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[Article by Chang Feng-chi (1728 7364 1477), chief of military and political training group assigned to Shihchingshan Middle School of Peking and delegate to congress of activities in study of Chairman Mao's works: "Mao Tse-tung's thought illuminates the road of military and political training--on experience gained in supporting left but not any particular faction"]

[Summary] Peking--"In accordance with Chairman Mao's 7 March instructions, we came to Shihchingshan Middle School of Peking in the early part of March to carry out military and political training for the revolutionary teachers and students. From our experience in the struggle over the past year, we profoundly realized that in order to fulfill this glorious task, we had to hold aloft the great red banner of Mao Tse-tung's thought and firmly adhere to the principle of 'supporting the left, but not any particular faction,'"

"All Revolutionary Mass Organizations Should Be Supported":

"There were over 1,000 teachers and students in the Shihchingshan Middle School. Since the beginning of the proletarian cultural revolution, there had been over 20 mass organizations. Because of the influence of the bourgeois reactionary line and bourgeois and petty-bourgeois factionalism, these organizations had regrouped into several factions."

When we first entered this school, strong antagonism existed among these mass organizations: they all claimed to be the representative of the left and asked for PLA support. The question confronting us was "How to support?" and "Whom to support?" The answer was found in Chairman Mao's instruction about having faith in the masses. Therefore, we decided to "learn humbly from the masses." From our investigation, we came to understand that among the 20-odd mass organizations, the overwhelming majority of members came from workers and peasants families, and that in the proletarian cultural revolution their class consciousness had been greatly enhanced and the spearhead of their struggle was directed at the handful of capitalist-roaders. They may have committed some mistakes, but once they realized these mistakes they boldly rebelled against the capitalist-roaders. After all, their general orientation was correct. The task before us was to form a revolutionary great alliance at the earliest possible date.

At first, some of the revolutionary teachers and students, who were still under the influence of the ultraleft trend of thought, failed to understand the meaning of this great alliance and called it "a blurring of the demarcation line between right and wrong" and the "rigging up of a hodgepodge." Some of them even put up slogan posters saying "the PLA should support the genuine left but not ghosts and monsters" and "the PLA should have a distinctive banner and be on the side of the left!"

Confronted with this situation, we again looked for a solution in Chairman Mao's instruction on PLA support for the left. After our study, most of us agreed that anyone loyal to Chairman Mao and Mao Tse-tung's thought belonged to the left. However, someone raised this question: "In this case, there will be too many left mass organizations!" Our reply was that Chairman Mao had all along taught us to "have faith in the majority of the masses." It was pointed out that at the beginning those who had the courage to "fight their way out" under the bourgeois reactionary rule might belong to a minority; but with the development of the proletarian cultural revolution, the political consciousness of the people had been enhanced as never before and the ranks of the revolutionary left, loyal to Chairman Mao's revolutionary line, had been enlarged. This awareness formed the basis of our work in supporting the revolutionary left.

To Help Left Masses Overcome Factionalism Is an Important Task of Supporting the Left

Among these mass organizations strong bourgeois and petty bourgeois factionalism existed, resulting in estrangement and even "civil wars." Our next step was to strengthen proletarian party spirit and overcome bourgeois and petty bourgeois factionalism.

Some teachers and students, under the influence of the bourgeois reactionary line, failed to judge the situation on the basis of class struggle; instead, they devoted all their consideration to personal gains. Those who had been hookwinked into carrying out the bourgeois reactionary line refused to admit their errors because they were afraid they would become the targets of revenge. On the other hand, those who had been victims of persecution under the rule of this black line could not forget their "old score." Therefore, our job to convince them that they were all class brothers and that whatever mistakes had been made in the past should be charged to the account of China's Khrushchev and the handful of capitalist-roaders.

When we finally succeeded in stopping the "civil wars" and were planning the revolutionary great alliance, another problem emerged. Two leading revolutionary mass organizations at the same time demanded to be regarded as the "nucleus of the great alliance." Factionalism was again playing havoc. Our only course was to "criticize and resist" it; there was no room for "compromise."

"As a result of repeated study of Chairman Mao's works and his latest instructions, and continual struggle with bourgeois and petty bourgeois factionalism, over 90 percent of the revolutionary teachers and students united." In the early part of last April, the school resumed classes after forming a revolutionary committee based on the three-way alliance.

Following Chairman Mao's Latest Instructions, We Can Get Rid of All Interference:

While resuming classes, a sinister "platform-demolishing wind" [chai tai feng--2133 0669 7354] was whipped up in society. Even resumption of classes in the schools was called a "restoration of the old" and a "capitalist restoration," while the revolutionary great alliance was vilified as a "great hodgepodge" which must be "thoroughly smashed."

"At that time more than 20 teachers and students of the schools were affected by this sinister wind. They withdrew from the revolutionary great alliance and set up their own 'mountain strongholds.' Contacts were established inside and outside of the school; while hundreds, and sometimes 1,000 people 'stormed' the school to topple the revolutionary great alliance and obstruct the resumption of classes."

While the teachers and students were resuming classes inside the school, people outside held a rally to "pledge opposition to restoration."

The comrades of the military and political training group repeatedly studied Chairman Mao's instructions and saw that in supporting the revolutionary great alliance and the resumption of classes they were carrying out Chairman Mao's instructions and following his great strategic plan. Therefore they resolutely resisted this interference no matter whether it came from the right or the ultraleft, greatly inspiring the revolutionary teachers and students. This further enraged those "storming" the school. They said: The military and political training group is taking the bourgeois reactionary line, supporting the conservatives, and suppressing the rebels.

Instead of avoiding them, our comrades took this opportunity to disseminate Mao Tse-tung's thought to the people, since the action of these people was only due to their ignorance of Chairman Mao's instructions. "We firmly took the frontline and unswervingly disseminated Mao Tse-tung's thought to those 'storming' the school. No matter how fierce they were, we treated them with great warmth and explained things to them with great patience." Whenever they "stormed" our position we considered it a good opportunity for us to reexamine and sum up our experience in supporting the revolutionary great alliance and the resumption of classes.

Those opposing the resumption of classes said: The general orientation of the struggle is to criticize the bourgeois reactionaries why are you resuming classes now? You are too early!" To this the revolutionary students replied: We are not early at all. Chairman Mao and the CCP Central Committee called on us to resume classes 'way back on 1 March and we did not act until 11 April. How can you call this too early?

Some other people appeared with this query: Why not go out to establish contacts? You are only dissipating your energy in fooling around with this training! To this the revolutionary students replied: You are wrong! Rebellion has a class character. Needless to say, we must rebel against the capitalist-roaders, but the purpose of resuming classes is to penetratingly criticize, thoroughly overthrow, and completely discredit the counterrevolutionary revisionist line of China's Khrushchev politically, ideologically, and theoretically.

We Must Vigorously Combat Self-Interest To Be Loyal to Chairman Mao's Revolutionary Line

"Young fighters are strong but are lacking in experience, particularly experience in serving class struggle. Although many comrades among the cadres have long been nurtured by the party and are experienced in fighting, their ideology has still not been sufficiently remolded so that bourgeois and petty bourgeois ideas often crop up in their minds, interfering with our principle of 'supporting the left but not any particular faction.' As soon as we entered the school the mass organization immediately asked us to clarify our stand. We were afraid of supporting the wrong party by a hasty decision. However, after studying the three much-read articles and truly grasping the meaning of the words 'completely' and 'thoroughly' serving the people, we became aware that our fear was based on 'self-interest.'

"Later when the resumption of classes had been regularized and people opposing it had disappeared some of us became complacent, feeling that we could heave a sigh of relief now that the situation was under control. Some revolutionary teachers and students even tried to work for personal gain. In other words, 'self-interest' had reappeared and had become our main concern."