

Chairman: 'Nieh Yüan-tzu's¹ big-character poster of 25 May is the declaration of the Chinese Paris Commune of the sixties of the twentieth century; its significance far surpasses that of the Paris Commune. It is beyond our ability to write this kind of big-character poster.'

(Some members of the Young Pioneers stuck up big-character posters about their fathers, saying that their fathers had forgotten the past and neglected to explain Mao Tse-tung's thought to them. The fathers only asked about their marks at school and gave prizes to good marks.)

Chairman Mao asked Comrade Ch'en Po-ta² to tell these youngsters: 'You have done well to put up those big-character posters.'

'I tell you that the young people are the main force of the great Cultural Revolution! We must fully mobilize them.'

'On my return to Peking, I feel sorry that things are so quiet. Some schools are shut; some even suppress student movements. Who [in the past] suppressed student movements? Only the northern warlords. It is anti-Marxist for the communist party to be afraid of student movements. Some people talk about the mass line, talk about serving the people every day, but they actually follow a capitalist line and serve the bourgeoisie.'

'The centre of the League [the Young Communist League] ought to be on the side of the student movement and yet it is actually on the side of its suppressors.'

'Who are against the great Cultural Revolution? American imperialism, Russian revisionism, Japanese revisionism, and the reactionaries.'

'The pretext of "inside and outside [the party] being different" shows a fear of the revolution. To cover up what has been stuck [on the walls] cannot be allowed. [To do so]

¹ A woman instructor at Peking University who was the first to write a big-character poster, inaugurating the Cultural Revolution in 1966. See below, p. 113, instruction no. 33.

² See below, p. 27, n. 1.

shows a mistake in our line and we must switch around quickly and smash all the restrictions (lit. "frames").'

'We trust the masses and must be their pupils before becoming their teachers. The great Cultural Revolution is a world-shaking event which [tries us out to see] whether we can or cannot, dare or dare not pass the test. This is the final test which will eliminate class distinction and reduce the three great differences.'

'Oppose, especially oppose the bourgeois "authoritative" thought; that is destruction (*p'o*), Without this destruction, there cannot be the construction (*li*) of socialism. We must first struggle, then criticize, and finally reform.'

'It will not do to listen to reports in one's office; we must depend on the masses, trust the masses, and fight to the end. We must be prepared for the revolution to hit at us. The leadership of both the party and government must be so prepared and the responsible members of the party must also be so prepared. Now, the revolution must be carried right through to the end and in the process we must train and remould ourselves. Only in this way can we [members of the party] catch up. Otherwise [the revolution] can depend only on those who are outside [the party].'

'Some comrades struggle fiercely against others, but not against themselves. They will never pass the test.'

'You will have to direct the revolution (lit. "fire") towards yourselves, ignite it, and fan it up. Will you do that? It will burn you!'

Comrades reply in this way: 'We shall prepare ourselves. If that will not do, we shall resign. We live as communists and shall die as communists. Easy chairs and electric fans do not suit our style of life.'

'It will not do to impose restrictions on the masses. Seeing the students rise up, Peking University imposes a restriction on them, euphemistically calling it "to direct them to the right way". In fact, it was directing them to the wrong way.'

Some schools label students as counter-revolutionaries. (Chang Yen, a liaison man, went out and was labelled a counter-revolutionary twenty-nine times!)

Chairman: 'In that way, we set the masses against us. We must

not be afraid of bad people. After all, how many bad people are there? Most of the students are good.'

(Someone mentioned riots and asked what should be done if the archives were destroyed.)

Chairman: 'Who is afraid of anyone? If a bad man comes, prove that he is bad. Why should you be scared of good people? The word "fear" must be replaced by "dare" and ultimately one should prove that one can pass the socialist test.'

'Anyone who suppresses student movements will end badly.'