.

Wave upon wave, hundreds of millions of Chinese people were mobilized to seize back from below the "struggle between the two classes and masses in power from the capitalists—those in power taking the capitalist road,"—in the same way.

Three of the six Houston cops who murdered Joe Torres were recently sent to jail. They have begun to serve time, being resented in October. The three murderers are resting comfortably in Montgomery, Alabama. They are incarcerated in a prison palace behind finely manicured hedgerows during the week, and on weekends they are permitted to take a 14-hour leave. They have also been put to hard labor—raking leaves and sweeping sidewalks. According to the wardens, these "three celebrities" will be treated no differently from any of the others—which have included John Mitchell, Charles Colson and other Watergate "celebrities." Their "prison" includes tennis courts, a miniature golf course, jogging track, fishing stream, art studio and baseball diamond. The question now is not whether these cops will get paroled when they become eligible in four months, but whether or not they will want to leave this place by then.

Meanwhile, back in Houston, the city government is breaking new ground in letting other murdering cops off the hook. The city council is actively working on a policy which would pay cops' legal expenses with city funds if they are indicted for a crime committed in the course of duty. This policy is immediately aimed at helping two cops charged with killing Reggie Lee Jackson, a Black man who, according to four witnesses, was begging for his life right before he was shot. To add to this outrage, the secretary of the Grand Jury which will hear this case is an assistant police chief hired by the City Mayor himself. Naturally, the authorities hope that the Reggie Lee Jackson killing will be dropped before it goes much further.

And as for the "punishment" given to the killers of Joe Torres, in this case it clearly means the state's view of the severity of the crime.