

Mao Zedong and the First Party-Army “Substitutionist” Revolution

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(This is the first of a two-part article on the “Crisis of Maoism”)

CHINA: WHAT WENT WRONG?

More than a decade ago, on the fiftieth anniversary of the Russian revolution, the American socialist Staughton Lynd despaired that “For me and for many others of my generation, the Soviet Union is the most discouraging fact in the political world...What is discouraging is that the Soviet Union is so very different from what we had hoped a socialist society would be like, and...shows little evidence of developing into such a society.”¹ The bureaucratic and repressive nature of the Soviet regime, the unwillingness of the ruling party to put international revolutionary solidarity above national interests had, in Lynd's view, undermined the USSR as a force for revolution.

Today, in the wake of the traumatic events in post-Mao China, another generation of revolutionaries find themselves equally disillusioned. Ironically, it was to China and especially to the politics of the Cultural Revolution that Lynd and most of the New Left in this country and Europe turned for inspiration and an alternative revolutionary model to the discredited USSR. China's achievements were indeed impressive. The Chinese revolution was one of the two greatest social revolutions of the twentieth century—an event of epic and heroic dimensions. At one stroke, the victory of Mao's armies dealt a stunning setback to world capitalism ending more than a century of imperialist predation in China. At the same time, the destruction of the old ruling classes closed the book on two thousand years of feudal oppression. And once in power, the Communist Party set itself the awesome task of building a new society by reorganizing agriculture, introducing planned industrialization, expanding basic education, health care, liberating women from the shackles of neo-feudalism, etc. These were giant strides forward, and remain enduring accomplishments matched by few comparably positioned third world nations today. Finally, Mao's egalitarian, collectivist and anti-bureaucratic vision of socialism appeared to hold out the prospect of a non-repressive model of development that could avoid the inequalities characteristic of both the capitalist and Stalinist paths.

Yet despite these impressive achievements, and despite two periods of significant popular mobilization (the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution), the overall trend in China has been to the right. Most dramatic has been the sharply rightward drift of economic policy: the rapid abandonment of the egalitarianism and mass mobilizations that were the hallmarks of the

Mao period in favor of a “productionist” ideology, the restoration of bureaucratic management, the revival of material incentives, and the shift from self-reliance to the current regime's unprecedented “Open Door” policy toward the world's capitalists. No less alarming has been China's nationalist foreign policy—a policy that has abandoned even the militant rhetoric of the sixties for open collaboration with the ruling classes of the west, lending political and even military support to the world's most reactionary regimes including Chile's Pinochet, the Shah of Iran, South Africa, calling for the strengthening of NATO and endorsing the most right wing European and American politicians from Nixon to Britain's Heath and Thatcher, and Germany's Strauss. But perhaps most telling has been the steady bureaucratization of the ruling party, and the systematic repression by the Party leadership of all opposition, beginning with independent leftists and trade unionists in the early 1950's and culminating in the military suppression of the popularly based “communes” and workers councils that emerged at the height of the Cultural Revolution. The closure of “Democracy Wall” and the recently concluded show trial of the Gang of Four only confirm this trend.

So now in China too, the direction seems clear: the erosion of popular power—in so far as it existed—the bureaucratization, the repression and nationalism, recapitulate in essentials, the history of the USSR. And with due consideration for differences in degree and form, much the same could be said for the remaining “post-revolutionary” societies: from Russia to China, to Vietnam to Cuba, this “two-phased” pattern of successful revolution followed by deradicalization and a drift to the right has become depressingly familiar—once again dashing the hopes raised by these revolutions.² For much of the American Left these events have provoked, in Paul Sweezy's words, “a deep crisis of Marxian theory” or more precisely in that form of Marxism based on Mao's theory and practice—of which Sweezy, Charles Bettelheim, William Hinton, Malcom Caldwell and Regis Debray have been the most influential and articulate contemporary exponents. The failure of Mao's strategy to lead to a successful socialist outcome in China—despite the country's material achievements—poses the crisis in sharpest relief. On the positive side, the crisis has sparked an exciting and deep reaching theoretical debate to which this essay aims to contribute.

Maoism and the Chinese Model

Mao's conceptions of revolutionary strategy and socialist construction took shape in the context of three broad historical trends: first, the defeat of the great wave of proletarian revolutions that swept Europe and China in the years 1918-1936, and the relative stabilization of class conflict in the advanced countries since WWII; secondly, the degeneration of the Russian revolution, its bureaucratization and the bureaucracy's efforts to subordinate China's revolution to its national interests; and thirdly, Mao's own highly unorthodox but striking success in constructing a new revolutionary force—a peasant-based cadre party that could complete China's national liberation and undertake the project of socialist construction. From the point of victory in 1949 forward Mao faced huge problems. He aimed to get economic development, industrialization, and transform social relations and consciousness *at the same time*. But the mass base of the revolution—providing both the army's recruits and the party's political support—was the peasantry. And the peasants' goals in the revolution were not necessarily socialist. Therefore a subjectively socialist force was needed to lead the peasant masses. This was the cadre party. But, as Mao saw from the Russian experience, and indeed from his own experience in the thirties and forties, the cadre party was itself subject to elitist and bureaucratic tendencies. Mao tried to prevent the development through mobilizing mass participation, through the “mass line”, and

through ideological struggle or “rectification”. Finally, to counter the isolation of the Chinese revolution, Mao looked to cadre leadership plus mass mobilization to build socialism through self-reliance. Thus, in searching for a solution to the problems he faced, Mao developed a distinctive revolutionary “model” that in one version or another was to serve as a prototype for a generation of revolutionaries on three continents—from Kim Il Sung and Ho Chi Minh in Asia to Fanon and Cabral in Africa to Guevara, Castro and Debray in Latin America. In the west, Mao's ideas have been systematically codified and elaborated as a “third way” for the third world (what used to be called the Chinese model) by a long line of Maoist theoreticians and academics beginning, most notably, with the Marxist economists, Sweezy and Bettelheim.³

As synthesized by Sweezy and Bettelheim, Mao’s distinctive contribution to revolutionary theory and practice may be summed up in three main ideas: the theory of the vanguard party as the “substitute proletariat”; the theory of the “two-line struggle” to socialism; and the conception of socialist construction through “self-reliance.”

1. The Vanguard Party as the "Substitute Proletariat"

Mao and many succeeding Marxists advanced the theory that in underdeveloped, predominantly peasant countries like China, a “vanguard party” comprised of revolutionary intellectuals and peasant guerrillas could “substitute” for the industrial proletariat as the agent of socialist revolution and socialist construction.⁴ Paul Sweezy put the case most succinctly. Socialist revolution in the third world countries depends, he says, on

the existence or nonexistence in the population of a sizable element capable of playing the role assigned to the proletariat in classical Marxian theory—*an element with essentially proletarian attitudes and values even though it may not be the product of a specifically proletarian experience*. The history of the last few decades suggests that the most likely way for such a “substitute proletariat” to arise is through prolonged revolutionary warfare involving masses of people. Here men and women of various classes and strata are brought together under conditions contrasting sharply with their normal ways of life. They learn the value, indeed the necessity for survival, of discipline, organization, solidarity, cooperation, struggle. Culturally, politically, and even technologically they are raised to a new and higher level. They are, in a word, molded into a revolutionary force which has enormous significance not only for the overthrow of the old system but also for the building of the new. (*OTTS* pp. 52-53: emphasis added: see also p. 120).

Thus the establishment of socialist relations of production could be *independent* of any specific social class. A revolution could be “proletarian” in character and take a “socialist” direction without the participation of the proletariat, without the workers actually taking power through their own institutions of self-rule such as workers councils or soviets—so long as the substitute proletariat remains *subjectively committed* to socialism, to a “proletarian line.” (*CS*, 1, p. 109).

2. The Two-Line Struggle to Socialism

Secondly, where classical Marxism assumed that a developed economy was a precondition for socialism, Mao and Maoist theorists have argued that subjective ideological struggle could facilitate economic development and establish socialist relations of production at the same time. Mao understood that the mere seizure of political power by a revolutionary vanguard could not,

obviously, solve the problem of economic backwardness, of real material inequality, of poverty and privilege. These structural inequalities, reinforced by the prevailing conditions of scarcity, would tend to promote the resurgence of new class contradictions and give rise to a new privileged elite and ultimately a new exploiting class.

Where Stalin maintained that the development of the productive forces would *in itself* lead more or less “automatically” to the transformation of social relations in the direction of socialism. Mao insisted that socialism depends not so much on objective conditions as on *subjective factors: cadre and ideology*. Thus, by putting “politics in command”, through ideological struggle to “revolutionize human nature”, to build “socialist men and women” with the “will to subordinate individual and particular interests to the overall interests of the revolution”, the material base for socialism, industrialization can be built without the exploitation that accompanied economic development in the Soviet Union. (*CRIOC*, p.20). As Bettelheim put it, “China proves that a low level of development of the productive forces is no obstacle to a socialist transformation of social relations and does not necessarily require passing through forms of primitive accumulation with aggravation of social inequalities, and go on.” (*CS*, 1, p. 42). Correlatively, tendencies toward bureaucratic degeneration, the re-emergence of new classes and new forms of exploitation can be prevented through permanent “cultural revolution”: the permanent mobilization of the masses by a politically correct leadership against self-interest and “bourgeois right”, against the resurgence of bureaucracy and privileges, and for a rededication to socialist principles and values. Thus says Sweezy, through permanent “class struggle under the dictatorship of the proletariat,” the “barriers to advance along the socialist road can be removed, and proletarian policies in the classical Marxian sense can be implemented.” (*OTTS*. p. 53).

3. Socialist Construction Through Self-reliance

Third, the failure of revolution in the capitalist West isolated the Chinese Revolution from immediate assistance from more advanced economies. To solve this problem, Mao looked to the combination of cadre leadership and mass mobilization to make the socialist revolution within a national framework.

So in Mao’s conception, the transition to socialism is seen as a lengthy historical epoch in which each nation is “revolutionized” more or less independently, each passing through an extended “transitional phase” in which, as he put it, “Classes, class contradictions, and class struggle will exist from beginning to end of this historical stage as will the struggle between the two roads of socialism and capitalism . . .”⁵ The ultimate outcome of this two-line struggle is determined neither by objective conditions nor by class forces but depends on the subjective political line of the party leadership. Thus, as Sweezy and Bettelheim put it, having won state power, the “substitute proletariat” can follow one of two courses: reliance on mass mobilization, moral incentives, on raising political consciousness, this leading forward to socialism, or, reliance on material incentives, on the market, on profit, etc., this leading backward to (state) capitalism (*OTTS*, pp. 9. 30-31. 52-53. 65-66; *PRS*, pp. 94-95). It is in this context that we must understand the determinant role in historical causation that Maoists give to leadership and political line. (*CS*, 1, p. 346: “Interview”, p. 10; *OTTS*, p. 122).

Maoist Analyses of the Degeneration of China’s Revolution

Finally, the theory of the two-line struggle has also provided the explanatory motif for a growing body of Maoist analyses of the deterioration of China's revolution, especially in the post-Mao period. Perhaps the most influential among these is Bettelheim's booklet-length essay, "The Great Leap Backward" published in *Monthly Review* (Jul.-Aug. 1978). The central thesis of Bettelheim's polemic is that the present decay of China's revolution is the result of a *change of political line*, a reversal of Mao's policies as a result of the rise to power of a "revisionist" "bourgeois" party leadership in the aftermath of Mao's death. In Bettelheim's account, from 1949 forward, Mao was engaged in a long uphill battle both against the centrifugal tendencies of Chinese society, against worker "economism" and peasant "individualism," and against an inexorable political and ideological decay of his own revolutionary party. Mao and the party left fought ceaselessly against these tendencies through ideological struggle and mass mobilization but in the end were overwhelmed and defeated.

The turning point in that struggle, Bettelheim says, came with the defeat of the "Shanghai Commune" in February 1967. In the winter and spring of 1966-67 millions of workers and students overthrew local Party authorities and set up popularly based Paris-type "Commune" governments in Shanghai and other Chinese cities. At the height of that struggle, Mao and the left sought to link up with the mass movement from below to build a countervailing power to the "Rightists" within the party. In the end, it was their failure, after some initial gains, that opened the way for the bureaucracy to secure bit by bit its control over the Party and state, and to begin to systematically reverse the gains of the Cultural Revolution. That failure, says Bettelheim, was crucially determined by certain tactical failures, by Mao's closest associates, the so-called "Gang of Four". In the aftermath, says Bettelheim, the communes were politically undermined or militarily suppressed by the Rightists. These were replaced by "Three-In-One Committees" comprised of what remained of the autonomous mass organizations, and of representatives of the Party and the Peoples Liberation Army—all in roughly equal proportions, in effect insuring the reconsolidation of Party-military control from the top. By the early 1970's, Bettelheim reports, even these residual vestiges of popular power had been discarded in favor of direct bureaucratic rule and "one-man management" in the factories. (*GLB*, pp. 42-43). It was this isolation of the Maoist Left from its potential mass base that facilitated their relatively easy defeat after the death of Mao himself in October 1976.

However problematic the question of the Left's relationship to the mass movements during the Cultural Revolution (a question we will treat below), the really fundamental question, which Bettelheim's analysis systematically begs, rather than confronts squarely, is, how is it that the very leading force of the Chinese revolution, the vanguard party, has itself become the agent of counterrevolution, and the restoration of capitalism?

Contradictions of the Maoist Vision: an Overview

The history of post-revolutionary China up to the death of Mao China can be understood in terms of the tendency toward bureaucratism and attempts to overcome this by means of self-reform from above and/or by mass mobilization from below. This history been marked by two major periods of degeneration of revolutionary momentum followed by two major attempts by Mao and Party leftists to counter this — the Great Leap Forward and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Each anti-bureaucratic upsurge only ended up in the restoration, and indeed the strengthening of bureaucratic rule and a weakening of left forces. The result has been a gradual downward spiral toward the consolidation of a new bureaucratic ruling elite.

The thesis of this article—against Bettelheim and Sweezy—is that Mao's strategy of cadre-led development itself fed bureaucratic degeneration. At the same time, his ultimate refusal to give power over the cadre to the masses disarmed Mao in his attempts to stem the bureaucratic tide. Mao wanted mass mobilization, mass participation, mass criticism. But he stopped short at real mass control, real democracy, from below. Thus, the ultimate contradiction of Maoism was “who is to revolutionize the cadres?” “Who is to educate the educators?” Mao's answer was permanent “cultural” revolution – a permanent campaign to transform and self-transform the cadres through “politics in command,” “two-line struggle,” criticism and self-criticism. But the problem with this strategy was that without societal democratic control from below by China's masses to stop cadre self-aggrandizement, Mao was left with no choice but to rely on the cadre bureaucrats to reform themselves. This was to prove a fatal delusion on Mao's part.

Mao was confronted with an impossible dilemma. In the first place, to build socialism he needed to develop the economy, therefore to accumulate. Mao in no way rejected the need for accumulation (as western Maoists like Sweezy and Bettelheim think). Development required machinery to increase the productivity of labor and ultimately raise the standard of living. But given China's backwardness and isolation from aid from more advanced economies, the labor and raw material resources to build machines could only come at the expense of people's consumption. Therefore, as Mao well knew, huge sacrifices by China's workers and peasants would be necessary through the period of industrialization. Yet it would be difficult if not impossible to elicit such sacrifices *unless the people themselves could decide on them*. Real popular power and control over the state was therefore required. But for all his rhetorical verbiage, Mao was never willing to actually allow the establishment of real institutions of popular control from below, even at the height of the Cultural Revolution: so “bombard the headquarters” yes. But seize power and take over the headquarters, definitely not.

By presenting the workers and peasants with no alternatives but long-term sacrifice *without popular power and control*, Mao invited the very “economism” he sought to overcome, as workers and peasants naturally resisted his efforts to squeeze surpluses out of them while the party cadres consolidated their privileged lifestyle, such as it was, off those same surpluses. So Mao had more and more to rely on the cadres to force the masses to produce the required surpluses. But the more he relied on the cadres, the more the cadres used their objective positions of power to reinforce their dominance and expand their privileges.

THE YENAN EXPERIENCE SHAPES MAO'S REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY

The revolution Mao led to victory in 1949 began with the defeat of the revolution of 1925-27. More than three hundred thousand Communists, workers and peasants were slaughtered, the CCP was all but annihilated, the labor unions and peasant associations crushed, the bourgeois revolution aborted, and China was again plunged back into warlordism and laid open to imperialist invasion.

In the years to follow the shattered and demoralized urban-based leadership of the CCP proved unable to rebuild the workers' movement and it remained to the ruralized wing of the Party to pick up the pieces. It was, as we know, under the inspired leadership of Mao and a few close

comrades that the Party was eventually rebuilt to lead another and finally successful revolution. The historic saga of this great revolution is well known. It began with the Communists' retreat from the cities in the late twenties: the regroupment of remnants of the Party and military units to form the first Red armies and found the first rural "soviets": the fall of the Kiangsi Soviet in 1934 and the harrowing "Long March" over near impassible terrain and against overwhelming odds to remote Yen-an in northwest China: and finally, after more than two decades of rural isolation, the conquest of power in 1949. The great events of 1925-27 notwithstanding, this has been regarded, and deservedly so, as the heroic period of modern Chinese history, and more than anyone else, Mao has been rightly credited as the political and military architect of that victory. It was above all Mao who summoned the courage to break with Stalin in order to re-launch the revolution, and it was principally Mao who devised the unique political-military strategy of "people's war" that was responsible for the success. In reviving China's socialist revolution on the foundation of a peasant-based rural strategy, Mao's revolution succeeded where China's proletariat had failed. But as we shall see, while Mao's strategic and theoretical innovations in a sense "solved" the problem of revolution in China, they did so in ways that actually deepened the already profound contradictions of socialist revolution and socialist construction in a backward country. What were these?

1. From Self-Emancipation to Revolution From Above

In the first place, in shifting from the working class to a peasant social base, Mao and his comrades had to find a new agent, a new social force for socialist revolution. And who, in the countryside, could this be? In searching for a solution to this dilemma, Mao at first tried to transpose the idea of "proletarian leadership" to the poor and landless peasantry.⁶ But this soon proved to be hopelessly mechanical. It was not a question of whether or not the peasantry was inherently "revolutionary". As both the Russian and Chinese experiences had shown, an aroused peasantry could be a massive force for revolution. But the peasants were not a force for *socialist* revolution. Physically isolated and atomised in predominantly self sufficient patriarchal family units of production, limited by a primitive technology and culture, the peasants' conception of emancipation and hence of revolution flowed from their existence. Above all this was an essentially *negative* conception: they sought mainly to get rid of their oppressors, the landlords and tax collectors, to be left alone to enjoy the untrammled security of their small property.

It was this elemental struggle for the land, born of misery and desperation that had powered countless peasant revolts in China's past—each time, as Mao noted, with the same ineffectual result: the restoration of landlord rule. Shackled by grinding poverty, split against itself by conflicting interests, the peasantry was incapable of breaking out of this ancient cycle on its own. It could neither consolidate itself as a national ruling class nor pose a real revolutionary alternative. The essence of this contradiction was brilliantly captured in William Hinton's *Fanshen*.

Without the Communist Party the poor peasants could easily have carried the revolution so far to the Left as to convert it into its opposite, a restoration from the Right. Without the Communist Party the poor peasants might well have divided everything right down to the last bowls and chopsticks on the farmsteads and the last gears and shafts in the factories and in so doing would have destroyed the only productive base on which they had to build. In the end, the peasants could well have gone down to defeat betrayed by a vision of justice and a program of action that was impossible of fulfillment in an economy of scarcity. The vision: absolute equality; the program: extreme leveling; the result: complete restoration of gentry rule.⁷

The peasants presented an enormous reservoir of "energy", but their driving interests were not toward socialism, collectivization, industrialization, but toward equal division of the land, toward small property. Their whole perspective was petty bourgeois, localist and particularist. So the peasants, and least of all the poor peasants, could never substitute for the industrial proletariat, could not be depended upon to lead the revolution in a socialist direction. Who then, could do so?

Socialist Surrogate: the Cadre Party as the "Substitute Proletariat"

Mao and his comrades gradually, and almost unconsciously at first, began to assume the task of constructing a new *subjectively socialist* revolutionary social force. While maintaining the fiction of the "leading role of the proletariat," Mao and the leadership in the Kiangsi period of the early thirties built an entirely new Communist Party of de-urbanized intellectuals, mutinous KMT soldiers, lumpen bandits, and elements of the peasantry itself. Given the tremendous centrifugal pressures arising from the heterogeneous social origins of the cadre as well as the rural classes' lack of interest in the Communists' long-range objectives, the Party could only hold onto its politics and build itself into a coherent political force by *distancing* itself from this peasant milieu, by lifting its recruits "up and out" of the village and welding them ever more cohesively into a self-conscious elite over the peasantry and over all rural social classes—through intense ideological remolding, through military discipline and collective struggle. The Red Army, as Liu Shao-ch'i described it, was the "crucible" that forged this revolutionary cadre into an independent political force:

More than twenty years of civil war and national war have steeled our Party. Hundred of thousands of Party members have given up their respective occupations in society for a long time and engaged in revolutionary military collective life and life-and-death struggle. They have had to undergo a stern ideological and organizational schooling and tempering: as a result, their class-consciousness and collective will have been raised and their sense of organization and discipline strengthened.⁸

2. Communist Party and Rural Social Classes

Since the peasantry could not be organized directly for socialist revolution, Mao had to find a means to mobilize and unleash the tremendous power of the peasants' struggle for the land, at the same time harnessing and channeling this energy toward the Party's immediate objectives. The solution was the construction of a popularly based army, and the productive base to support it, which could win state power for the Party through armed struggle (people's war). But such a strategy of revolution through military conquest instead of class struggle and popular insurrection altered not only the nature of the Party but its whole relationship to the masses.

Mass Mobilization: the Yen-an Way

With the fall of Kiangsi and the Long March to Yen-an the Party was forced to adapt still more to its rural milieu. Foremost among the difficult tasks in this period was to mobilize a passive and often fatalistic peasantry, while simultaneously winning the support of the landed classes. Largely by experiment the Party leadership devised increasingly innovative and sensitive

approaches to building this broad rural support. It did so first, by building a highly *politicized*, extraordinarily disciplined, and even partly self-sufficient army and civil administration that contrasted sharply with the corrupt and plunderous forces of the Kuomintang and the Japanese occupation armies. Likewise, the Communist "people's governments" of the rural base areas were models of "clean government." Secondly, to broaden its base of support, the Party in 1937, dropped its radical land reform program for a program of partial (roughly 25%) reduction of rent and a reduction of interest. This preserved the landlord system intact, but significantly improved the conditions of the tenantry and broke the unchallenged power of gentry control over village life, and thirdly, to improve the peasants' livelihood and mobilize existing resources for the war effort, the Communists organized agricultural and industrial cooperatives and sponsored literacy campaigns and medical programs. These all relied on primitive technology, "men over machines," on popular initiatives and local self-reliance, and were designed to overcome the peasants' fatalism, to give them the confidence in their capacity to win the war and the revolution. It was the Party's consistent and ever more refined application of these policies that eventually enabled the cadre to win the active support of the rural classes who fed, clothed and hid the Red Army, provided it with spies, informants and recruits, and permitted the party-army to move through village society as "fish in the sea."

The Mass Line

But Mao's responsiveness to the wishes of the mass movement (his "Mass line"—"from the masses to the masses") had especially sharp limits in the context of a rural peasant-based movement. While building grassroots popular participation and support for its goals, the Party could not permit these rural classes to exert real *democratic control* over either the Party or the governments of the base areas. For not only were the Party's long-range objectives radically different from those of the peasantry or the landlords, but even in the short run, the peasants' struggle for the land ran up against the Party's overriding need to build an army and boost productive output to support it. Consequently, from the Party's point of view, it became increasingly critical to put the brakes on the rural class struggle, to restrain poor peasant and worker "excesses," to subordinate the rural class struggle to the "primary contradiction," the national struggle. However resourceful and creative *in their own interests*, none of these rural classes could pose socialism as their historic goal. It was not "from below", from the rural masses that the idea of socialism came, but "from above", from the Party cadre and especially from the leadership. While Mao had profound faith in the *creative energy* of the masses, he had little confidence in their capacity to provide political leadership for the socialist revolution. The masses themselves had to be "corrected" by the cadre. So while Mao insisted that the cadre "must listen to", and "be close to" the masses, he warned at the same time against "an erroneous emphasis on 'doing everything as the masses want it done', and an accommodation to wrong views existing among the masses." (SW. 4. p. 197).

To "steer" a mass movement whose basic interests were not in the direction of socialism, the cadre party had to constitute itself not just as an elite but as a bureaucracy over the masses. Mark Selden, the most sympathetic historian of the Yen'an period points out, for example, that while popular elections were designed to elicit mass *participation* they were more *paternalistic* than democratic and designed to win popular execution of policy rather than popular formulation and control:

Although the laws stipulated that all anti-Japanese parties were entitled to campaign, there

was at the time but one party, the Communist . . . This did not eliminate debate, discussion, or criticism, nor did it assure that all candidates elected were party members. Indeed, party branches had not yet been established in large areas of the border region. But it redefined the grounds for discussion: this focused more often on policy *implementation* than on formulation of policy guidelines, and on the performance of individual officials and local issues where there was considerable latitude for maneuvering within established policies. Finally, elected government was never the ultimate authority: rather. It was but one facet of New Democratic politics in which power was shared by the party, the bureaucracy, the army, and mass organizations . . . The party remained the ultimate arbiter in policy matters.⁹ (emphasis in original)

Popular Participation Without Popular Control: The Roots of Bureaucratization

Such built-in elitist practices, however, tended inevitably to generate increasingly serious problems of "commandism" and "bureaucratism". In combatting such tendencies, Mao and the leadership confronted one of the central contradictions that would run throughout the revolution and through Mao's thought: So long as Mao was determined to make a socialist revolution without the working class, he could not try to overcome such tendencies through the establishment of democratic control from below—since, whereas workers' democracy and socialism were compatible, the establishment of a peasants' democracy would mean no socialism. Yet without popular control from below it was almost impossible to prevent the growth of bureaucratization. Mao's only other weapon, therefore, lay in periodic Ideological "rectification" campaigns which Mao initiated with increasing seriousness in the Yen-an period. By forcing the Party cadre to renew their revolutionary commitment through "criticism and self-criticism", through participation in manual labor, and through close association with the masses, Mao hoped to build a cadre permanently dedicated to "serving the people", to a non-bureaucratic "style of work". Given the Party's crucial dependence on the support of the rural masses, such reforms were crucially necessary. But just as certainly, so long as the Party could not rely on the masses themselves to lead the revolution, such reforms could only be temporary, limited essentially to "style", precisely because if the revolution was to reach Mao's objective, such reforms must end up in the re-establishment of top-down control. Given the limitations of peasant politics and the Party cadres' objective monopoly of military-political power within the base areas, the logic of such "self-reform" tended not only to reinforce the internal solidarity, the camaraderie and collectivist spirit of the cadres, but tended *at the same time* to reinforce their self-conception as a distinctive and relatively autonomous (if as yet little privileged) *elite*.

3. From Internationalism to Self-reliance

The Chinese revolution of 1925-27 had been a profoundly internationalist event. Not only did Chinese revolutionaries receive arms, advisors, and support from the Soviets, but revolutionaries from all over eastern and southeastern Asia flocked to Shanghai. However, with the Party's shift to the countryside in the 1930's, "proletarian internationalism" became less and less a relevant idea as it became less a practical fact. As the Party gradually reoriented itself to a new rural-based strategy, its survival came to depend in practice not upon the solidarity and support of the international workers' movement in addition to its own resources, but entirely on the strength of its own military machine, the support of the rural classes and therefore the effectiveness of its political rule in the base areas. Least of all did the party depend upon aid from the Soviet Union.

Mao's revolution succeeded in large part because he broke in practice from Stalin's efforts to sacrifice the Chinese Revolution to the interests of Russia's national bureaucracy. Stalin's new course for the Russian Revolution since 1924 had been "socialism in one country," and this policy helped to a large extent to ensure that there would be no successful socialist revolutions elsewhere, as Fernando Claudin, among others, has so effectively demonstrated. To build socialism in isolation, Stalin needed above all certain minimal international guarantees for Russia's territorial security. Nothing could have been more likely to jeopardize that security by antagonizing British and Japanese imperialists against Russia, than a socialist revolution in China. Stalin therefore preferred the "safer" course of helping to construct a "friendly" bourgeois government under the nationalist Kuomintang (KMT). So instead of supporting the CCP, Stalin in the mid-20's poured in arms, money and advisors to build an army for the KMT. He instructed CCP members to join the KMT as individuals rather than as a block, to subordinate the workers' demands to the agenda of the bourgeois-democratic revolution under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek. They were ordered to neither criticize Chiang nor to arm workers and peasants independently of Chiang's forces.

Stalin's policy disarmed the workers militarily and politically, and left them defenseless when Chiang turned against the Communists and joined the bourgeoisie and the imperialists to crush the 1927 revolution. Mao learned the lesson of this tragic defeat and broke decisively with Stalin's policy of subordination to the KMT. Although he formally agreed to cooperate with the KMT from 1937-1946, Mao maintained a strictly independent military and political posture in his base areas. In result he received no Soviet aid.

Not surprisingly, Mao's theory soon came to reflect this practical "self-reliance". The negative experience of being on the receiving end of Stalin's "internationalism", and the positive experience of the almost superhuman will and endurance of the Long March and the cadre-led mass mobilization of Yen'an communism, gradually worked to reorient Mao's politics toward an explicitly nationalist revolutionary strategy and a voluntarist conception of socialist construction. Mao's idea, as yet in germ, was twofold: He envisioned that the "Yen'an spirit" of subjective will, self-sacrifice, and mass mobilization would carry over to the project of economic development, to build socialism through self-reliance, and he hoped that the exemplary selfless, egalitarian, and altruistic cadre leadership styles forged in the heat of guerrilla warfare would carry over to lead this post-revolutionary "struggle for production."

The tasks of national liberation and the abolition of feudalism carried out in the west under the bourgeoisie and in Russia by the working class were, in China, carried out in their stead by a new social force—a revolutionary cadre-bureaucracy, the vanguard party. Two decades of common struggle had molded the cadre party into a disciplined and collectivist revolutionary force that was indeed subjectively committed to socialism. Yet however revolutionary, it was *at the same time* elitist and nationalist—committed to building socialism without relying on the working class and without an internationalist strategy. The question was, could it build socialism under these constraints?

THE TWO-LINE STRUGGLE IN PRACTICE: THE GREAT LEAP FORWARD

Mao's break toward the politics and theory of the two-line struggle originated in the two-sided interrelated crisis faced by China's new revolutionary government by the mid-nineteen-fifties: the loss of revolutionary elan, the deradicalization of the social forces that had made the revolution, and the problem of slow economic development.

1. The Crisis of the 1950s: On Whom Could Mao Rely?

Confronted with Cold War political hostility and economic blockade by the west, China's new revolutionary government "leaned to one side" in the early 1950's. Despite the strong strategic differences with Stalin which existed prior to 1949, the Chinese had nowhere else to turn, and so looked to the Soviet Union for aid and modeled its own industrialization strategy after the Russians. Starting off very late, and with a far smaller industrial base to begin with, China's First Five Year Plan (1952-1957) mirrored and magnified its Soviet predecessor: The Chinese Plan allocated more than half (58%) of its fixed capital investment to industry, and less than 8% to agriculture (the corresponding Soviet figures during its First Five Year Plan of 1928-32 were 49% and 19%). Within the industrial sector itself, heavy industry received 88% of investment capital versus 11% for light industry (Soviet proportions were 82:18).¹⁰ The Chinese likewise adopted the Russian "command" style bureaucratic planning structure based on centralised output and productivity norms and a managerial responsibility system based on highly stratified ranking, grading and salary incentives.¹¹

Over the period of the Plan, China's industrial growth was indeed impressive. Most industrial targets were achieved or surpassed: crude steel output multiplied five-fold, coal more than doubled, petroleum and electrical power tripled. However, by the mid-nineteen-fifties the industrialization drive began to stall. It was held back mainly by a growing bottleneck in agriculture on which the state depended for 90% of its raw materials for light industry and 75% of export products to pay for machinery imports.

Industrial expansion had been predicated on three sources of finance: Soviet aid, self-accumulation out of industry, and the taxation of agriculture. As it turned out, Soviet credits and technical assistance, while critical to certain key industrial projects, were far less than expected. Soviet credits financed 30.5% of the cost of the 156 core industrial projects initiated under the First Five Year Plan (the remainder being paid for by commercial exports to the Soviet Union). As a percentage of total fixed capital formation this amounted to 3.6% of investments. However, these credits were entirely in the form of short to medium term loans, not grants. They had to be paid back.¹² China's industrial sector provided roughly 50% of the state's budget revenues in these years. But, of course, at this point, the industrial base was tiny. For this reason, only limited resources could be hoped for here, at least in the short run. Consequently, rapid industrialization depended crucially on accelerating agricultural growth over and above population growth, and taxing off surpluses to support industry.

These expected agricultural surpluses failed to materialize. After an initial spurt during the post-war recovery period, agricultural production leveled off, and in some sectors actually declined. The Plan set targets for increased grain output of up to 6.5% per annum (1953-57). But far from providing a surplus, actual growth rates (of around 1.7% to 2.0%) just barely kept pace with population growth.¹³ Similarly, against a target of 4.6% p.a., cotton production *declined* by 9.3% in 1954. Low government-set prices for these staples meant that the peasants had little incentive to produce and market surpluses over subsistence.¹⁴ So they tended to cut back on production

or conserve their surpluses for higher consumption. The output of peasant subsidiary industries also stagnated or fell. The government reported that between July 1954 and July 1956, 17 million pigs were lost resulting in serious shortages of pork and the loss of half a million tons (or 4.6 kilograms per arable hectare) of ammonium sulphate fertilizer. Again, the peasants preferred to slaughter their pigs rather than market them at low prices, or turn them over to the collectives.¹⁵ By the mid-1950's, the situation had reached crisis proportions. There were increasingly sharp "grain crises" in 1953, 1955, and 1956, resulting in widespread food shortages in the cities. The lack of agricultural raw materials brought some industries, such as textiles to a virtual standstill and undermined accumulation.

Peasants and Accumulation

The inability of the state to elicit sufficient agricultural supplies needs to be placed in the context of the peasants' position, and the basis and limits of their alliance with the Communist Party.

The Chinese revolution of 1949 was, as we've seen, in reality two revolutions in "tandem". While the Party military cadre took over the state and the urban industrial sector, the peasantry took over the land. The redistribution of some 44% of China's arable, mostly to the poor and landless, installed the social power of a vast "sea" of small proprietors. And here was the problem. For in the absence of massive foreign aid, socialist construction would have to be based on internal accumulation, therefore largely through taxing agriculture, by making the peasants both produce more and give more of their surpluses up to the state (See Mao's remarks on this in SW. 5. p. 197).

Several barriers, however, stood in the way of this strategy.

In the first place, the extremely low productivity of Chinese agriculture meant that, by and large, the massive surpluses needed for industrialization did not exist in the Chinese countryside. For example, Chinese per capita grain production in 1952 stood at less than half that of the Soviets in 1928 (480 vs. 220 kilograms per annum).¹⁶ This meant that there could be no question in China of a purely "extractive" solution to the grain crisis; the Party could not simply go and seize huge surpluses from rich peasants, as Stalin did in Russia from 1928. Secondly, because of the extremely labor intensive nature of China's agriculture, particularly rice cultivation, there was little prospect of raising production and productivity without substantial capital inputs. The early stages of collectivization yielded significant gains through economies of scale: the consolidation of small plots, pooling of village resources, the mobilization of slack season labor for local construction, irrigation projects, etc. But these were essentially one-time gains and were limited, given existing technology and capital resources. Finally, the new government lacked the industrial capacity to produce sufficient light industrial goods to coax more production out of the peasants through trade.

In short, with respect to the peasantry, the state was caught in a double bind: it aimed to be developmental and extractive at once. To industrialize, to build steel plants, to produce tractors, the state needed both to maximize agricultural output and to skim off surpluses from agriculture to support industry and a non-agricultural labor force. So agricultural collectivization had a two-fold aim: to boost output through more cooperative production, and to centralize surplus extraction by preventing peasant hoarding. But taking away the peasants' support not only undermined their capacity to reinvest to expand output; it threatened their very subsistence. To win the peasants' support, "socialist construction" had to bring an immediate improvement in

their material life, in their standard of living. A policy which demanded sacrifices with little hope of gain in the near future would tend to provoke their resistance. Consequently, each attempt by the state to step up taxation and collectivization was met with peasant opposition.

During the 1950's, the state sponsored a series of "socialist upsurges" (the 1950-52 land reform, the 1952-53 mutual-aid campaign, the 1954-55 cooperativization campaign, the 1955-56 cooperativization and collectivization drive). To each, the peasant responded by cutting production, slaughtering or neglecting their livestock, felling orchards, stopping fertilizer collection, and fleeing the land for the cities.¹⁷ Each advance and the reaction forced the state to retreat, at least partially and temporarily—to cut back on taxation and compulsory grain purchases, to grant concessions to the more highly productive middle and rich peasants, to permit some restoration of the private economy in order to get production moving again.

Rural discontent, falling production, and the alarming level of rural emigration to the cities convinced many cadre that accelerated collectivization disrupted production, that the most effective means of generating increased agricultural output lay through relying on the market, on the toleration of a controlled peasant "capitalism". But this policy had its dangers too. Such a strategy tended not only to undermine state control of planning and priorities, but as Mao warned in July 1955, threatened to undermine political support for the government:

Everyone has noticed that in recent years there has been a spontaneous and constant growth of capitalist elements in the countryside and that new rich peasants have sprung up everywhere. Many...middle peasants are striving to become rich ones. Many poor peasants, lacking sufficient means of production, are still not free from the tolls of poverty: some are in debt, others selling or renting land. If this tendency goes unchecked, the separation into two extremes will get worse day by day. Peasants who have lost their land . . . will complain that we do nothing to save them...And the well-to-do middle peasants who tend towards capitalism will also find fault with us...because we have no intention of taking the capitalist path. If that is how circumstances stand, can the worker-peasant alliance stand fast? (SW, 5. pp. 201-202).

Herein lay the embryo of the two-line struggle.

Workers and "Economism"

Mao's problems in the mid-fifties did not end with the peasants. Peasant resistance to state surplus extraction was paralleled by productivity problems in the industry and increasing discontent and opposition from China's industrial workforce. From the early 1950's the Chinese press complained repeatedly of "slackened labor discipline", of chronic absenteeism, of "go-slow strikes" and "counter-revolutionary sabotage" in the factories and mines. These escalated into widespread strikewaves in 1955 and 1956.¹⁸ One can understand the reluctance of peasants to support socialist construction, but why the workers' opposition?

The development of workers' opposition may be understood in terms of the revolution's failure to develop institutions of workers' self-rule. In contrast to the revolution of 1925-27 when workers' strike committees—embryonic soviets—took control of Canton, Shanghai and other cities, no similar institutions emerged in the 1949 revolution. In fact, as Mao's armies swept southward to conquer the cities in the years 1948-49, workers here and there actually did rise up

and seize their factories. But to their surprise, the CCP ordered them to remain passive and return their factories to their owners. Thus before the fall of Shanghai, Tientsin and other cities, Mao and Chu Teh issued proclamations stating in part:

It is hoped that workers and employees in all trades will continue to work and that business will operate as usual...Officials of the Kuomintang Central, Provincial, Municipal or County Governments of various levels or delegates of the 'National Assembly', members of the Legislative and Control Yuans or People's Political Council members, police personnel and heads of 'Pao Chia' organizations. . .are to stay at their posts, obey the orders of the PLA and People's Government.¹⁹

Instead of workers' control from below to organize production and determine economic policy from the factory up to the level of national economic policy, the Party imposed a top-down hierarchical factory management structure and absolute Party control over a centralized national plan. The workers themselves were effectively shut out of decision making about economic policies—how much for accumulation, how much for improved living standards, how far and how fast to push expropriation of the capitalists, etc.

Without control over the production process, workers had little incentive to contribute. So the Party could not tap into and release their creativity and initiative in production. To improve productivity and increase the surpluses available for development, therefore, the Party had to *force* people to work hard through harsh labor discipline, material incentives, etc. CCP Labor Codes from 1949 made no mention of the right to strike but enforced compulsory arbitration between workers and management and imposed a rigid labor discipline with severe penalties for infractions. A system of police records or "labor books" was instituted to restrict mobility, job entry and to prevent organized opposition. Trade unions were deprived of all independent power and harnessed to the state in the effort to maximize production. "Collective bargaining agreements", the *Daily Worker* now declared were "the best means for organizing all employees and workers to launch emulation campaigns and for ensuring the overall and balanced fulfillment of the state plan".²⁰ Whereas in the 1920's, the principle demands of the Communist Party had been the abolition of piecework and the institution of the eight-hour day, in the early 1950's workdays were lengthened, vacations cut, and piecework expanded to one-third of the workforce in 1952, and 42% by 1956. The state imposed massive speedups including "shockwork" campaigns, and instituted sharply graded wage scales in state-owned and private enterprises.²¹ Over the years 1952-1957, while labor productivity increased by 10% to 15% per year, real wages were held to increases of barely 1.9% per annum on average.²² Workers who protested the speedup, productivity drives and low wages were attacked by the Party leadership for "economism" and "syndicalism", and told that they "spoke merely from the standpoint of individual welfare and did not sufficiently recognize that the state must accumulate capital to strengthen its defence and develop its industry."²³

Of course, the leadership was right that current consumption had to be sacrificed in the interests of accumulation for future development. But the need to sacrifice did not require party rule to replace workers' rule. On the contrary, China's workers may have been willing to accept such austerity *had they been free to collectively and democratically make the choice for themselves*, had they been free to determine for themselves what was in the interests of their class and the revolution, rather than the Party deciding for them. Workers' control had the possible disadvantage that workers may not have been willing to sacrifice their consumption for

accumulation *quite* as much as the Party desired. On the other hand, workers' control offered the potential of bringing tremendous increases in productivity through overcoming alienation, absenteeism, and relying on the workers' own initiative, creativity and cooperation—potentials that could be liberated only if the workers themselves could decide who must sacrifice, how much and for how long. That China's workers had the will and capacity for self-rule was demonstrated in the 1925-27 revolution, in 1948-49 (and would be again in the Shanghai Commune of 1967). But coming out of its whole Yanan experience, the Party had learned to rely upon the masses for mobilization, but to distrust their capacity for self-emancipation. Where it saw the peasants as spontaneously petty bourgeois, it now tended to see the workers as basically "economist". Therefore, the Party never seriously considered giving political power to the workers but instead approached them from the same top-down perspective. Indeed, through the mid-fifties it relied on the old capitalist bosses to guarantee accumulation until the long-neutralized Party cadre became sufficiently acquainted with industrial management to take over directly. Alienated from real control over the determination of industrial policy, China's workers inevitably responded not with cooperation but with passive and active resistance.

The Political and Ideological Degeneration of the Revolutionary Party

Finally, by the mid 1950's, socialist construction was running into difficulties from a third quarter: from a loss of "communist consciousness", a loss of commitment to discipline and self-sacrifice by the Party cadre itself. As Mao complained in January 1957: "They vie with each other not in plain living, doing more work and having fewer comforts, but for luxuries, rank and status. They scramble for fame and fortune and are interested only in personal gain." (SW. 5, pp. 350-55). As a result, Mao later remarked, "their work is in a state of chaos . . .they are divorced from reality, from the masses, and from the leadership of the party...Their revolutionary will is weak: their politics has degenerated..."²⁴ Such "bourgeois" tendencies not only violated Mao's conception of what a revolutionary should be like, but were equally disastrous from the point of view of production. As he observed, "Our experience is that . . .the lordly behavior of the cadres makes workers unwilling to consciously observe and implement labour discipline". (*Miscellany*, p. 283). Moreover, cadre self-interest and careerism led to gross mismanagement of the economy. The press complained constantly that many factory and mining managers and provincial cadre "put their own interests above the needs of the state and the people" systematically sabotaging national planning and accumulation by resisting higher output quotas, hoarding funds and supplies, and feeding misinformation to the leadership.²⁵

From Cadre to Bureaucracy

How could the Party's once selfless and dedicated revolutionary cadre degenerate into a privileged and authoritarian bureaucratic elite? "Elitism", "commandism" and "bureaucratism" were not mere attitudes. One might start with the admitted and not surprising class origins of the cadre, especially the top leadership. "A considerable number of our ministers, vice-ministers, heads of departments or bureaus as well as cadre at the provincial level are from landlord, rich peasant or well-to-do middle peasant families." Of these, Mao tells us, "Though more or less tempered in long years of arduous struggle, quite a number have not acquired much Marxism..."(SW. 5. pp. 351-52)

In late 1926, the party claimed a membership of 66% industrial workers, 22% "intellectuals" (i.e.. of urban petty bourgeois origin), 5% peasants, and 2% soldiers. In 1956 working class members

were only 5% of the Party, and only 15% in 1960.²⁶ During the Party's reconstruction in the 1930s and '40s, its membership was drawn mainly from China's traditional urban and rural petty bourgeoisie, and this bias was reinforced in the 1950s by the flood of former officials, bourgeois managers, professionals and so forth drawn into the Party and state-industrial structure.

But more than their social origins, what crucially *enabled* the Party cadre to transform themselves into a ruling elite was their unchallenged monopoly of political power, free from any practical control from below. In command of the old state apparatus, the Party cadres had unchecked access to the income from industry and agricultural taxation. And, as Mao noted, the cadres both "old" and "new" lost no time in appropriating this income. After years of "plain living and hard struggle", the Party elite soon dispensed with the old egalitarian "supply system" of the Red Army. By the mid-fifties, the army reestablished military ranks with all their trappings. Meanwhile, civilian state administrative personnel were ranked in thirty grades (with salary differentials ranging from ¥560 to ¥30 per month). Industrial management and technical personnel were ranked correspondingly in twenty-five grades (and these were separate from the eight-grade system for ordinary production workers). Such pay differentials could yield a factory manager more than fifteen times the salary of an unskilled worker. And this was to say nothing of the uncounted income enjoyed by the Party elite: first class travel, preferred housing, servants, resorts, special shops, etc. No doubt, after decades of hardship and privation the former cadres were entitled to some improvements. But in the midst of the poverty of China's masses, they (and the millions more who joined the Party after the revolution) had, in Mao's words, "gone to heaven."

From the standpoint of mismanagement, irrational planning and corruption, Mao had every reason to want to "get rid of bureaucratism". But what would he put in its place?

3. "Politics in Command": Theory and Practice in the Great Leap Forward

So by 1957 China's socialist construction was at a critical impasse. The Party leadership faced alienated workers, alienated peasants, and alienated cadre. Grain production had increased only one per cent over the preceding year and the industrial growth rate was the second lowest since the Party took power. The domestic crisis was, in turn, worsened by the cutoff of Soviet loans in 1957, and by heightened political tensions with the U.S. over Taiwan.

In the face of the crisis, Mao sought desperately to reverse these trends by breaking radically with the Soviet model on which the Party had based its economic and political reorganization of the early fifties. In its place, Mao aimed to mold the principles of Yanan "war communism": people over machines, mass mobilization, mass-line style politics, military collectivism, local self-reliance etc., into a strategy for national development: a "Chinese Road to Socialism".

The centerpiece of Mao's strategy was his thesis that the key to social change lay through the transformation of *consciousness*: "Socialist transformation is a twofold task, one is to transform the system and the other is to transform man" (*SW*, 5. p. 460). China's masses, Mao observed in April, 1958, "have two remarkable peculiarities: They are, first of all, poor, and secondly, blank. That may seem like a bad thing but it is really a good thing. Poor people want change...A clean sheet of paper has no blotches, and so the newest and most beautiful words can be written on it, the newest and most beautiful pictures can be painted on it" (*PT*, p. 352). So the key to social transformation lay through *socialist education*, through a permanent "cultural revolution" in the superstructure.

Mao hoped in the Great Leap Forward to mobilize the enormous creative potential of China's masses through an ideological offensive to smash "bourgeois right". This aimed to "re-revolutionize" the cadre and the masses by restoring revolutionary values, and, through subordinating private individual interests to the collective, to concentrate China's human and material resources for a frontal assault on the development problem. Mao aimed, by shifting to *advanced social relations* to overcome "economism" by abandoning material incentives for a radically egalitarian wage structure. He hoped to eliminate cadre bureaucratism, privileges, etc. through "mass line" criticism from below, through worker participation in management and cadre participation in labor. He sought to break through the "objective limits" of productive capacity by relying on mass mobilization and by turning "reds" into "experts" and vice versa, and to overcome peasant individualism and narrow the gap between town and country through accelerated collectivization and rural industrialization. The Idea was to overcome the alienation of the direct producers, to maximize the commitment and Involvement of the masses by removing the barriers posed by entrenched and privileged managers and bureaucrats, and encouraging bottom-up participatory leadership.

Sweezy and Bettelheim: Accumulation Without Squeezing

Now Paul Sweezy and Charles Bettelheim argue that Mao's shift to "politics In command" was Indeed a solution to the problem of bureaucratism because it allowed China to go beyond the need for forced "primitive accumulation" and therefore the need for a repressive state that must inevitably be bureaucratic. As they see it, socialist construction "by means of the most rapid attainable development of the forces of production" (Stalin's method), must inevitably lead to the "subordination of politics to economics". Thus the logic of "forced draft" industrialization requires, to start with, priority investment in producer goods at the expense of consumer goods. The drive to accelerate accumulation requires maximizing surplus extraction, therefore the "squeezing" of direct producers. The need to subordinate consumption to accumulation necessitates a repressive state, and reliance on a privileged bureaucratic-managerial stratum. This, in turn, reinforces and perpetuates social inequality, therefore ruling out the possibility of transforming social relations in the direction of socialism. (Sweezy, PRS, pp. 85-86).

By contrast, say Sweezy and Bettelheim, under Mao, "Priorities were re-ordered...the absolute priority accorded to heavy Industry in the Soviet model was abandoned [and replaced by] a strategy which put agriculture (and the 80% of the people dependent on it) at the top of the nation's concerns." (PRS, pp. 86-87). This, says Sweezy, opened up the possibility of getting accumulation *and* socialist social relations simultaneously, rapid development without squeezing:

This meant that the "capital" needed to develop the Chinese economy could come from a general increase in the productivity (agricultural and industrial alike) of the Chinese labor force. *In this way the imposition of a special burden on any particular section of the population could be avoided and the whole issue of primitive socialist accumulation rendered irrelevant and meaningless...*which In turn would make the build-up of a specially repressive state apparatus as unnecessary as it would be Irrational. (PRS. p. 87; emphasis added).

But Sweezy and Bettelheim fail to see that the unstated *implication* of their model, is, in fact,

slow growth, *little or no accumulation and industrialization*. For, given a relatively fixed and limited technology (and no capital inputs) the only practical way one could actually get more production and productivity (i.e. more accumulation) is either by lengthening the working day or by lowering consumption—in other words, precisely by imposing an added burden on the direct producers. The only alternative to this (within a national context) would be to lessen the impact by slowing down accumulation to develop as the Russian economist, Nikolai Bukharin suggested, "at a snail's pace" if necessary, in order to prevent the alienation of the peasantry. But while slowing down accumulation may forestall a political crisis, it cannot solve the problem of industrialization. It is characteristic of the whole Sweezy-Bettelheim approach that they try to get around this contradiction essentially by *abstracting from it*, by treating the entire project of socialist construction as a question of political "line" divorced from the *practical concrete* problems created by poverty and underdevelopment.

This was a luxury, however, that Mao could ill afford. Mao indeed warned that China must not repeat the disastrous mistakes of Stalin's Industrialization—particularly the forced collectivization and excessive squeezing of the peasantry. Nonetheless, Mao (no less than the current leadership) understood that socialism required a material base, hence massive increases in output, and defense against the very real threat of imperialism required a strong military-industrial base. So to survive and develop, China must develop its productive forces *as rapidly as possible*, indeed "faster and better" than the USSR. (Mao. *SW*. 5. pp. 198-99, 291, 491; *Miscellany*, pp. 25, 29, 115, 123, 143-48). But within the confines of one backward country, self-industrialization meant the need to accumulate. And the need to accumulate meant that in the meantime living standards could not be raised, in fact would have to be held down, if not reduced, and that therefore (Sweezy and Bettelheim notwithstanding), industrialization must impose a severe burden on China's workers and peasants. Consumption would have to be subordinated to accumulation to an even greater degree than in the Soviet Union, at least for some time:

In the Soviet Union accumulated capital amounts to one-fourth of the national income. In China the figures were as follows: 27% in 1957, 36% in 1958, 42% In 1959, and it appears that in the future it will be possible to maintain regularly a figure of over thirty percent. *The main problem lies in the vast development of production. Only If production increases and percentages of accumulation go up a bit can people's livelihoods be finally improved* (CSE. p. 99).

So contrary to Sweezy's and Bettelheim's presentation, Mao himself did not pose the question of the two-line struggle as one of "politics" as *opposed* to accumulation and production ("economics"). Rather he thought they were *compatible*. He thought that the adoption of advanced social relations would actually *pave the way* for the development of social productive forces by *accelerating* accumulation (See esp. Mao. *SW*. 5. pp. 184-206). But, however much he may have *wished* otherwise, this put him squarely up against the dilemma as posed by Sweezy and Bettelheim. How could he "squeeze" the direct producers in order to develop as rapidly as possible, and still have socialist relations of production? These two aims appeared to be in contradiction, as Mao himself implicitly recognized: "It is wrong to ignore people's livelihood" he wrote in 1955, "but the emphasis must be on production" (*SW*. 5. p. 105). Could he have it both ways?

The Great Leap Forward was launched in the winter of 1957-58 in a gigantic effort to break

through the impasse and hurl the country forward into modernity in a few years of intense "exertion". The Party promised the masses of peasants and workers that the transition to advanced social relations (within basically existing techniques) would bring huge breakthroughs in development through the reorganization and political mobilization of labor.

"Walking on Two Feet"

Now for many, Mao's shift to the Great Leap strategy of "Walking on Two Feet" appeared to mark a reversal of the previous Soviet type heavy industry bias in the economy. But while Mao called for "simultaneous development of industry and agriculture", this did *not* mean, as Sweezy and Bettelheim think, a diversion of capital away from heavy industry to light industry and agriculture. In October 1957, on the eve of the Leap, Mao reminded the Party that: "we should of course concentrate on heavy industry and give priority to its development: this is a principle about which there can be no question or wavering" (SW, 5 p. 490). In the first year of the Great Leap Forward, the state's capital investment in heavy industry more than doubled to ¥15,120 million from ¥6.140 in 1957. In the years 1958-59, fixed capital investment (as a percentage of gross investment) climbed to 40% (up from 29% in 1957). By comparison, state investments in light industry held roughly constant at 5.9% (compared with 5.7% the year before—and both were down from 10% in 1952).²⁷

The strategy of "Walking on Two Feet" aimed not to divert capital away from heavy industry but to conserve scarce capital for reinvestment in heavy industry, *by shifting the burden of light industrial production onto the peasantry*. Through "self-reliance", local communes were supposed to raise their own savings to finance local re-investment, and to make up for the lack of state produced light industrial products by setting up masses of small-scale foundries, chemical plants, etc.—thereby permitting the state to cut capital imports. Meanwhile rural agriculture would be expected to provide *increasing surpluses* to be taxed off by the state to support the growth of heavy industry.

Mobilization of the People's Communes

But without imports of capital and modern technology such massive increases could only result from the intensification of labor, the lengthening of the working day, and cutting consumption—in other words, only a *further impoverishment* of the peasantry. Instead of less work, the peasants' overall workload more than doubled during the Leap. Whereas in 1950-52, men put in about 119 (and women about 70) full-time labor days in agricultural field work per year (excluding domestic labor and private plot sideline activities), in 1958-59 some communes were requiring more than 330 days from men, and 300 days for women.²⁸ On the promise that the commune "free supply" system would guarantee housing, free meals in public mess-halls, provide nurseries and "happiness homes" (for the aged), peasants were directed to turn over "to the common ownership of the commune all privately-owned plots of farmland and house sites and other means of production such as livestock, tree holdings, etc."²⁹ So, it was said that "The adoption of the combined system of grain or meals supply and wage payment marks the beginning of the gradual transition to the stage of 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.' It ensures that everyone in the commune can equally eat his or her fill—a great liberation no doubt..."³⁰ But how could the peasants' consumption increase when the *overriding* objective of the "free supply" system was to centralize and maximize accumulation? As the People's Daily of August 18, 1958 described it:

Grain can be saved...on a planned basis...everyone in the mess halls has a plan for grain consumption, which is less [than would be consumed in their homes]. For example, Yin Fuyuan and his family formerly consumed eight catties and two taels of grain per day, now in the mess hall they consume only seven catties...Consumption of firewood is also reduced.³¹

Peasant income and consumption, as a whole, was sharply reduced during the Leap. In 1956, government regulations stipulated that 70% of agricultural income should be distributed as income to the peasants, with 30% going for accumulation. By 1958 the percentages were almost exactly reversed—with few, if any gains in productivity.³²

Likewise, the collectivization of domestic labor through the establishment of communal mess halls and nurseries was intended, it was said, to liberate women from household drudgery and break down the sexual division of labor. *But, since the state was unwilling to divert resources for funding child care, etc.* this could be no more than a reorganization of existing resources: women still had no choice but to do "double duty".³³

Mao said there was nothing China's peasants could not do with a measure of "exertion"—and it was in this spirit that during the height of the Great Leap Forward, enormous battalions of peasants were sent into the fields and engaged in round-the-clock "shock work" in a monumental effort to "turn labor into capital": The press reported that tens and hundreds of thousands of peasants "fight for every single minute or second regardless of night or day, rain or shine";³⁴ in Hopei some 150,000 commune members "continued working even on windy and snowy days, eating and sleeping right in the field. They broke the frozen earth in the morning, plowed it deep in the afternoon and kept on fighting in rotation during the night": in Honan, "people fought day and night, shifting all the activities of life—eating, sleeping, office, conference and even nursery—to the field". In the "Battle for Iron and Steel", peasants and workers in Kirin province "fought round the clock, eating and sleeping beside the furnaces": and in Peking too, workers moved their bedding into the shops during the latter half of 1958 under the slogan "not to leave the forefront before accomplishing the task" and "not to leave even when slightly wounded", etc., etc. Under such conditions, mass mobilization could only result in mass exhaustion. As a Honan Party Secretary (later purged for his protests of the overdriving of the peasants) described it:

The peasants were not equal to beasts of burden in the past, but are the same as beasts of burden today. Yellow oxen are tied up in the house and human beings are harnessed in the field. Girls and women pull plows and harrows, with their womb hanging down. Cooperation is transformed into the exploitation of human strength.³⁵

Moral Incentives in Industry

It was the same story in industry. The abolition of piecework, wage-differentials, material incentives and the like was, in principle, "a step closer to communism". As the People's Daily editorialized on November 13, 1958:

During the Great Leap Forward movement, workers voluntarily abolish the piecework system and the extra-pay for extra-work system. People now work not eight hours but ten hours, even twelve hours. If work requires, they work throughout the night. Each one is not

working for himself but for the whole nation and the future. This kind of enthusiasm breaks down capitalist principles, the remuneration system and the strife for personal gains...it gives a big lift to the Communist spirit . . . "36

But again, how long could they keep up this pace, especially on reduced incomes? The policy of the state was "to hire five workers on three workers wages". "Excessive increase in consumption and elevation of the wage level will run counter to the demand of the Chinese people for fulfilling the prescribed historical task", a ministry spokesman commented, "Hence the necessity for austerity..."37

Similarly with the question of industrial safety and working conditions, given the demands of the leadership to "double steel output" and capital construction in one year. Po I-po, Chairman of the State Economic Commission maintained that it would be possible to produce more "with the same amount of money", and "the same or even inferior equipment" by, among other measures, "slashing unproductive expenditures" such as "lower(ing) the standard and quota planned, revising particularly those for safety, health, anti-air raid, fire prevention, anti-flood and anti-shock measures".38

Participatory Management

Finally, Mao and the leadership tried in the Great Leap Forward to involve the masses in participatory leadership both to overcome "economistic" approaches to production on the part of workers and peasants, and to counteract individualistic and bureaucratic tendencies of industrial managers and Commune administrators. So, in industry for example, one-man management was replaced with a new system of "two participations" (worker participation in management and cadre participation in labor) and the "triple combination" (worker, technician, and political cadre teams to facilitate technical decisions and innovation).

Now many western Maoists, such as Bettelheim and Sweezy have looked to such innovations as these in the Great Leap Forward and the People's Communes as examples of the displacement of the coercive state and top-down bureaucratic control by bottom-up self-management.39 Mao indeed mobilized the workers to "participate" in management in order to break through the resistance of management to higher output quotas, to break through the "limits" posed by technical experts, to recapture for the accumulation fund resources formerly diverted to private consumption through material incentives and bureaucratic corruption. But Mao did not call on the workers to take over and run the factories, to actually subordinate management to workers' *control* from below. This was a crucial distinction. Workers were given the freedom to "criticize" management but they had no real power to enforce reforms. Moreover, all real authority to determine national planning, priorities, output quotas etc. remained lodged at the top, in the hands of the Party; workers' "democracy" was limited essentially to implementation. In both industry and the communes *top-down* control by "bourgeois" managers was replaced by *top-down* control by more "radical" cadre-bureaucrats.40 Too often, this shift from market to Party control resulted in more, not less coercion. To cite but one of many examples from the press, here is how a *New China News Agency* report of November 20, 1958 described life in the Meih sien people's commune in Hunan province:

Members of the commune are directed to lead a collectivized life. Each person must work ten hours and engage in ideological studies for two hours a day. They are entitled to one day

of rest every ten days.

In directing the militarization of organization, the adoption of combat spirit in action, and collectivization in livelihood, the CCP committee of the commune has discovered that some minor personal freedom should be granted to the members in order to develop their enthusiasm to the fullest extent. For this reason, the CCP committee rules that all members are free to use their time as they wish outside of the ten hours of labor and two hours of ideological study each day, that husband and wife may have a room of their own, that members are permitted to make tea and other refreshments in their own quarters for themselves, and that women members may use their spare time to make shoes and mend clothes . . .

The commune members have enthusiastically welcomed the small personal freedoms granted them by the CCP committee.

4. The Collapse of the Great Leap Forward

The Great Leap Forward and the Commune movement collapsed in early 1959 in the face of massive peasant resistance. The Party attributed failure of the Leap to the excesses of overzealous cadre. There were many excesses, but the error lay in the theory of the Leap, in Mao's overestimation of the transformative power of ideology.

The idea behind the Leap was Mao's assumption that he could mobilize China's masses through ideology and education to overcome the objective barriers to development. So, as he put it in December 1955, "Chinese peasants are even better than British and American workers. Hence they can achieve greater, better and faster results in reaching socialism" (*Miscellany*, p. 29). His basis for this assumption was, once again, his Yanan experience. In the civil war against the Kuomintang Mao and his comrades succeeded in mobilizing thousands and ultimately millions of individually powerless peasants into a mighty revolutionary force. This was done in part, through patient education of the peasantry, through building up their confidence and overcoming their fears of the landlords, through convincing them of their own power and ability to "move mountains". *Yet even then, the Party was able to do so successfully only because of a basic (if temporary) correlation of interests between the Party and the peasantry.* The Party's program: "land to the tiller", represented an immediate improvement in the peasants' livelihood.

But it was a very different matter in the 1950's and especially in the Great Leap Forward. The Maoist leadership indeed promised the peasants that "90% would gain" from collectivization and communization. But in fact, "politics in command" represented big sacrifices, with little or no gain and for a long time. Peasants are not "immutable": They could be won to collectivism, to a "socialist consciousness" but only if it worked, if it in fact produced a better life. Without improved conditions, without a payoff, Mao could not keep the masses "revved up" for long.

So, without inputs of capital and technology everything turned into its opposite. Without inputs of fertilizers, irrigation pumps, tractors, etc., the reorganization and intensification of cultivation could produce few gains, and resulted in serious overfarming. Shifting masses of peasants out of agriculture and into small-scale industry resulted in crop losses and industrial waste. Finally, neither peasants nor workers could stand, for long, the grueling pace of round-the-clock work, still on cut rations. In the end, despite intensive "socialist education", the peasants, like their Russian predecessors, but much more effectively, resisted collectivization and the Communes:

they cut production, slaughtered their livestock sabotaged collective production, hoarded and concealed their surpluses, refused tax collection and where possible reverted to self-sufficiency.⁴¹ Without modern industrial inputs, the overdriving of people, machinery and the land brought the economy to the brink of collapse by the spring of 1959. In that year and the next disastrous weather aggravated an already desperate agrarian crisis and the spectre of famine loomed once again over the Chinese countryside. In 1960, in Honan and elsewhere, desperate peasants, driven by starvation and the exactions of the state, rose in rebellion against the government.⁴² In the end, Mao got neither accumulation nor socialism.

Peasant Resistance Blocks Development

In terms of production the leadership got nothing out of the Great Leap Forward. In August of 1959, Chou En-Lai admitted that grain output figures for the previous year had been overestimated by more than a third (actual output of food crops in 1959 amounted to 168 million metric tons vs. the planned target of 275 million tons, and this was down from the 185 million tons produced in 1957 and the 194 million tons in 1958). Production fell still further in 1960 (to 160 million tons) the worst year since the war.⁴³ Confronted with the double threat of economic collapse and peasant revolt the state was forced to retreat (much as the Bolsheviks had done after Kronstadt and a wave of peasant insurrections forced them to abandon "War Communism") to what amounted to a Chinese NEP. In the early 1960's the Communes collapsed down to the "production team" level (which corresponded, more or less, to the traditional pre-liberation village and kinship units of cooperation, usually numbering some fifteen to thirty families each). The private plot was restored and the free market reinstated. Compulsory grain purchases were cut back, agricultural taxation sharply reduced, and the terms of trade turned steadily in favor of the peasantry through the 1960's. The inability of the state to make huge advances in agriculture in turn put the brakes on the industrialization drive. Capital investment in heavy industry was substantially cut back and redirected into agriculture and light industry, in order to coax the peasants back into production. While this facilitated recovery it also returned the economy to a trajectory of slow development.

By 1965, overall agricultural production recovered to the level of 1958, but grain production remained relatively stagnant requiring continuous and growing imports beginning in 1961. Agricultural restoration was only managed at the cost of substantial economic concessions to the peasantry. But with the pressure off, the peasantry took advantage of the market by specializing in cash crops instead of undervalued staple grain or simply increased their own consumption when the state had nothing to trade. So peasant "capitalism" was once again rampant in the countryside—to the detriment of central planning.⁴⁴

In industry, widespread exhaustion from the overdriving of workers during the Great Leap Forward seriously demoralized the workforce and resulted in falling productivity and rising absenteeism. To restore productivity the state was forced to revive material incentives, reemphasize piecework, and grant a general wage increase of forty percent in 1963, the first since 1956.⁴⁵ But this once again tended to reinforce "economistic" attitudes toward production, pitting individuals against the needs of accumulation.

Further Entrenchment of the Bureaucracy

Ultimately these economic changes provided the material basis for the reconsolidation of the

bureaucracy. The catastrophic results of the Great Leap Forward demoralized the great mass of the cadre and convinced many who had supported Mao in 1958, among them Liu Shao-chi, that "politics in command" was dangerous as well as utopian. Many of them became convinced "capitalist roaders." Moreover, the pressure to adapt was reinforced by demands from the peasantry and workers for greater incomes. Finally, political demobilization, the restrengthening of managerial authority, the revival of incentives and with them privileges, fitted directly with the material interests of the bureaucracy. So by the mid-1960's, the bureaucracy was more strongly entrenched than ever, and Mao himself was becoming convinced that the cadre bureaucracy were becoming a new "red bourgeoisie" as in Russia: "The bureaucratic class," Mao wrote in 1960, "is a class sharply opposed to the working class and the poor and middle peasant classes. These people have become or are in the process of becoming bourgeois elements sucking the blood of the workers."⁴⁶

Yet to some extent at least, this further entrenchment of the bureaucracy can be explained by the self-imposed limits of Mao's own anti-bureaucratic campaigns. Mao and the leadership had fairly successfully restrained bureaucratic tendencies in the 1930's and 1940's, through ideological struggle and mass line "criticism and self-criticism". But, of course, in the context of the privations of war communism, there was little material basis for the establishment of a privileged bureaucracy. It was a very different situation in the 1950's. Given the cadres' objective position of power, and their new control over the social surplus, they naturally used their positions to promote their own material interests, to reinforce and extend their power and privileges.⁴⁷ Under such conditions, it was unrealistic to say the least, to expect the bureaucracy to continuously revolutionize itself.

In this context Mao only strengthened the bureaucracy he sought to overcome by his refusal to rely on the masses, especially the workers. So while he mobilized the masses to "criticize" the bureaucracy at no point did Mao suggest the only real solution to the problem of "bureaucratism": that classical formula posed more than a century ago by the Paris Commune: that officials of the state should be subject to *direct election and recall* and *paid at no more than average worker-wages*. Mao mobilized the workers to "participate" in management and gave them free scope on the shop floor to use their initiative and creativity to boost production. But he did not propose that the workers should actually take over and run industry and the economy through their own institutions of self-rule such as soviets and workers councils—to control not just the shop floor, but rational economic policy, planning, distribution, foreign policy, etc. Indeed, as we noted, Mao was directly instrumental for short-circuiting the potentials of workers' control in the factories in the late 1940's. But without such alternative bases of popular power that could actually supervise and *control* the cadre, what was to prevent their transformation into a bureaucracy, a new ruling class?

As we shall see, it was precisely the spontaneous emergence of such institutions of self-rule, and the Maoists' reaction to them, that formed the axis around which turned the struggles of the Cultural Revolution.

In launching the Cultural Revolution Mao again looked to the masses—to their creativity, their revolutionary elan, their egalitarianism—to defeat the entrenched Party/bureaucracy. In mobilizing the masses Mao indeed unleashed a mighty revolutionary force. For the movement quickly ran beyond the limits *which he set for it*, challenging Party rule and creating new institutions for self-rule in its place. The defeat of this movement and of its highest expression—

the Shanghai Commune—paved the way for the final triumph of the bureaucratic class that rules China today. In the conclusion of this essay to be published in the next issue of *Against the Current*, we will try to show how the tragic defeat of the Cultural Revolution reveals the ultimate weaknesses of the theory and practice of Mao and Maoism.

notes

¹ *Monthly Review*. (Nov. 1967). pp. 29-31.

² See Sweezy's remarks on these developments in *Monthly Review* (June 1979), pp. 20-24, and his recent essay "Post-Revolutionary Society" in Idem. *Post-Revolutionary Society*, New York 1980, pp. 139-51: see also the important historical re-evaluation by Gerard Chaliand, *Revolution in the Third World*, New York 1977.

³ Bettelheim and Sweezy developed their ideas in a series of essays and books since the late fifties, and in particular through an extended debate in the pages of the *Monthly Review*. The exchanges were subsequently collected and reprinted under the title *On the Transition to Socialism*, New York 1971 (OTTS). Other works by Bettelheim quoted in this discussion include: *Cultural Revolution and industrial Organization in China*, New York 1974 (CEIOC); *Class Struggles in the USSR 1917-1923*. New York 1976 (CS 1); "Interview with Charles Bettelheim: Economics and Ideology" translated by David Fernbach in *China Now*, no. 52 (June 1975) (Interview); "The Great Leap Backward", *Monthly Review* (July August 1978), pp. 37-130 (GLB).

Sweezy has recently republished a second series of essays reflecting his further thoughts on the debate, including reviews of Bettelheim's book, under the title, *Post-Revolutionary Society*, New York 1980 (PRS). Hereafter when quoting from these works, I will cite the collected editions of the essays, and indicate the source whether book or essay by using the indicated abbreviations, with page numbers, placed in parentheses in the text.

⁴ This thesis has usually been advanced in conjunction with the idea that the industrial working class, especially in the advanced countries, has been "bought off" and displaced as a revolutionary force in the contemporary world. See Paul Sweezy, "The Proletariat In Today's World". *Tricontinental* no. 9 (Nov.-Dec. 1968), pp. 22-33: and Malcolm Caldwell, "The Revolutionary Role of the Peasants", *International Socialism*, no. 41 (Dec. Jan. 1969/70), pp. 24-30.

⁵ Stuart Schram, *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung*, revised edition, New York 1969 (hereafter: *PT*). The official and unofficial works referred to in this paper include in addition: *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* volumes 1-5, Peking, various dates (*SW*). *Miscellany of Mao Tse-tung Thought*, Joint Publications Research Service no. 61269-1, Arlington Virginia, February 1974 (*Miscellany*). *Chairman Mao talks to the People: Talks and Letters: 1956-1971*, edited by Stuart Schram. New York 1974 (*CMTP*). *Mao Tse-tung: A critique of Soviet Economics*, introduction by James Peck, New York 1977 (*CSE*). Henceforth when quoting from these works of Mao, I will here also note the source by using the indicated abbreviations, with page numbers, placed in parentheses in the text. I have retained the standard Wade-Giles system of transliteration for Romanizing Chinese terms and proper names rather than the newer *pinyin* system (thus Mao Tse-tung rather than the now preferred Mao Zedong) as the latter is still much less familiar and may in some instances be confusing to many.

⁶ See Philip C.C. Huang, "Mao and the Middle Peasants, 1925-1928", *Modern China* (July 1975) pp. 271-296: and idem, "Intellectuals, Lumpenproletarians, Workers and Peasants in the Communist Movement", in Philip C.C. Huang, Lynda Schaffer Bell and Kathy Lemons Walker, *Chinese Communists and Rural Society 1927-1934*, Berkeley: Center for Chinese Studies, 1978, pp. 5-28.

⁷ *Fanshen*, New York 1966, pp. 605-607: See also. Mao, *PT*, pp. 262-263.

- ⁸ Liu Shao-ch'i to Anna Louise Armstrong in 1947: *Amerasia* (June 1947), pp. 162-163. For Mao's own assessment of the difficulties involved in constructing a "proletarian" party-army out of declassed elements and peasants, see *PT*, pp. 267-82.
- ⁹ *The Yen'an Way in Revolutionary China*, Cambridge, Mass. 1971, p. 135.
- ¹⁰ Li Fu-chun, *Report on the First Five Year Plan for Development of the National Economy of the People's Republic of China in 1953-1957*, Peking 1955, pp. 22-23, 34-35, 47.
- ¹¹ Stephen Andors, *China's Industrial Revolution*, New York 1977, pp. 53-62.
- ¹² Choh-Ming Li, *Economic Development of Communist China*, Berkeley 1959, pp. 169-175.
- ¹³ Nai-Ruenn Chen and Walter Galenson, *The Chinese Economy Under Communism*, New York 1969, p.95: and Anthony M. Tang. "Policy and Performance In Agriculture", in *Economic Trends in Communist China*, edited by Alexander Eckstein et al., New York 1968, pp. 504-505.
- ¹⁴ On the grain supply crisis of the mid-fifties and peasant resistance to collectivization, see Kenneth R. Walker, "Collectivization in Retrospect: The 'Socialist High Tide' of Autumn 1955-Spring 1956", *China Quarterly* no. 26 (Apr.-June 1966) pp. 1-43: and Thomas P. Bernstein, "Cadre and Peasant Behavior Under Conditions of Insecurity and Deprivation: The Grain Supply Crisis of the Spring of 1955", in A. Doak Barnett (ed.) *Chinese Communist Politics in Action*. Seattle 1969.pp.365-399.
- ¹⁵ Kenneth R. Walker, *Planning in Chinese Agriculture*, London 1965, pp. 66: also Mao.SW.5. pp. 196-7.
- ¹⁶ By 1957 Chinese per capita grain availability was still only 256 kilograms: Tang, p. 466
- ¹⁷ Walker, "Collectivization", passim.
- ¹⁸ See Ygael Gluckstein, *Mao's China*, London, 1957, pp. 218-223; and Mao's contradictions speech of February 27, 1957 in his *Selected Works* vol. 5, pp. 414-415
- ¹⁹ *New China News Agency* (hereafter *NCNA*), May 3, 1949, quoted in Gluckstein, op. cit., pp. 212-213
- ²⁰ *Daily Worker*, October 18, 1953: Survey of China Mainland Press (hereafter *SCMP*) no. 705, quoted in Gluckstein, op. cit. p. 234.
- ²¹ On China's industrial and labor policies in this period, see Gluckstein, op. cit., chapters 10-14; Andors, op. cit., chapter 3; and Kenneth Lieberthal, "Mao vs. Liu? Policy Towards Industry and Commerce: 1946-1949", *China Quarterly*, no. 47 (July-Sept. 1971), pp. 494-520. Official Policy Statements may be found in *Regulations Governing the Procedures for the Settlement of Labour Disputes*, *NCNA*, Nov. 25, 1950; and *Outline of Labor Regulations for State-Operated Enterprises*, *People's Daily*, July 14, 1954: *SCMP* no. 859.
- ²² Chu Cheng-ping. "Production and Consumption in China's 1st and 2nd Five Year Plan" *New Construction* (Feb. 1957): *Extracts From China Mainland Magazines* (hereafter *ECMM*) no. 81. p. 23: Christopher Howe. *Wage Patterns and Wage Policy in Modern China 1919-1972*, Cambridge 1973. p. 33; Gluckstein, op. cit. p. 260.
- ²³ *Liberation Daily*, June 25, 1952: *SCMP* no. 375, cited in Gluckstein, op. cit. p. 235.
- ²⁴ "Chairman Mao Discusses Twenty Manifestations of Bureaucracy", *Joint Publications Research Service*

Translations on Communist China no. 90, Feb. 12, 1970, pp. 40-43.

²⁵ See for example, "The Case of the Shenyang Transformer Plant", *NCNA*, July 22, 1956: and "Politics as the Guide: Ministry of Coal Industry Deals With the 'Under-assessment of Capacity' Question", *Political Study*, no. 5, May 13, 1958: *ECMM* no. 139.

²⁶ Edgar Snow, *Red China Today*, Great Britain, 1970, p. 338.

²⁷ See Yang Po, "Simultaneous Development of Industry and Agriculture with Priority to Heavy Industry". *Political Study*, Nov. 13, 1957: *ECMM* no. 117: and William Hollister, "Trends in Capital Formation In Communist China", in Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress, *An Economic Profile of Mainland China*, New York 1968, pp. 132ff.

²⁸ Peter Schran, *The Development of Chinese Agriculture 1950-1959*. Urbana 1969, pp. 69-78.

²⁹ "Tentative Regulations of the Weihsing People's Commune", August 7, 1958, reprinted in *People's Communes in China*, pp. 61-80.

³⁰ "The People's Commune Movement in Hopei", *Red Flag*, Oct. 1, 1958, reprinted in *People's Communes in China*, p.55.

³¹ Quoted in Geoffrey Hudson, et. al, *The Chinese Communes*, New York 1960, pp. 23-24.

³² See Cheng Chu-yuan, *The People's Communes*, Hong Kong 1959, p. 23

³³ See the study by Phyllis Andors, "Social Revolution and Women's Emancipation: China During the Great Leap Forward", *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* (Jan.-Mar. 1975). pp. 33-42.

³⁴ *Red Flag* no. 11, 1958. This and the following examples of "shock work" are drawn from Cheng Chu-yuan, *The People's Communes*. See especially chapters three through six.

³⁵ *Current Background* (hereafter *CB*) no. 515.

³⁶ See Hu Shang, "Speaking of the Government Issue System", *Joint Publications Research Service* (hereafter *JPRS*) no. 6230.

³⁷ Sung Ping, "Why is it Necessary to Introduce a Rational Low Wage System?", *Study*. Dec. 3, 1957: *ECMM* no. 118. See also articles on the abolition of piecework, "bourgeois right", and "money in command" in *CB* no. 537.

³⁸ "Several Problems in the Rectification Movement in the Economic Departments", *Study*, Mar. 3, 1958: *ECMM* no. 136.

³⁹ See for example the commentaries by Sweezy and Bettelheim in *China Shakes the World Again*, Paul Sweezy and Leo Huberman (editors), New York 1959.

⁴⁰ For an account of the substitution of party-committees for old-style management in the factories see, Andors, *China's Industrial Revolution*, p. 71-96: Franz Schurmann, *Ideology and Organization in Communist China*, pp. 284-96.

⁴¹ The most concise summary of peasant resistance to the collectivization and communization drives is to be found in Walker, *Planning*, pp. 59-98. See also Cheng Chu-yuan, *The People's Communes*, pp. 125-129: Parris Chang, *Power and Policy in China*, London 1975, chapters three through five: and articles in *The Far*

Eastern Economic Review of June 27, Sept. 5, and Oct. 24. 1957, and Feb. 20, Oct. 9, and Dec. 11, 1958.

⁴² Walker, *Planning*, pp. 81-92; Chang, *Power and Policy*, pp. 96-121. The full extent of the losses was revealed only in April of this year when the government of the People's Republic reported that nearly twenty million people died in the famine of 1960-1962, *Los Angeles Times*, May 6, 1981.

⁴³ Walker, *Planning*, pp. 81-82.

⁴⁴ Franz Schurmann, "China's New Economic Policy—Transition or Beginning", in Roderick MacFarquhar, *China Under Mao: Politics Takes Command*, Cambridge, Mass. 1966, pp. 211-237; and Richard Baum, *Prelude to Revolution: Mao, the Party and the Peasant Question, 1962-1966*, New York 1975, pp. 11-21 and passim.

⁴⁵ Charles Hoffman, *Work Incentive Practices and Policies in the People's Republic of China, 1953-1965*, Albany 1967, pp. 103-107.

⁴⁶ Quoted in Victor Nee and James Peck (eds.), *China's Uninterrupted Revolution*, New York 1973, p. 121

⁴⁷ On the transformation of the Part in the early 1950's, see Ezra F. Vogel, "From Revolutionary to Semi-Bureaucrat: The 'Regularization' of Cadres", *China Quarterly* no. 29 (Jan.-Mar. 1967), pp. 36-60.