

LIN PIAO'S DIRECTIVE OF 9 AUGUST 1967

Canton, Chu-ying Tung-fang-hung, 13 September 1967

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Chairman Mao has told us that bad things may be turned under given conditions into good things. The Wuhan incident is a very bad thing, but it has had great repercussions in all parts of the country and its educational significance is tremendous. We have thoroughly exposed Ch'en Tsai-tao's reactionary line and the counterrevolution, but in the process we have also exposed the acuteness and complexity of the class struggle.

Of all the big military districts in the whole country, we were worried about two in the past. One was Peking and the other was Wuhan. There simply was no way to get at them. The great cultural revolution has now solved this problem. The law governing the development of things is such that when a bad thing reaches its limit, it will turn around in a good direction. That is why Chairman Mao says that when a thing is thoroughly rotten it will take a turn for the better. The forces of the revolution always advance, while the reactionary forces will ultimately fail. However reactionary he may be, Ch'en Tsai-tao cannot resist the torrent of the revolution. To expose is better than to conceal, and it is a good thing for bad people and bad things to be exposed. Chairman Mao has instructed us that when a thing is thoroughly rotten it will quickly turn for the better. The solution of a problem will be stalled if it gives us no pain. When the problem is not solved and exposed completely, we cannot strike him down.

The situation of the great cultural revolution is exceedingly excellent. Great, brilliant victories have been won. In carrying out the great cultural revolution we rely on two conditions: 1. the thought of Mao Tse-tung and Chairman Mao's lofty prestige; 2. the strength of the Liberation Army. It is only with these two conditions that we dare to mobilize the masses with a free hand. Let various bad things be fully exposed. With these two conditions, bad things cannot be turned into good ones. We cannot do without these two conditions, and, in particular, without the wise leadership of Chairman Mao and the absolute authority of Mao Tse-tung's thought. Only Chairman Mao has this gut and stamina and, healthy and robust, is personally leading, and at the helm of, the great cultural revolution, to let all bad things be fully exposed and all hidden troubles be brought to light. Through the stage of the great cultural revolution, we will expose all bad things and counterrevolution, make them turn into things conducive to the proletariat, into good things, so that our political power may be more consolidated and the old stage may be replaced by a new stage of victory.

The victory of the present great cultural revolution is very great. The price we paid is the smallest, smallest, and smallest, but the victory we gained is the greatest, greatest, and greatest. On the surfaces, everything seems so chaotic, and the chaos is caused by upsetting the reactionary line. The reactionary classes are upset and have been exposed. The handful of Party people in authority taking the capitalist road have been discredited. This upheaval is necessary and normal. Had there been no upheaval, reactionary things would not have been exposed. The reason that we have dared to do so is because we have the highest prestige of Chairman Mao and the strength of the Liberation Army. With these conditions, if we do not let them expose themselves now, when should we let them do so? Upheaval is not something to be feared under Chairman Mao's leadership.

There are four kinds of upheaval:

1. Good people struggling against bad people.

2. Bad people struggling against bad people. We may make use of such struggles in an indirect way.

3. Bad people struggling against good people. This has happened in Peking, in the navy, in the air force, in the Headquarters of the General Staff, and in the General Rear Service Department. The good people came in for attack, but this has also done them some good.

4. Good people struggling against good people. This is of course not good, and some damage has been done. But this is a contradiction among the people, and it can be easily resolved.

Only the third kind of upheaval—bad people struggling against good people—we do not want to see. Good people were criticized and attacked. Comrade Ch'iu Hui-tso (6726 2585 0155) had been attacked for more than a month. Li Tso-p'eng (2621 0155 7720), Wang Hung-k'un (3769 1347 0981) and Chang Hsiu-ch'uan (1728 4423 1557) had been attacked, and so had Wu Fa-hsien (0702 3127 2009). In the past you had suffered some hardship; now you have gained something. We should not be afraid that bad people attack good people. At most, you would share the lot of Ch'iu Hui-tso, Li, Wang and Chang as well as Wu Fa-hsien. You must put up with it and control yourselves. It is necessary to see that the situation is very favorable to us, and there is a big plan for a hundred years, a thousand years. With the great leader Chairman Mao, healthy and robust, with us, and with his lofty prestige and the strength of the Liberation Army, we have nothing to be afraid of. Bad people will be criticized and punished. Then you will straighten up your back once again.

In various areas, some comrades have made mistakes. Now that we have Ch'en Tsai-tao, let us not have another Ch'en Tsai-tao or Li Tsai-tao. Those comrades who can be saved must be saved. As for those who have not fallen, we should not hope that they will fall. But we ourselves should make up our minds to rectify our mistakes. If we ourselves do not make up our minds to rectify our mistakes but, instead, keep on travelling along the road to doom, then nothing can be done.

There are three ways to prevent our fall:

First, we must tightly grasp the conditions at the lower level. We must carry out investigation and studies of the Left, the Rightists and various mass organizations in order to understand them. Chairman Mao says that investigation and study is a basic skill. Only when we grasp the true situation can we raise problems and find means of settling them.

Second, we must closely follow the Central Committee. We must seek instructions from and report to Chairman Mao, the Central Committee, and the Cultural Revolution Group of the Central Committee. We must not have the idea that we need not report to the Central Committee so long as we ourselves

understand the situation. Nor must we have the idea that we need not seek instructions from the Central Committee because the matter can be dealt with by us since it is so small or because we ourselves are intelligent enough to deal with the matter. We must not hesitate to trouble the Central Committee. We should seek instructions from and report to it on all matters, big and small.

The Premier and the comrades of the Cultural Revolution Group of the Central Committee are all working day and night. You may send a telegram or make a telephone call. In the case of a telephone call, few people would hear it and the message would be passed around slowly. A telegram may be read by everyone. Besides, you may take a plane and reach there in one or two hours. Don't act on your own because you think your ideas are right or you are clever. This I must say again and again, and it is the most important of the three ways.

Third, after a year of the great cultural revolution, the line has been drawn clearly between the Left and Right. You must divide people into Left and Right not according to whether they attack the military district, but according to whether they protect or oppose Chairman Mao. We must resolutely stand on the side of Chairman Mao, on the side of the Left, and on the side of the masses. We must not judge a group as to whether it is a leftist or rightist one simply on the basis of whether the class status of its members is pure or not, whether it has many or few Party members or many or few cadres. Class status must be examined, but it is not everything. The main thing is to see what line is followed.

In dealing with the conservatives, we must carry out adequate political and ideological work and the work of dividing them and winning them over; we must not let them oppose us for any long period of time. It is imperative to win over the broad masses of the hoodwinked and make them stand on the side of the revolutionaries. As for the leaders of the conservative groups, we must, in the spirit of the Chairman Mao's directives, mobilize the masses to drag them out. It is necessary to give firm support to the Leftists in winning over the hoodwinked masses. If there are problems among the Leftists, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of alliance and to persuade them not to engage in a civil war, not to promote departmentalism, the limelight mentality, the small-group mentality. These mentalities can do good not the the Leftists but to the Rightists.

The masses must not be suppressed. When problems arise or incidents break out, we should report to and seek instructions from the Central Committee. There is no need for haste; instead, we should solve the problems slowly and step by step. We should ascertain the conditions clearly, report to the Central Committee and seek instructions from it, wait for its approval, and then take action to solve the problems. This is the style of work consistently advocated by Chairman Mao.

To be frank, I am worried that our comrades may make mistakes since they are entrusted with such heavy tasks, and that would not be favorable to the great cultural revolution. Now we rely on the army and it must not make mistakes. To avoid making mistakes, we must rely on the Left and the masses, and the most important thing is to seek instructions from the Central Committee and its Cultural Revolution Group.

Those who have made mistakes should admit and examine and correct them early — in fact, the sooner, the better. This will satisfy the masses and gain their understanding. It is not good to refuse to recognize mistakes or to conceal them. It is dangerous to persist in the mistakes and turn down any advice to correct them. The armed forces' involvement in the great cultural revolution is rather hasty, and since they do not understand the situation, they can hardly avoid making mistakes. When they make mistakes and refuse to admit them, they will not go unpunished. If they correct the mistakes which they have made, they will have the understanding of the masses. Communists must have this style.

The past revolutions were also hasty. The land revolution, the Autumn Harvest Uprising, the struggle against local bad gentry, the fight against Chiang Kai-shek and Japan were all carried out in a hurry. After the lapse of several decades, we finally became familiar with the rural conditions and clear about these problems. With the victory of the revolution, we embarked on a new stage and adopted new systems, and new conditions appeared. The theory of the socialist revolution, the line, the principle and policies had not been studied before, and we were not prepared theoretically and ideologically. We had overthrown the big mountains [imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism] and carried through the bourgeois democratic revolution. All this was no more than the bourgeois democratic revolution. With the victory things changed, and the bourgeoisie itself had to be revolutionized.

The present revolution is aimed at revolutionizing those of us who have engaged in the revolution. For revolution of this kind we have not prepared ourselves, and we do not understand it. Only Chairman Mao — who has the highest theoretical level and the utmost foresight as regards theory, line, ideology, principle and policies — knows what he should do and has long prepared himself. Comrades with a high ideological and theoretical level are prepared; other comrades in general have not prepared themselves in the ideological sense. In the past, we were familiar with the land revolution in the countryside, and were not familiar with capitalism. In such capitalist developed countries as the United States, Britain, France and Japan, even an ordinary worker knows clearly what capitalist exploitation and aggression mean. But in China capitalism was not developed, and in the past we were in the countryside, did not see much of capitalism, and had little understanding of the law governing the development of capitalism.

If we view the revolution of today with the old ideas, policies and theories that applied to the bourgeois democratic revolution, we can hardly

avoid making mistakes, and we cannot understand the great cultural revolution of today, either. If we still use the methods which we used to fight the local bad gentry, to fight Chiang Kai-shek, and to fight Japan, then we cannot but make mistakes. There are two kinds of people where mistakes are concerned: Those who are willing to correct their mistakes; and those who persist in their mistakes. Great harm would be done to the Party by those who refuse to correct their mistakes. This is generally true of mistakes made over the last 18 years. Those who have made mistakes are still welcome if they correct them.

The problems dealt with by Chairman Mao at the Second Plenary Session of the Seventh Central Committee were of tremendous significance to the socialist revolution. This was a major development of Marxism. However, we did not quite understand it, and we still applied the old methods in doing new things. Our Party is a proletarian party. In the past, however, only the leadership core of the leadership group was genuinely Marxist-Leninist. Apart from the backbone elements, many had bourgeois ideas, and some were bourgeois elements. Therefore, when we make mistakes, we must correct them; failing this, we would embark on the capitalist road, the state would change color, and the individual persons would become power-holders taking the capitalist road.

The present great cultural revolution is, in fact, aimed at attaining a great political revolution. Without a great political revolution, capitalism would be restored. The great cultural revolution is a great socialist revolution in the political and ideological fields, for without a great political and ideological revolution, there would be no socialist revolution. Theoretically and ideologically we cannot find out the truth about capitalism and socialism, the right and the wrong, unless we properly study Chairman Mao's theories. Only when we master the thought of Mao Tse-tung can we attain socialism. Today, under Chairman Mao's leadership, we must properly study and properly transform our world outlook; otherwise, we would make mistakes. To study and master the thought of Mao Tse-tung is to understand Marxism-Leninism and to avoid making mistakes.

In order to make a success of the great cultural revolution we must rely on the Liberation Army, which is created by Chairman Mao. In order to avoid making mistakes, we must seek more instructions from the Central Committee and the Cultural Revolution Group of the Central Committee. On the other hand, we must strengthen the political and ideological work in the armed forces, place politics in command, study Chairman Mao's works, make the thought of Mao Tse-tung command everything, develop and advance in the socialist direction indicated by Chairman Mao, and not in the direction of capitalism.

Chairman Mao's thought must be put in command, in view of the fact that there are thousands of threads in the work of the armed forces. Only when we grasp the study of Chairman Mao's works, and study of Chairman Mao's works, and study and apply them creatively, can we solve all problems readily.

Failing to do this, we would suppress the people, as has happened in Inner Mongolia.

For some time after the struggle against T'ian Cheng, the study of Mao's works was quite successfully grasped in the General Political Department, but in the course of the great cultural revolution, it performed badly and failed to keep abreast of the situation. Its principal leading cadre made one mistake after another, and we tried again and again not to let him fall, and now we are still trying to help him do well. In studying Chairman Mao's works, you must principally rely on the various military districts, armies, divisions, regiments, battalions, and companies, and study of Mao's works is a magic wand. In doing work, you principally rely on various big military districts, and the main thing is to grasp the study of Mao's works well, conduct the education in two lines, and teach the armed forces to deal correctly with the revolutionary Leftists, young Red Guards, and the revolutionary masses.

At the present time, it is necessary to grasp the mass criticism -- to criticize the bourgeois reactionary line and the small handful of the top Party power-holders taking the capitalist road. It is only by conducting political and ideological work, helping the cadres and fighters to make thinking clear and arming them with the thought of Mao Tse-tung can we fulfill the task of "three-support" [support the Left, industry and agriculture] and "two-military" [military control and training]. Some cadres participate in the three-way alliance, others are transferred to other places.

The basic question of the revolution is political power. Yet many people have an inadequate understanding of the importance of this question, of the importance of political power, and of the importance of the leadership group. They must have their thinking clear. In the last 18 years, the capitalist roaders in the Party controlled a number of Party and government organs. Since the start of the cultural revolution, some groups have fallen, and a new state machine has to be built. The leadership group is very important, for it holds political power, and it itself is a state machine. The old leadership group of power-holders was incapable of becoming a state machine, fell, and has been taken over by the military. Our state machine has many things which are capitalist and revisionist, and its fall does not do any harm. Let it fall. Our leadership group should be forever loyal to Chairman Mao, to the thought of Mao Tse-tung; it should be forever composed of people who take Chairman Mao's revolutionary road.

In the case of the military take-over, mistakes should be avoided, but when they are made, they should be corrected immediately in accordance with Chairman Mao's teachings. Cadres of the military districts, the provincial military districts, and the people's armed forces departments who have made mistakes should be sent to receive training in accordance with Chairman Mao's instructions, so that the revolutionary rebels may be their teachers and their own mistakes may be their teaching materials. In this

way, they may accept the experiences and lessons. Those Party and government personnel who did not make their thinking clear in the past should also be given education. When they change through the education, this is a good thing, and they should be welcome when they want to return to Chairman Mao's revolutionary line. Cadres should be treated in accordance with the policy of "learning from past mistakes in order to avoid future ones, curing the sickness in order to save the patient" — a policy set forth by Chairman Mao. Even when those who have been overthrown for the time being are made to change over through education, this is also a good thing. The majority of the cadres can be won over, and those who are unable to make their thinking clear may also be won over and made to change their attitude. Those who have corrected their mistakes may be given work, while those who are still unable to make their thinking clear may be replaced. Those who may not be overthrown must not be overthrown, and those who have been overthrown may be made to change over through education. The leadership group is the State machine. It must conform to the thought of Mao Tse-tung and follow the revolutionary line of Chairman Mao or it must be replaced. But nothing should be condemned without education.

Lest you should make mistakes, may I remind you once more of the three ways, especially the second one. Things should rather be done a bit slowly; they should be given more consideration and must not be done in a hurry. If they are delayed for a few days, the sky would not fall. The Premier and Comrades Po-ta and Chiang Ch'ing are working day and night. I hope that all of you at the higher and lower levels will make more reports to them and seek more instructions from them.