In late February a little over three thousand people met in China. They discussed how to mobilize nearly a quarter of humanity with one heart and mind to accomplish a common purpose. The purpose dwarfs some of the greatest feats of humanity. It makes the seven wonders of the world seem like trivial tasks. It is the goal of completely transforming the face of China from one of a poor and backward country, still marked by centuries of colonial bondage, into a great and powerful socialist country with modern agriculture, industry, national defense and science and technology by the end of the century that catches up and surpasses the most advanced countries in the world.

It was the Fifth National Peoples Congress of the Peoples Republic of China, the highest organ of the Chinese government. What gives these farmers, workers, students, technicians and Communist Party members the confidence to believe they can accomplish these goals? Particularly at a time when the capitalist world's finest economists, government officials, technicians and journalists predict at best continued recession and at worst a new world depression? At a time when the Soviet Union can't alleviate grain shortages, when Western Europe can't employ millions of college educated youth and when the city of New York wonders if it can afford to prevent its bridges from collapsing? It is the confidence of knowing socialism to be a system that is far superior to capitalism.

Capitalism is a system geared to private profit and to the profits of a handful of monopolists at that. These drives for profit define and fundamentally restrict the country's goals. Everything from education to growing apples is determined by the needs of the monopolists. These needs are not based on or synonymous with the needs of society and its people. They are the needs of accumulating the greatest amount of money in the shortest amount of time, sacrificing quality, the lives of its producers (the workers), the effects on the environment and so on in the process. As a mere handful grow richer, the vast majority move closer to starvation. Society is divided into two great camps with nothing in common.

Based on the individual needs of each or a group of monopolists, rather than the entire society, the result is anarchy. Millions of cars sit in lots unsold while decent housing is a scarcity. Cars no longer being profitable, auto workers are laid off by the thousands sending reverberations throughout the economy. Unemployment mounts, resulting in declining purchasing power and even greater layoffs. Friedrich Engels put it best: "Production and exchange gradually begins to move again. By degrees the pace quickens, it becomes a trot, the industrial trot passes into a gallop and the gallop in turn passes into the mad or rash of a complete industrial commer- dence of living in socialist society. The confidence of knowing socialism to be a system that is far superior to capitalism. Capitalism is a system geared to private profit and to the profits of a handful of monopolists at that. These drives for profit define and fundamentally restrict the country's goals. Everything from education to growing apples is determined by the needs of the monopolists. These needs are not based on or synonymous with the needs of society and its people. They are the needs of accumulating the greatest amount of money in the shortest amount of time, sacrificing quality, the lives of its producers (the workers), the effects on the environment and so on in the process. As a mere handful grow richer, the vast majority move closer to starvation. Society is divided into two great camps with nothing in common.

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For 29 years, the Chinese people have held state power. From a backward, starving, illiterate country, the Chinese have consciously transformed all spheres of their society. Most significant, the Chinese working class has broken the shackles that held them to a colonized and feudal society. The success is due to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which has led 600 million peasants to pool their labor, tools and lands together. For the first time in history, China's population has enough to eat. With only 7% of the world's arable land, China now feeds one-quarter of humanity. By pooling resources, collectivization has laid the basis for completely mechanized agriculture.

Similarly, working class rule in China has allowed, for the first time, the development of modern industry. While enormous strides are yet to be made, the working class has broken the shackles that held them to a colonized and feudal economy. In addition, the achievement of literacy across the country, has been coupled with the initial developments in socialist science and technology to serve the working class in building up the country.

These advances have allowed the working class to further consolidate its rule, and achieve higher levels of ownership by the people. All this has established a critical foundation for China's entire economic and technical levels to make a big leap in the next period, a leap where China can catch up and pass the most advanced levels of development in the world.

To become a powerful and modern socialist country, it is necessary to advance on all fronts, and what is seen as most important at this time is the rapid development of the economy. The goal is to raise the economic and technological norms to approach, equal and surpass world level. This demands in the next ten years mechanizing eighty-five percent of the agriculture in a country where agriculture, and in particular, grain, is the foundation of the economy. It means developing light industry so that greater amounts of quality merchandise will be produced and the standard of living of the people will rise. At the same time, China envisages rapid development of heavy industry, including 120 large scale projects. In this way the basis for expansion on other fronts will increase.

To accomplish advances on the economic front, it is necessary, and a key task, to further increase China's technical ability. If technology fails to keep pace, plans for new factories, for terracing mountains to farmlands, discovering more resources, and challenging and conquering nature, will all remain hopes and dreams with no one certain of fulfillment.
At the same time, new plans and breakthroughs are all in the final analysis, to strengthen socialism, the rule and dictatorship of the working class. The Soviet Union continues to stand as a grim warning to everyone. It stretched from increasing the numbers and skill of leopards of "bare foot doctors" to making eight years of education at least universal throughout the country. It includes achieving new heights in the conquering of science, and also new breadths in the development of culture.

As one American writer put it: "China is developing a new generation of working-class intellectuals. "Technological developments are key to building a new China."

Teachers didn't teach, students didn't learn, culture wasn't developed and factories didn't run. The Gang eliminated rules, state plans and production quotas. It was the Gang themselves who laid the basis for capitalist restoration and opened the door to black markets, careerists and profiteers who thought to take advantage of the disruption to promote themselves.

But it was almost two years ago that this "gang of four" were removed from power. The confidence and plans for the Fifth National Peoples Congress as a result of this political victory for the Chinese people. It represents new clarity and understanding in how to develop the class struggle as the guiding force and not separated from the day to day tasks of building socialism. As these plans come to fruition, the various arguments, including the "Gang of Fours", that socialism is only for poor countries, will be exploded as China becomes more and more a modern, powerful and socialist country by the end of the century.

The next twenty-five years of China's development promises to be as exciting as the last twenty-five. In watching China develop and grow we are watching the future unfold before our eyes.