

THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EARLY AND LATE-COMERS IN MAKING REVOLUTION

— Editorial of *Wenbui Bao*, February 18, 1967 —

Note by the Editor of *Hongqi* (Red Flag):

The editorial "There Is No Difference Between Early and Late-Comers in Making Revolution" is well written and worth careful study.

The question it raises: "there is no difference between early and late-comers in making revolution" is very important. Whether they are early or late, provided the cadres at whatever levels they may be truly rise and make revolution, the proletarian revolutionaries should warmly welcome and enthusiastically support them and must not discriminate against or exclude them.

"There is no difference between early and late-comers in making revolution" is an important revolutionary principle, an embodiment of the thought of Mao Tse-tung. It applies not only to the cadres, but also to the masses and mass organizations.

The application of this principle is of great significance in the implementation of Chairman Mao's policy of the revolutionary "three-in-one" combination, the formation of the great alliance of the proletarian revolutionaries, the uniting of the great majority, and the victorious seizure of power from the handful of Party persons in authority taking the capitalist road.

The proletarian revolutionaries forming themselves into a great alliance to seize power from the handful of Party persons in authority taking the capitalist road is a revolutionary storm so forceful and irresistible that those who go with it survive

and those who are against it perish. Impelled by this revolutionary gale, a number of cadres working in the Party and government organizations who formerly made mistakes have stepped forward one after another, made a clean break with the bourgeois reactionary line, and resolved to return to the proletarian revolutionary line represented by Chairman Mao, rebelling and fighting shoulder to shoulder with the proletarian revolutionaries. This has immensely enhanced the might and influence of the great proletarian revolutionary forces, with the result that the handful of Party persons in authority taking the capitalist road have been thrown into complete isolation, finding themselves deserted by their followers and cut off from all possibility of help.

The fact that large numbers of cadres, particularly leading cadres, have stepped forward to make revolution has an extremely important significance. Holding the positions of leadership, they know well what is behind the scenes. For them to come out and make revolution will do much to thoroughly refute and completely overthrow and discredit the handful of Party persons in authority taking the capitalist road. Lu Hsun put it very well: "Since they are from the old fortress, they have a better knowledge of the situation. When they turn round and strike a blow it is easy to put the strong enemy to death." This is why the handful of Party persons in authority taking the capitalist road feel deadly hatred for and mortal fear of the cadres who want to make revolution when the latter step forward to rebel against them.

These many cadres, particularly leading cadres, are more experienced in struggle, politically more mature, and have a greater ability in organization. When they rise to rebel, the proletarian revolutionaries should warmly welcome them and give them enthusiastic support. They should receive into the revolutionary mass organizations concerned those cadres at various levels who have been proved to be genuine revolutionaries through tests over a comparatively long period in

the movement. They should form a "three-in-one" combination with these cadres and, with them, seize power from the handful of Party persons in authority taking the capitalist road. Some genuinely revolutionary leading cadres among them should be included in the core of leadership.

Some make revolution early, some late; some rebel early, some late. This is in conformity with the objective law of man's knowledge. Correct knowledge is often attained after going through many reverses. It is understandable that for some people the reverses take a longer time and there are more twists and turns in the process of gaining knowledge. Because the tricks played by the handful of persons in the former Shanghai municipal Party committee who were in authority taking the capitalist road were extremely covert and cunning, many cadres in the Shanghai area have been poisoned to a greater extent and have waked up comparatively late. But if they really wake up, admit mistakes, rise to rebel and make amends for their mistakes by good deeds, they can come back to the proletarian revolutionary line represented by Chairman Mao. Our attitude is: Early or late, provided they really make revolution and really rebel, they are always warmly welcome. If they make revolution today, they are welcome today. If they make revolution tomorrow, they will be welcome tomorrow. All the cadres who are willing to make revolution should follow Chairman Mao's instruction to "**Seize the day, seize the hour**"¹ and rise and make revolution at once.

All views that discriminate against cadres and debar them from rising up to make revolution are wrong and must be severely refuted.

"You should stand aside!" thought some comrades when they saw these cadres coming out to make revolution. This

¹From Mao Tse-tung's poem *Reply to Comrade Kuo Mo-jo — to the melody of "Man Chiang Hung"*.

view, which does not distinguish between right and wrong and excludes all the cadres, is extremely harmful. We must see that with the exception of a handful of persons in authority taking the capitalist road, the overwhelming majority of the cadres are good or comparatively good and want to make revolution. It is true that many cadres have carried out the bourgeois reactionary line. Their mistakes must be criticized and repudiated. But we must differentiate between those who followed the bourgeois reactionary line consciously and those unconsciously. Some of them were executors of the bourgeois reactionary line and at the same time victims of that line. We criticize them in order to help them and in the hope that they will stand up and make revolution and come back to the proletarian revolutionary line represented by Chairman Mao. Chairman Mao teaches us:

The attitude of Communists towards any person who has made mistakes in his work should be one of persuasion in order to help him change and start afresh and not one of exclusion, unless he is incorrigible.¹

It is against Chairman Mao's instructions to make all the cadres stand aside and knock them down with one blow. As a matter of fact, through the help of the masses, many of the cadres who had made mistakes have begun to see where they have been wrong and have shown willingness to come back to the proletarian revolutionary line represented by Chairman Mao. We should see the changes in them and warmly welcome the progress they have made.

"They're 'sham rebels'." Some comrades do not believe that cadres can really rise and make revolution. They say that the cadres did not make revolution earlier or later, but now seeing the general course of development they have

¹Mao Tse-tung, "The Role of the Chinese Communist Party in the National War", *Selected Works*, FLP, Peking, 1965, Vol. II, p. 198.

metamorphosed themselves in the twinkling of an eye and come over to the side of the proletarian revolutionaries. Such argument does not conform to Mao Tse-tung's thought. When a cadre who has made mistakes shifts from persisting in the bourgeois reactionary line to standing up and making revolution, turning round and striking a blow at the bourgeois reactionary line, this is a change of stand. This "metamorphosis" is very good. All cadres who want to make revolution should undergo such a great metamorphosis. To come over to the side of the proletarian revolutionaries is to surrender to the truth, an act of great honour. To do so is to make revolution, to make revolution against the noxious influence of the bourgeois reactionary line in one's mind. This has nothing in common with the speculations of a bourgeois politician. Our only duty is to encourage such a revolutionary action and we have no right at all to censure it. While we proletarian revolutionaries ourselves want to make revolution and rebel, we at the same time most welcome others to stand up to make revolution and rebel. In no case should we recklessly label a cadre who has risen to rebel as a "sham rebel" or the like.

"Our ranks have become impure," worry some comrades. This worry is utterly needless. Whether or not a revolutionary contingent is pure depends on what class line it is following. If a contingent follows the proletarian revolutionary line represented by Chairman Mao it is perfectly sound, even though it is composed entirely of cadres. A contingent without a single cadre in it still can be impure or even reactionary if it follows the bourgeois reactionary line. Some cadres who in the past set themselves against the proletarian revolutionaries, have mended their ways and are now of one heart and one mind with the proletarian revolutionaries. What is bad about that? Chairman Mao teaches us that **not only must we unite with those who agree with us, we must also be good at uniting with those who disagree and even with those who formerly opposed us and have since been proved**

wrong in practice.¹ We must, through criticism and struggle, unite with and win over the cadres who have made mistakes and battle together with them while continuing to educate and help them. In helping a number of cadres who have made mistakes but are willing to turn over a new leaf, to rise and make revolution, we proletarian revolutionaries are tempering and putting ourselves to a test. To do so will not defile our ranks, but quite on the contrary, will increase our fighting capacity and make our ranks purer. Not to do so, but to exclude these cadres from the ranks of the proletarian revolutionaries and ignore them will not help their remoulding, nor will it help our uniting with the great majority and the revolutionary cause as a whole.

Chairman Mao teaches us: "**Marxism consists of thousands of truths, but they all boil down to one phrase: 'It's right to rebel.'**"² The revolutionary actions of all cadres who rise to rebel are justified and in conformity with Marxist principles and the thought of Mao Tse-tung. All you cadres who want to make revolution but have not yet risen, it is time now to rise and rebel! Don't miss this opportunity, which comes only once. Step forward quickly and boldly, stand on the side of the proletarian revolutionaries and hit hard the handful of Party persons in authority taking the capitalist road. The proletarian revolutionaries armed with the thought of Mao Tse-tung are fully able to distinguish between those who are surrendering themselves to the truth and those who are engaged in political speculations, those who are genuine revolutionaries and those who are sham revolutionaries. Provided that you truly and sincerely rise to make revolution and come back to Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line in actual deeds, the proletarian revolutionaries will closely unite with you in battle.

¹ See *On Khrushchov's Phoney Communism and Its Historical Lessons for the World*, FLP, Peking, 1964, p. 73.

² Mao Tse-tung, "Speech at a Meeting of All Circles in Yanan in Celebration of Stalin's Sixtieth Birthday" (December 21, 1939).

In this way, all the revolutionary forces can be united to the largest extent, the handful of die-hard reactionaries will be thoroughly isolated and completely overthrown, and the great proletarian cultural revolution will win an early and complete victory.

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